

MISSION STATEMENT

OF

EAST OTTER TAIL

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

It shall be the mission of the Soil and Water Conservation District to conserve and protect our soil and water resources that were placed into our trust.

Our quality of life and our environment depends on the partnership between our Board of Supervisors, its employees, and a willingness of land users to commit to good land use practices and management skills.

It is the District's responsibility to provide trained, competent technicians and office staff to disseminate information and provide technical assistance to all land users applying conservation practices and measures to their land.

And it is the responsibility of the District employees to achieve the mission of this District by dedicating their services, talents, and skills in meeting the goals and objectives set forth in our "Long Range" and "Annual Plan of Work" and to remain flexible to change.

The East Otter Tail Soil and Water Conservation District is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, public assistance status, veteran status or sexual orientation.

**ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES OF THE
EAST OTTER TAIL SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

*The quality of life and environment in the
East Otter Tail Soil and Water Conservation District
depends upon a partnership among citizens,
elected officials, and employees.*

*Each one of us in the District
is striving for success.
We are what makes the difference between a good
organization and an excellent one.*

As such, we have agreed upon the following as our organizational values:

We value open, accessible government. A government cannot be dishonest if its actions are taken openly, and honest government is our first responsibility. Openness encourages competence because it subjects our actions to public scrutiny.

We value fiscal responsibility. Careful management of our financial resources demonstrates our respect for the citizens whose taxes support our organization. Fiscal responsibility recognizes that most problems cannot be solved by money alone, and therefore demands fresh approach and creativity in addressing issues.

We value a spirit of professionalism. We believe that successful completion of the task is more important than who gets the credit. A professional attitude dictates a dispassionate analysis of issues, free of personal biases, and with a commitment to the organization and the community.

We value humane organization. We believe that our work should be a source of enjoyment and satisfaction. We place great emphasis upon the personal qualities that contribute to that environment, informality, humility, energy, and independence of thought. A ready sense of humor and caring attitude.

We value organizational self sufficiency. To insure the continuity of District services and programs, and to foster innovation in the development of those services and programs, we encourage the use of local resources to meet local needs.

*We are Proud of the
East Otter Tail Soil and Water Conservation District,
It's Employees and the Citizens We Service*

The District will Implement Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights Responsibilities Resulting in Strong Working Relationships with Agencies, Units of Government and Organizations.

Objectives:

- ❖ Document corrections of disparities in the civil rights case file.
- ❖ Review Memorandum of Understanding between the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the EOT SWCD including CR, EEO and Drug Free Workplace provisions. Review will be documented.
- ❖ Include nondiscrimination statements in all information released to the public.
- ❖ Review policies and encourage equal representation of minorities, women, and handicapped on local program boards, councils, and committees.
- ❖ Maintain the civil rights case file.
- ❖ Review handicapped accessibility to office including parking space requirement. Discrepancies to be reported to the Area Conservationist and the SWCD Board.

I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The purpose of the “Annual Plan of Work” is to guide the actions of East Otter Tail Soil and Water Conservation District for the period of January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011. Each concern can be measured by performance and action when reviewed by the Board of Supervisors and staff on a quarterly basis. The District is to provide an organized approach to solving or reducing soil erosion, water resource protection, development of wildlife habitat, and the improvement of forest and pasture lands.

The District is governed by an elected Board of Supervisors which consists of five members from designated election areas located in East Otter Tail County. The Board of Supervisors meets on a regular basis, meeting on each third Wednesday of the month for decision making and the implementation of its programs. The District Board of Supervisors for the calendar year are:

Chairperson	Lyle Dittmann	New York Mills
Vice Chairperson	Steve Inwards	Parkers Prairie
Secretary	Dennis Reynolds	Richville
Treasurer	Marion Gill	Perham
Public Relations	Terry Greenwaldt	Henning

The District staff consists of one full time District Manager (Darren Newville), one full time Office Manager (Deb Werner), one full time Farm Bill/District Technician (Aaron Salo), one full time Shoreland Specialist/District Technician (Steve Henry) and one part time Irrigation/District Technician (Arnonld Rethemeier). Up to four temporary part time District Aides have also traditionally been hired each spring to help in the District’s tree planting program, tree fabric matting program, and to assist in the native grass programs.

The District will also host a Conservation Corp of Minnesota apprentice in the summer of 2011.

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) also provides the District with a full time District Conservationist (Bruce Becker), a full time Soil Conservationist (Alan Lepp) a full time Soil Conservation Technician (Troy Baumgart) and a part time Soil Conservation Technician Aide (Jean Eken).

The District administers several state grants and programs, these include but are not limited to the State Cost Share Program, Conservation Delivery Grant Program, Farm Bill Assistance Grant, Observation Well Monitoring, Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM), Permanent Wetland Preserve Program (PWP), the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act (WCA), the Feedlot Water Quality Management program and the Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program.

The District has entered in to a Joint Powers Agreement with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) to provide assistance and funding on groundwater issues specifically related to nitrates. This agreement includes several irrigation initiatives and the Adaptive Nitrate Management program using guided basal stalk testing on corn.

The District also assists the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) in promoting and implementing USDA's conservation provisions of the farm bill including but not limited to the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP), Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), the Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP), the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

II. OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS

I. SURFACE WATER QUALITY

To improve the water quality of surface waters in East Otter Tail County by reducing or minimizing the amount and extent of contaminants entering surface waters.

- A. Promote the use of riparian buffers and filter strips
- B. Provide technical assistance to shoreland owners on water quality projects
- C. Promote the use of ag BMP's such as conservation tillage, nutrient management, and manure management
- D. Promote and provide assistance to the adaptive nitrogen management program that offers guided basal corn stalk nitrate testing for producers through an agreement the District has with the MDA
- E. Promote the use of urban BMP's such as lakescaping, rain garden's and proper lawn fertilizer rates and provide technical assistance to interested landowners

- F. Cooperate with Otter Tail County COLA and Lake Associations with educational efforts and projects that improve water quality and provide them with financial and technical assistance with the Shoreland Owners Stewardship Guidebook that will be printed and distributed
- G. Administer and Implement the DNR Shoreland Buffer Initiative Grant Program in accordance to the approved workplan (funds provided through the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the LCCMR)
- H. Promote livestock exclusion from sensitive surface water areas and provide technical assistance to interested producers along with financial assistance when available to projects that meets eligibility criteria
- I. Assist with feedlot runoff projects and provide technical assistance to interested producers along with financial assistance when available to projects that meets eligibility criteria
- J. Investigate opportunities for monitoring various water bodies and assist with the monitoring efforts being conducted by MPCA, RMB labs and the Otter Tail County COLA in the Red Eye and Long Prairie Watersheds in 2011
- K. Promote Citizen Lake and Stream monitoring programs
- L. Promote erosion control practices, and storm water management plans on construction sites through the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit process
- M. Continue to provide financial assistance for ISTS through the Ag BMP loan program
- N. Provide Technical Assistance with the Wetland Conservation Act
- O. Administer and Implement the County Comprehensive Water Plan
- P. Educate the public about surface water quality issues and efforts to protect it
- Q. Use funding from the Native Prairie Buffer Cost-share program on projects that enhance, improve, or protect surface water quality
- R. Work with the County Board of Commissioners on becoming a MPCA delegated feedlot county, and create a County Feedlot Officer position
- S. Assist with high water issues in various areas in the County

II. GROUND WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY

To improve and protect the quality and quantity of groundwater resources in East Otter Tail County by minimizing or reducing the amount and extent of contaminants entering the groundwater resources, and ensuring that there will be a stable and adequate source of useable water for municipal, industrial and agricultural purposes.

- A. Facilitate a statewide Irrigation Forum and provide MDA a written report on the findings of the forum
- B. Promote the use of the District's Irrigation Scheduler program
- C. Upgrade equipment used with the Districts Irrigation Scheduler program and ET holine. This will include installing three new automated weather stations in various regions on the District

- D. Promote and administer the CWF grant the District received to convert 5 irrigation systems to low pressure and provide financial assistance to producers on up to 40 fields to use the Districts Irrigation Scheduler Program
- E. Continue to sponsor Nitrate testing clinics
- F. Continue to assist MDA with the Sand Plain Monitoring plan and disseminate information collected from the study
- G. Develop and hold Irrigation Education Clinics in conjunction with the Minnesota Dept of Ag and develop a curriculum that can be shared with other local staff for putting on a clinic
- H. Purchase two Ground Water models to be used for educational purposes in conjunction with the MDA agreement
- I. Provide cost-share for priority well sealing projects
- J. Continue to cooperate with the DNR ObWell Program
- K. Promote the use of nutrient management plans and provide technical assistance to producers to develop nutrient management plans
- L. Promote and provide assistance to the adaptive nitrogen management program that offers basal corn stalk nitrate testing for producers through an agreement the District has with the MDA
- M. Promote BMP's for pesticide use
- N. Work with Municipalities on Wellhead Protection Plans as requested and continue to serve as Technical Advisor to the Perham Wellhead Protection Committee
- O. Assist the Perham Wellhead Protection Committee and the MDA with a FANMAP study in the Perham Wellhead Area
- P. Promote conservation programs such as RIM and CRP in all wellhead protection areas
- Q. Adminster and implement the County Comprehensive Water Plan
- R. Stay abreast of any proposals that could potentially adversely affect the quantity of the groundwater available
- S. Educate the public about groundwater quality and quantity issues and efforts to protect it

III. DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE

To protect the natural resource of Otter Tail County by reducing or minimizing the impacts of ongoing and future development within the county.

- A. If approved provide lake assements on 21 lakes in Otter Tail County in conjunction with RMB labs and various lake associations. These assements will incorporate all montitoring data avaialabe for the various lake and a GIS assessment will be done using LiDAR technology. This would be funded through a Lake Protection Grant from the BWSR and funding provided by the Lake Associations. These assements will be used by the lake associations as a planning tool and will be incorporated into the County Water Plan

- B. Continue to provide assistance to lakeshore property owners on erosion issues and promote the use of lakescaping and storm water runoff control
- C. Maintain up to date knowledge of Otter Tail County's shoreland management ordinance and direct landowners to the Land and Resource Management Office when permits are needed for proposed projects
- D. Administer and implement the DNR Shoreland Buffer Initiative Grant Program in accordance to the approved workplan (funds provided through the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the LCCMR)
- E. Continue to provide support for lake associations completing the healthy Lakes and Rivers Program
- F. Provide technical assistance to the County for the review of plat applications
- G. Promote the use of stormwater BMP's including rain gardens, stormwater retention ponds and other acceptable practices
- H. Provide technical assistance to the County and individual landowners with the Wetland Conservation Act
- I. Promote erosion control practices, and storm water management plans on construction sites through the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit process
- J. Educate the public about development pressure issues
- K. Work with the Otter Tail County Commissioners and staff members on any proposal for county wide land use planning

IV. SOIL EROSION

Promote best management practices that reduce soil losses through wind and water erosion to below 2T.

- A. Provide technical assistance to landowners on the design, layout and installation of wind erosion conservation practices such as windbreaks, shelterbelts, living snowfences. Provide financial assistance when available to projects that meet eligibility criteria
- B. Promote the use of and provide technical assistance on conservation tillage practices, and provide financial assistance when available to projects that meet eligibility criteria
- C. Promote the use of cover crops and provide technical assistance
- D. Promote the use of crop rotations that prevent or reduce soil loss
- E. Provide technical assistance for native prairie plantings
- F. Promote the use of Shoreland BMP's in shoreland areas sensitive to erosion
- G. Promote erosion control practices, and storm water management plans on construction sites through the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit process
- H. Educate the public about soil erosion and efforts to control it

V. WILDLIFE HABITAT/FORESTRY

To protect and preserve wildlife habitat including prairie, forested and wetland habitats from conversion to cropland and urban development, and promote the re-establishment of these wildlife habitats.

- A. Provide technical assistance to landowners interested in wildlife habitat tree and shrub plantings or forestry practices, along with financial assistance if available to projects that meet eligibility criteria
- B. In cooperation with the Minnesota Forest Resource Council (MFRC) and the Wadena SWCD the EOT SWCD will be working on a project promoting active management of the high quality hardwood stands located in Otter Tail and Wadena Counties. This project is be funded partially through a US Forest Service Grant
- C. Promote the District's conservation tree program and services
- D. Provide technical assistance to landowners interested in wildlife habitat grass and forb plantings, along with financial assistance if available and project and landowner meet eligibility criteria
- E. Promote the District's seeding program and services
- F. Promote conservation programs such as RIM, CRP, CCRP, WRP, WHIP and EQIP that assist with wildlife habitat preservation, renovation and development
- G. Facilitate listening sessions to gain insite on possible local priorities for projects that could potentially be funded through the Lessard Heritage Council
- H. Provide technical assistance with the Wetland Conservation Act
- I. Provide technical assistance with wetland restoration projects to interested landowners, along with financial assistance if available to projects that meet eligibility criteria
- J. Continue to work with other resource agencies to partner and collaborate on wildlife habitat projects
- K. Educate the public on wildlife habitat issues and protection and enhancement efforts
- L. Use funding from the Native Prairie Buffer Cost-share program on projects that enhance and improve wildlife habitat

VI. SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

To assist agricultural producers in mainitaining productivity through the use of conservation practices that protect and preserve our natural resouces, and maintain a sustainable agricultural base in the county.

- A. Promote conservation practices that sustain soil productivity
- B. Promote alternative crops as technology develops and new markets emerge
- C. Maintain knowledge of new legislation or programs that benefit local producers and dessiminate information to local producers.

- D. Promote rotational grazing practices and provide technical assistance and financial assistance when available to projects that meet eligibility criteria
- E. Assist with feedlot runoff projects and provide technical assistance to interested producers and financial assistance if available to projects and producers that meet eligibility criteria.
- F. Educate the public about agricultural issues
- G. Keep informed on Bio Mass information and technology on how it may impact local producers
- H. Investigate staffing a nutrient management/pest management specialist to work with producers to develop and implement nutrient management and pest management plans.

VII. EDUCATION/PROMOTION

Promote soil and water conservation through an effective information and education program to the residents, seasonal property owners, schools, and elected officials in Otter Tail County

- A. Support local ag in the classroom programs
- B. Support Conservation Days
- C. Support the Nitrate testing clinics and programs in local schools
- D. Support the regional Envirothon
- E. Develop and maintain an email newsletter
- F. Provide presentations to area groups as requested
- G. Educate the public on the District's programs and services
- H. Educate the public on other state and federal programs that may provide technical and financial assistance
- I. Sponsor and staff a booth at the Perham Trade Show in February
- J. Maintain District web page and keep it up to date

VIII. FUNDING/PARTNERING/ADMINISTRATION

Provide assistance to the public through the most efficient use of public funds and administration of programs, and maintain and develop a strong working relationship with other resource agencies.

- A. Continue to work to gain better sources of stable funding
- B. Research possible grant opportunities to assist with funding projects and specialized staff positions as they relate to the District's priorities
- C. Maintain and improve working relationships with NRCS and FSA
- D. Maintain and improve working relationships with County Commissioner and County Departments
- E. Maintain and improve working relationships with other state and federal resource agencies
- F. Continue to work with the Otter Tail River Watershed Team on joint projects such as the Native Buffer Cost-share Pooling Agreement

G. Administer programs in a manner that efficiently uses the Districts resources

IX. STATE COST SHARE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The Erosion, Sediment Control, and Water Quality Cost-Share Program (C-S Program) provides funds to Soil and Water Conservation Districts through the Board of Soil and Water Resources (BWSR) to cost-share on priority projects. The SWCD Board of Supervisors are given the authority to decide which resource problems within their jurisdiction are most deserving of financial assistance, as well as the amount of assistance. Guidelines set by BWSR state that SWCD's may cost share with land occupiers at the maximum rate of 75 percent of the eligible cost of a project. In 2011 the East Otter Tail SWCD was awarded \$15,449 to be used through this program, of that 20% (\$3,089.80) may be used to cover for technical and administrative assistance provided by the District. The following shows the estimated need for these dollars.

1) HIGH PRIORITY EROSION

On areas where erosion from wind or water is occurring on Class I-IV soils equal to or in excess of 2 x T tons per acre per year or is occurring on any area that exhibits active gully erosion.

1) Funds needed:

- a) Critical Area Stabilization: 3 acres @ \$550/acre = \$1,650 total; 75% of \$1,650 = \$1,237.50 total cost share
- b) Field Windbreaks: 20 acres x \$550 per acre = \$11,000 total; 75% of \$11,000 = \$8,250 total cost share

2) HIGH PRIORITY SEDIMENTATION

Areas within 300 feet of a water course or 1,000 feet of a water basin or wetland where the water erosion rate exceeds three tons per acre per year, or areas where the District can show that sediment delivery occurs from a watershed or direct conveyance structure such as a storm sewer or paved outlet channel discharging to these waters.

1) Funds needed:

- a) Stream bank, Lake shore, and Roadside Stabilization: 3 landowners @ \$65 per foot x 450 ft = \$29,250 total; 75% of \$29,250 = \$21,937.5
- b) Riparian Buffer Strips: 4 landowners @ \$550 acre x 8 acres = \$4,400 total; 75% of \$4,400 = \$3,300

- c) Sediment Retention, Erosion or Water Control Structures: 2 landowners @ \$3,000/project = \$6,000 total; 75% of \$6,000 = \$4,500
- d) Critical Area Stabilization: 2 acres @ \$550 acre = \$1,100 total; 75% of \$1,100 = \$825

3) HIGH PRIORITY FEEDLOTS

Feedlots where the pollution potential rating from the feedlot is greater than or equal to one.

- 1) Funds needed:
 - a) Waste Storage Ponds and Structures: 2 Systems @ \$60,000 = \$120,000 total; 75% cost-share is = \$90,000 = \$45,000 per system
 - b) Diversions: 1 landowner @ \$6/ft x 300 ft. = \$1,800 total; 75% cost share is = \$1,350

4) SPECIAL PROJECTS/GRANTS

Conservation Delivery Grant Program

This grant is used for technical/administrative services incurred by the District to carry out their conservation programs. It is also used for the educational and promotional programs of the District. For fiscal year 2011 the amount granted to the District was \$18,374.00. An additional 20% of cost-share funds (\$3,089.80) can also be used for technical and administrative services for the amount spent on completed projects. The total amount of technical/administrative services funding for fiscal year 2011 is \$21,463.80.

ReInvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Service Grant

This grant is given to the District for the implementation and application of the RIM Reserve Program. For fiscal year 2011 the District received \$617.00.

Farm Bill Assistance Grant:

This grant is given to the District to provide for staff to promote the conservation provisions of the Farm Bill. The purpose of position would be to promote the conservation programs of the Farm Bill – CRP, CCRP, WHIP, WRP, CREP, etc. Promotion will be done through direct contact (mailings, phone calls, group presentations, etc), with follow up to determine eligibility, contract processing, conservation planning and monthly reporting. For fiscal year 2011 the District received \$15,750.00.

TOTAL STAFF HOURS NEEDED

OBJECTIVE	SWCD DM	SWCD TN	SWCD SS	SWCD PTT	SWCD OM	SWCD TEMP	NRCS DC	NRCS SC	NRCS TN
Surface Water Quality	300	500	500	100	200	200	400	600	600
Ground Water Quality and Quantity	350	500		800	200	200	400	600	600
Development Pressure	300	200	500		200	200	400	600	600
Soil Erosion	300	400	500		150	20	400	100	100
Wildlife Habitat	150	450	100		200	50	200	100	100
Sustainable Agriculture	100	40		100	50		200	100	100
Education/Promotion	250	50	500	635	350	175	100	50	50
Funding/Partnering/Adminstration	450	40	100		800	100	250	40	40
TOTAL STAFF HOURS NEEDED	2200	2180	2200	1635	2150	945	2350	2190	2190
TOTAL STAFF HOURS AVAILABLE	2080	2080	2080	1635	2080	945	2080	2080	2080
NRCS AIDE HOURS AVAILABLE	500								

Total Staff Hours Available does not take into account Annual Leave, Sick Leave, Training and other days employees are not at work.

SWCD DM = District Manager

SWCD SS = Shoreland Specialist/District Tech

SWCD TN = Farm Bill/District Technican

SWCD PTT = Part Time Irrigation Technican

SWCD OM = Office Manager

SWCD Temp = Temporary Part Time Aides

NRCS DC = District Conservationist

NRCS SC = Soil Conservationist

NRCS TN = Soil Conservation Technican