

Mower SWCD 2019 Annual Plan of Work



Mission Statement

Provide local leadership to conserve, protect and enhance Mower County's natural resources.

Statement of Need

The Cedar, Turtle and Root River Watersheds are impaired for turbidity. There is a need for numerous water flow and erosion control practices in all three watersheds. Practices that include waterways, water and sediment control basins, wetland restorations and streambank stabilization will be the practices of choice for landowners.

2019 SWCD Board	
Randy Smith	Chair
Micah Peterson	Vice Chair
Jon Erichson	Secretary/Treasurer
Jim Kellogg	Board Member
Jim Gebhardt	Board Member

Mower SWCD Staff
Justin Hanson , <i>District Manager</i>
Jeanne Crump , <i>Administrative Assistant</i>
Cody Fox , <i>Project Manager</i>
James Fett , <i>Watershed Technician</i>
Steve Lawler , <i>Resource Specialist</i>
Paul Hunter , <i>Watershed Conservationist</i>
Tim Ruzek , <i>Water Plan & Outreach Coordinator</i>
Larry Callahan , <i>District Technician</i>



**1408 21st Ave. N.W.,
Austin, MN 55912
507-434-2603
www.mowerswcd.org**

Mower SWCD is charged with implementing several areas of the Mower and Root Water Plans. The following targets are priority activities for the district in 2019.

Projects and Practices	Planned Goals
CIP Project Plans Developed	3 Project Plans
CIP Projects Constructed	3 Projects
Cover crop acres implemented	2,000 acres
Grass Waterways	10 Contracts
Sediment basins	4 Basins
Windbreaks	4 Projects
CREP Easement Establishment	5 Applications
CRP Acres Enrolled	500 Acres
AG BMP Loans	10 Projects



Outreach and Assistance	Planned Goals
Landowners Contacted for Buffer compliance	404
Contact with Landowners needing buffer	100%
Staking assistance request	100% of requests
Program Assistance Request (eligibility dependent)	100% requests
Total Acres Buffer Compliance	99%
Root Headwaters Landowner Contacts	5
CRP Contracts	40
Ag Water Quality Certifications	5
Soil Health Outreach	5 Events
Nitrate Clinic	1 Event



- ### Initiative Focus Areas
- Root River Headwaters Watershed
 - One Watershed Planning
 - Root River
 - Cedar River
 - Dobbins Creek Watershed
 - Mississippi River Basin Initiative
 - Dobbins Targeted Watershed Implementation
 - Buffer Initiative
 - CREP Rollout
 - Soil Health Initiative and Soil Health Team Support
 - Public/Private Partnership Initiative

Goal 1—Watershed Planning and Implementation

The District will provide administrative and/or technical assistance to watershed authorities and programs

Mower SWCD provides technical and administrative services for the following watersheds.

Cedar River Watershed District

Turtle Creek Watershed District

Root River Watershed

Upper Iowa Watershed.

Mower SWCD will provide administrative services to the Turtle Creek and Cedar River Watershed Districts

Provide Assistance in the Watershed Planning Process

Cedar River 1W1P

- Collaborate with local government units within the 8 digit HUCs with the intent of increasing efficiencies and effectiveness among organizations that share goals, objectives, and responsibilities. “One Watershed, One Plan” Cedar River Watershed.
- Act as leadership team for plan development
- Operate as fiscal agent for Watershed Planning
- Provide input on the plan development, to assure the planning document reflects the priorities of Mower County the water quality improvement needs of the Cedar River Watershed
- Administer and implement the Targeted Watershed Program for initiative areas.

Root River 1W1P

- Work with MPCA and other stakeholders in the development of the Upper Iowa Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS)
- Administer and Implement the Targeted Watershed Program for Headwaters.
- Represent Mower County and SWCD in targeting and implementation phase for Root Plan
- Headwaters walkover and project implementation of projects in the year one implementation plan.

Wapsipinicon Strategy

- Work with locals to develop watershed protection strategy for Wapsi watershed.

Develop and Implement Data Projects

- Provide leadership in evaluating new innovations and conservation trends in Drainage.
- Continue to partner with the Department of Ag on the field to stream monitoring program.
- Build out precision ag and soil health plots with sustainability partners

Goal 2—Surface Water Quality Treatment

Restoring impaired waters for pollutants and protect those rivers and streams that have good water quality.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a multi-purpose, long term land, water and wildlife habitat program

Provide Quality Technical Assistance

- Develop cost effective and site appropriate conservation practices. Provide quality training for staff.
- Train technical staff and provide opportunities for those staff to increase Technical Approval Authority, as experience dictates.

Pursue Grants

- Link water quality improvement projects to implementation strategies through watershed plans and comprehensive water plan/SWCD plan.
- Develop and coordinate competitive grants that include Federal, State, Local and Private Foundations.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

- Promote the sign-ups for CREP in the county
- Provide program and technical assistance for landowners pursuing program implementation.

Responsive To Landowner and Public Needs

- Develop annual outreach strategy to encourage participation in voluntary conservation programs.

Statewide Buffer Law

- Implement the statewide buffer program, for Mower County
- Complete regulatory obligations by state deadlines
- Communicate buffer options with each of those landowners and offer discussion on buffer benefits and voluntary practices

Soil Erosion Ordinance Implementation

- Respond to all Soil Erosion whistle blower notifications and staff identified areas of compliance
- Work with landowners to install BMPs.
- Design BMPs for construction.
- Respond to all ordinance complaints and achieve 100% compliance of addressing those issues

Goal 3—Land & Habitat Protection

The District will promote soil health and plant diversity to help control erosion.

Healthy soils produce organisms that break down compaction and greatly increase water infiltration which reduces runoff to our streams.

Five Soil Health Principles:

- 1. Minimize soil disturbance-both physical and chemical*
- 2. Keep the soil covered with plants and plant residue.*
- 3. Maximize diversity of plants in a rotation*
- 4. Keep living roots in the soil as much as possible.*
- 5. Create a favorable habitat for the soil food web.*

Lead Soil Health Initiative

- Support the Soil Health team and connect partners together in support of the initiative
- Promote plant diversity and retention of plant residue through less soil disturbance.
- Promote cover crops and residue management
- Work with local stakeholders to implement field days
- Establish site plots for evaluating soil health in agricultural landscape such as Cedar and Root watersheds

Encourage Implementation of Vegetated Filter Strips

- Target land corridors for habitat development and pursue landowners that may participate in programs
- Evaluate various incentives and program options that create landowner flexibility while maintaining water quality and habitat goals.
- Support USDA staff in the implementation and contracting of CRP plans.

Habitat Improvements

- Partner with local wildlife organizations and other non profits to enhance habitat on public and private land.
- Complete 50 Spot Checks on RIM Easements
- Provide leadership at legislature to support a CREP
- Provide seeding services for program participants.
- Coordinate the 2018 tree program while assisting landowners in planning and designing windbreaks.
 - Develop a strategy to improve sales.

Aquatic Invasive Species

- Protect local and statewide aquatic habitat, through the promotion and implementation of Aquatic and Invasive Species management and education

Goal 4 - Water Quantity/Drainage Management

Focusing on alternative drainage, wetland restorations and floodwater retention opportunities.

Flood History in Cedar Watershed

10 Highest Floods

<u>Date</u>	<u>Gage Height</u>
09/16/2004	25.00
(07/10/2000	23.40
(06/12/2008	22.40
07/17/1978	21.90
08/15/1993	21.30
09/24/2010	20.60
09/23/2016	19.80
(06/17/1976	19.10
07/02/1983	18.20
03/26/1950	17.80

Flood Stage is 15 Feet

Flooding also occurs in the Root River and Upper Iowa Watersheds.

Pursue Water Detention Opportunities

- Coordinate with MPCA to identify storage opportunities in the Root River Watershed, for WRAPS development
- Work with Hormel Foundation and Cedar River Watershed to implement the 25 project CIP

Partner with Watershed Organizations

- Link water quantity challenges to implementation strategies through watershed plans and comprehensive water plan/SWCD plan.
- Assist the CRWD to utilize the H&H for practices to slow the water down in headwaters in priority sub watersheds.

Pursue Water Storage Program

- Work with MASWCD, BWSR and other partners to develop a statewide water storage program
- Educate the stakeholders on the multi benefit approach to water storage for water quality and habitat development

Research and Submit Competitive Grants

- Pursue funding options for flood mitigation projects to include federal and state funds.
- Pursue a continuation of funding for National Water Quality Initiative in Dobbins

Protect Existing Wetlands

- Serve as the Local Government Unit responsible for the State Wetland Conservation Act.

Goal 5—Collaboration and Financial Stability

The District will pursue and advance partnerships to implement programs and activities.

The District is governed by five Mower County citizens that are elected to four year terms and are responsible for developing policies of the District.

Under Minnesota State Statute, the District has no land use or taxing authorities.

Deliver Quality Service

- Retain qualified and well trained staff to deliver conservation to the rural and urban areas in the County.
- Continue to train staff on new trends with agriculture to work with the producers.

Collaborations and efficient options for local government program delivery.

- Pursue new options to evaluate programs and delivery that can be coordinated in Watershed Districts , Counties and neighboring SWCDs.
- Provide assistance to County with County Drainage Systems and serve as the Drainage Inspector.
- Assist the Mower County Feedlot Officer with technical assistance.

Encourage board members and staff to be involved at the area and state level.

- Seek to be on Area and State committees for MASWCD.
- Staff involvement in the Water Resources Board

Work Ag Business

- Build network with local ag groups to find common interests
- Attend Corn Growers annual meeting and invited field days
- Build networks with private ag retail business for communicating programs and partnership opportunities
- Continue Cedar River Partnership work with CFS, Land O Lakes, Hormel, MDA, Environmental Initiative and Northern County Co-Op
- Establish new partnerships with local ag retail entities that find value in our service

Goal 6—Groundwater Protection

To Protect Groundwater Resources.

Ground water is the sole source of drinking water in Mower County.

The sand plain area of the northwest part of the County and the shallow limestone aquifers of southwestern, southeastern, east central and northeastern Mower County are the areas of groundwater units of greatest concern.

Determine which hydrologic units are determined to be vulnerable due to geography or geology and implement strategies.

- Utilize the Mower County Geologic Atlas to identify areas that are susceptible to ground water contamination from surface or subsurface sources.

Protect groundwater resources for water quality as well as quantity.

- Promote and provide public education on lawn and ag fertilizers, proper waste water treatment and nutrient infiltration into the groundwater.
- Continue to work with partner agencies to assure groundwater protection and health with increased groundwater usage.

Volunteer Nitrate Program Local Contact

- Coordinate the local volunteer nitrate program for Mower County
- Maintain homeowner network and contact list

Community Wellhead Protection Plan Imp.

- Support local communities with the implementation efforts of their Wellhead Protection Plans
- Assist with funding opportunities and grant support, as needed.

Goal 7—Public Outreach

The District will strive to make a difference in the lives of the residents in Mower County through outreach and involvement in the Community.

Increasing our local capacity to better connect with the public with our mission

Engaging our customers and local stakeholders is the key to short term success and long term sustainability

Evolving our communication methods and outreach will cast a wide net of information

Create Opportunity for Public Input

- Ensure the District is a transparent organization that offers opportunity for public participation and feedback.

Comprehensive Education Outreach Plan

- Maintain an education plan, to engage, lead and educate on all of the projects and initiatives of the SWCD
- Identify new members of the community who are not traditional stakeholders and find ways to engage them in our work
- Work with the Hormel Foundation to educate the committee members and bring the programs and opportunities that we offer to the committee.
- Work Closer with local co-ops and seed dealers to participate and be a stakeholder at their events.
- Utilize TV and radio opportunities
- Provide staffing for public presentation opportunities within the work area
- Provide monthly media content to keep the message in the public

Engage Citizens Using Social Media Platforms

- Establish a Facebook page for SWCD
- Revamp the district website and incorporate updates

Recognize Citizen Accomplishments

- Continue the Conservation Partner award
- Continue School program to recognize youth leadership in conservation.

Initiate Aquatic and Invasive Species Program

- Partner with County to deliver AIS program for Mower County

2019 Budget

Expenditures	2019 Final Budget	Revenues	2019 Final Budget
Capital Outlay (Equipment)	\$ 60,262	Applicator Test	\$ 250
Capital Outlay-Other		Drill Rental/Charges	\$ 3,000
Staff Payroll		Vicon Seeder Revenue	\$ 500
Pay	\$ 495,730	WCA Services	\$ 1,000
Performance Pay	\$ 1,456	County Grants	\$ 146,998
Insurance Fringe	\$ 3,600	County Grant-Buffer Implementation	\$ 18,000
FICA	\$ 31,113	Ditch Inspector	\$ 6,000
PERA	\$ 37,637	Water Planning	\$ 17,500
Medicare	\$ 7,276	Aquatic Invasive Species Coord.	\$ 3,000
Addition Payroll Expenses	\$ 300	Wetland Grants	\$ 18,000
Total Staff Payroll	\$ 577,112	Edge of Field- Monitoring	\$ 26,000
Supervisors Compensation	\$ 10,000	Vision 2020/Foundation CIP Revenue	\$ 18,588
PERA for Supervisors	\$ 500	Foundation- Soil Health Grant	
Total Payroll	\$ 587,612	CRWD Water Monitoring	\$ 5,000
Health Ins/Employee Share	\$ 15,473	CRWD Administrative	\$ 70,000
Health Ins/Employer Share	\$ 91,886	CRWD Permitting & Technical	\$ 30,000
Health Ins. Admin. Fees	\$ 500	CRWD Project Manager	\$ 40,674
Total Health Insurance	\$ 107,859	CRWD-CWF-Technical Dobbins	\$ 10,000
Total Compensation	\$ 695,471	CRWD-CWF-(16 CIP Technical)	
District Audit Expense	\$ 3,000	CRWD-Public Outreach	\$ 20,000
Bank Charges	\$ 200	Turtle Creek Watershed Revenue	\$ 15,000
Employee Education & Trning	\$ 4,000	Farm Bill Assistance Revenue	\$ 43,875
Employee Expenses	\$ 2,000	CREP Assistance	\$ 10,000
Fees & Dues	\$ 7,500	Watershed Soil Conservationist	\$ 100,000
Misc other Services & Charges	\$ 500	Buffer Assistance Grant	\$ 30,000
Postage	\$ 1,500	BWSR Project Grants	\$ 8,500
Professional Services	\$ 1,500	BWSR Service Grants	\$ 27,000
Public Education and Promotion	\$ 2,000	PERA Aid	\$ 850
Rent	\$ 37,500	CWF Cedar 1W1P	\$ 71,500
Leadership Staff Development	\$ 800	Root 1W1P - Headwaters Project Grant	\$ 9,000
Supervisor Expense	\$ 7,500	Bonding CIP Technical	\$ 35,000
Multi Media Expense (Network/Phone/Tracker)	\$ 14,000	Headwaters Watershed-Fillmore Grant	\$ 12,000
Network Infrastructure (server)	\$ 30,000	Local Capacity Grant	\$ 114,400
Workers Comp & Insurance	\$ 11,000	Interest Earnings	\$ 1,500
Field Expense	\$ 2,000	Employee Paid Insurance	\$ 15,473
Office Supplies	\$ 3,000	Workers Comp. Ins. Dividend	\$ 2,000
Service Contracts	\$ 1,500	Flag Sales	\$ 25
Vehicle Expense	\$ 8,000	Platbook Sales	\$ 200
Edge of Field- Monitoring Expenses	\$ 600	Seed Sales	\$ 23,000
Drill Expense	\$ 500	Tree Sales	\$ 40,000
Seed Expense	\$ 20,000	Total Revenues	\$ 993,833
Windbreak Cost share	\$ 2,500	Revenue from Equipment Fund Balance	\$ 30,000
Tree Expense	\$ 28,000	Total Revenues with Fund Balance \$	\$ 1,023,833
Vicon Seeder Expense	\$ 500		
State Cost Share	\$ 8,500	Total Revenues	\$ 993,833
		Revenue from Equipment Fund Balance	\$ 30,000
CWF Cedar 1W1P Expense	\$ 70,000	Total Revenues with Fund Balance \$	\$ 1,023,833
Total Misc Expenditures	\$ 268,100		
Total Expenditures	\$ 1,023,833	Expenditures	
		Compensation	\$ 695,471
		Capital Outlay	\$ 60,262
		Other Expenditures	\$ 268,100
		Total Expenditures	\$ 1,023,833
		Fund balance + or ()	\$ -