

**YELLOW MEDICINE  
SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION  
DISTRICT**

**ANNUAL REPORT**



2014

The following Annual Report for the Yellow Medicine Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) consists of a list of personnel and cooperating agencies, the goals of the district, a description of services provided and a narrative of the accomplishments for 2014.

**YELLOW MEDICINE SWCD SUPERVISORS**

|                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Burton Kuehn</b>    | <b>Chairperson</b>      |
| <b>Hollis Weber</b>    | <b>Vice Chairperson</b> |
| <b>Menno Fokken</b>    | <b>Secretary</b>        |
| <b>Jerry Nelson</b>    | <b>Treasurer</b>        |
| <b>Norris Peterson</b> | <b>Reporter</b>         |

**YELLOW MEDICINE SWCD STAFF**

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>Lou Ann Nagel</b> | <b>District Manager</b>                  |
| <b>Anita Borg</b>    | <b>District Administrative Assistant</b> |
| <b>Kurt Johnson</b>  | <b>District Engineer Technician</b>      |
| <b>Tyler Knutson</b> | <b>Farm Bill Assistant</b>               |

**COOPERATING AGENCIES**

**Board of Water & Soil Resources**

|                     |                              |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>John Jaschke</b> | <b>Director</b>              |
| <b>Dave Sill</b>    | <b>Board Conservationist</b> |
| <b>Kane Radel</b>   | <b>Wetland Specialist</b>    |

**USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service**

|                         |                                     |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Don Baloun</b>       | <b>State Conservationist</b>        |
| <b>Gary Watson</b>      | <b>Area Conservationist</b>         |
| <b>Desmond Glenn</b>    | <b>District Conservationist</b>     |
| <b>Jon Paul Pringle</b> | <b>Soil Conservation Technician</b> |

**Yellow Medicine County Commissioners**

|                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Ronald Antony</b> | <b>Canby</b>         |
| <b>Gary Johnson</b>  | <b>Montevideo</b>    |
| <b>Greg Renneke</b>  | <b>Echo</b>          |
| <b>Louis Sherlin</b> | <b>Canby</b>         |
| <b>John Berends</b>  | <b>Granite Falls</b> |

**Other Agencies**

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Peggy Heglund</b>  | <b>County Administrator</b>                |
| <b>Jolene Johnson</b> | <b>Planning &amp; Zoning Coordinator</b>   |
| <b>Liz Ludwig</b>     | <b>FSA County Director</b>                 |
| <b>Chris Balfany</b>  | <b>County Ditch Inspector</b>              |
| <b>Wendy Krueger</b>  | <b>DNR Wildlife Habitat Specialist</b>     |
| <b>Lucas Youngsma</b> | <b>DNR Area Hydrologist</b>                |
| <b>Alicia Webb</b>    | <b>MN Extension 4-HProgram Coordinator</b> |

The district, in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and other agencies, provide technical and financial assistance to individuals, groups, organizations, and governments in reducing costly waste of soil and water resulting from soil erosion, sedimentation, pollution and improper land use.

In 2014 the district provided the following:

- Tree planning, planting, and matting services.
- Technical assistance for the installation of conservation practices.
- A manager for the district.
- Assistance to other agencies in promoting programs concerning conservation.
- Promotion of educational activities in the district.
- Promotion and administration for the CREP/RIM/PWP and WRP/RIM Reserve Programs.
- Promotion and administration of Rock Outcrop Easement Program.
- Promotion and administration for the State Cost Share Program.
- Assistance to the county in implementing the Yellow Medicine County Water Plan.
- Administration for the Wetland Conservation Act of 1991.
- Promotion and administration for the Native Buffer Cost Share Program.
- Administration of the Rainfall Monitoring Program.
- Promotion and administration for the Ag Best Management Loan Program.
- Promotion and administration for the Blind Intake Program.
- Promotion and administration for the Working Lands Initiative Program.
- Promotion and administration for the Vegetative Management & Enhancement of Conservation Easements.
- Promotion and administration for the Clean Water Fund Drainage Program.
- Promotion and signup landowners for the Walk In Access Program.
- Annual and year end reporting in BWSR reporting system – reporting of progress of conservation practices through the BWSR webpage.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Yellow Medicine Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is to provide technical, financial, and educational support to the public for the purpose of conserving and protecting soil, water, and other natural resources.

The SWCD prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, family status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

This annual plan is written to implement the Yellow Medicine Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan which the Yellow Medicine Soil and Water Conservation District adopted as their comprehensive plan starting in 2004. The goals as defined in the Yellow Medicine County Water Management Plan for 2013 are as follows:

- Promote and Educate the Public on the District's Ongoing Programs.
- Protect and Improve the Soil Resources and Surface Water Quality in the County.  
Reduce erosion and sediment problems to sustainable levels by promoting the use of Best Management Practices (BMP's).
- To Enhance and Restore the County's Water Quality.  
Reduce priority pollutants to sustainable levels.
- Protect and Improve the Quality and Quantity of Groundwater in the County.  
Assist with wellhead protection planning.  
Support good land use decisions regarding groundwater resources and wellhead protection areas.  
Expand groundwater monitoring.
- Improve Surface Water Management to Decrease Flooding in the County.  
Minimize losses associated with the flooding of agricultural lands.
- Implement Sound Surface Water and Drainage Management Strategies in the County.  
Apply watershed based principles while properly managing drainage systems.
- Protect Surface Water Quantity in the County.  
Preserve existing wetlands and restore legally drained wetlands having potential for flood damage reduction, wildlife, recreational and groundwater recharge benefits, where practical.

## **SERVICES AND PROGRAMS**

- Tree Program – Design, Planting, and Mats
- State Cost-Share Program – Cost Share dollars available for installation of best management practices
- Vegetative Management & Enhancement of Conservation Easements Cost Share Program - This program provides cost share up to 100% with a maximum of \$300/acre to convert cool season grass stands to native grasses, or to enhance and inter-seed additional species into an existing native grass planting on eligible lands enrolled into certain conservation easements
- Blind Intake Program – Cost share available to replace existing open intakes with alternative intakes
- Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM), RIM Riparian Buffer Program, WRP/RIM Program, and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) – Permanent conservation easement programs
- Rock Outcrop Easement Program – RIM Program
- Education Programs
- DNR Well Monitoring - Monitor DNR observation wells throughout the County
- Water Permits - Process and review the DNR water permits
- Annual and Year End Reporting in BWSR Reporting System - Reporting of progress of conservation practices on the SWCD web page
- Wetland Conservation Act
- Ag BMP Loan Program
- Assist with Yellow Medicine County Local Water Plan. To view plan go to the Yellow Medicine County Website: [www.co.ym.mn.gov](http://www.co.ym.mn.gov). The link is located on the right side of the page.
- Engineering (survey, design, etc.)
- Walk In Access Program
- Rain Gauge Program
- Clean Water Fund Drainage Program
- Clean Water Fund Projects
- Yellow Medicine Watershed Restoration and Protection Project Strategy (WRAPS)
- Lac qui Parle Watershed Restoration and Projection Project Strategy (WRAPS)
- One Watershed One Plan

## GOAL & OBJECTIVES

### ***GOAL: PROVIDE FOR AN EFFICIENT DISTRICT OPERATION – Actions:***

1. Held regular board meetings the fourth Thursday of each month.
2. Developed budget, annual plan of work and annual report.
3. Staffed office with a District Manager, District Technician, District Administrative Assistant, and Farm Bill Technician.
4. Provided training for all personnel in order to carry out the SWCD's programs.
5. Conducted employee evaluations and updated job descriptions.
6. Supervisors reviewed policies and developed priorities.
7. Supervisors reviewed various memorandums of understanding.
8. Provided representation to various organizations, such as but not limited to: RCRC, Yellow Medicine County Water Task Force, Yellow Medicine Watershed Advisory Board, Yellow Medicine Watershed Clean Water Technical Committee, Lac qui Parle Yellow Bank Watershed Clean Water Technical Committee, Southwest Prairie Joint Powers Board, etc.
9. Utilized web based reporting system to report progress.
10. Utilized district website to publish annual plans/reports and other reports.
11. Convened stakeholder meetings and local work group meeting for establishing priorities for EQIP and other conservation programs.
12. Due to the fact that the SWCD currently has two Clean Water Fund Grants and the SWCD's staff will be spending time on the One Watershed One Plan for the Yellow Medicine River Watershed and the Aquatic Invasive Species Plan for the County, the SWCD decided not to apply for Clean Water Funds in 2014.
13. Installed all cost share practices according to standards and specifications required by the program.
14. Conducted State Cost Share spot checks as required by the program.
15. Participated in brainstorming meetings that established priorities and needs in all watersheds in the County.

### ***GOAL: PROMOTE & EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ON THE SWCD'S PROGRAMS – Action:***

1. **Goal - Publish 3 newsletters:** The SWCD did not publish any newsletters in 2014.
2. **Goal - Select a Conservation Farmer:** The Yellow Medicine Soil and Water Conservation District is pleased to announce Doug Albin, a Clarkfield native, as the 2014 Conservation Farmer of the Year. Albin has participated in several conservation efforts on his land. He has installed field windbreaks that reduce exposure to the harsh seasonal winds on his land along with vast improvements on a farmstead shelterbelt. Albin has performed a plethora of cropland management techniques that have included: soil sampling, split nitrogen applications on crop fields to avoid leaching and increase crop uptake, deep placement of phosphorus and potassium to ensure plant availability, site-specific tillage, utilization of nitrification inhibitors on fall applied nitrogen products, along with vigilant monitoring and mapping of all applications and fieldwork through GPS systems. He has employed several integrated pest management techniques on his crop land; full-field pest scouting, chemical spraying only as absolutely needed, cultural control methods along with biological control measures of removing pest habitat have been productive actions taken by Albin. He was the first to have a saturated buffer in the state of Minnesota and only third in the nation. Albin is proactive in buffering and stabilizing shorelines of all applicable streams as well. He has voluntarily maintained a wetland near his homestead for wildlife and water filtration purposes. Albin is an advocate for other landowners to enroll marginal acres into CRP; he also assists them in establishing CRP in addition to owning and managing dozens of CRP acres himself. Additionally, Albin has implemented a bioreactor to treat drainage into the Yellow Medicine River; thus, reducing nitrates in the tile drainage. He also installed terraces on contoured slopes, gully alleviation byway of water and sediment control basins along with obligating grassed waterways in long gully areas.
3. **Goal - Set up displays:** The SWCD, along with Redwood, Lac qui Parle and Lincoln SWCDs, developed the Farmfest display – “Water plus Shed = Watershed”. A display announcing the Southwest Minnesota Farm Water Management and Cover Crop Field Day and a display showing the growth of the SWCD was developed for the Yellow Medicine County Fair.

**GOAL: PROMOTE & EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ON THE SWCD'S PROGRAMS – Actions - Continued:**

4. **Goal - Work with the SWMACDE to co-sponsor an Environmental Fair for all 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> graders in Murray County.** Schools from Yellow Medicine County did not participate in this year's Environmental Fair since it was in Murray County. They typically only attend the fair when it is located in Marshall. Two Yellow Medicine SWCD staff members worked at the fair.
5. **Goal - Publish news articles to address conservation issues and concerns:** The SWCD published news articles, unfortunately not weekly. A paid ad was put in the local papers announcing the Women's Field Day. Another paid ad was published in the Spring Farm Edition.
6. **Goal – Make informational calls to landowners/operators regarding current programs:** Through the efforts of the SWCD staff, approximately 226 landowners were contacted one on one promoting the current SWCD and Federal programs. News articles, workshops and the SWCD website have been used to reach landowners in Yellow Medicine County.
7. **Goal - Assist and promote the SWMACDE Area Envirothon:** Letters were sent to all schools in the county inviting them to participate in the SWMACDE Area Envirothon. Unfortunately no school in the county wanted to participate this year. In fact, the Area V Envirothon was cancelled due to lack of participation.
8. **Goal - Assist Pezuta Zizi Environmental and Cultural Learning and Resource Center:** No contact was made in 2014.
9. **Goal - Meet with County FAC Committee:** The SWCD met periodically with the Farm Service Agency, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Extension Service and the Yellow Medicine County Zoning Office as needed to discuss building and/or county concerns.
10. **Goal – Assist the Yellow Medicine River Watershed District, the Lac qui Parle – Yellow Bank Watershed District and the Redwood Cottonwood River Control Area in their educational efforts:** The SWCD staff, when able, attended technical planning meetings for the Yellow Medicine River Watershed, and the Lac qui Parle River Watershed. A SWCD Supervisor attended Redwood Cottonwood River Control Area meetings.
11. **Goal - Hold SWCD Retreat:** The SWCD's staff and supervisors held a retreat on November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 to discuss the Yellow Medicine River Watershed's One Watershed One Plan and the SWCD's annual plan.
12. **Goal - Hold regular staff meetings:** Staff meetings were held regularly throughout the year.
13. **Goal - Develop promotional presentations:** Presentations were developed promoting a variety of SWCD program.
14. **Goal - Continue to maintain the SWCD's website:** The District Manager continued to update and maintain the SWCD's website.
15. **Goal – Meet with agencies/organizations to prioritize resource concerns, etc.:** The SWCD continued to meet with the Yellow Medicine Water Task Force, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, Yellow Medicine County Zoning Office, Lac qui Parle Watershed District and the Yellow Medicine Watershed District to discuss resource concerns. Resource concerns were addressed at the Local Work Group Meeting held for the Federal Environmental Quality Incentive Program on August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014.
16. **Goal – Work with SWCDs, Watersheds and County officials to discuss watershed based planning:** The SWCD, along with the Watershed Districts, the County, and surrounding SWCDs, applied for and received funding to complete a One Watershed One Plan for the Yellow Medicine River Watershed. A memorandum of agreement was signed by SWCDs and Counties in Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon and Yellow Medicine; along with the Yellow Medicine River Watershed District and Area II Minnesota River Basin Projects, Inc. Committees were developed and meetings were conducted. A consultant was selected to assist in development of the One Watershed One Plan document.

**GOAL: PROMOTE & EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ON THE SWCD'S PROGRAMS – Actions - Continued:**

- 17. Goal – Present at the Ag in the Classroom Event:** The Ag in the Classroom annual event was held on March 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. This year both 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students were invited to attend due to the fact that last year's event was cancelled due to bad weather. Roger Dale organizes this event and invites the SWCD to participate. Tyler Knutson and Kurt Johnson presented on trees and their benefits.

**GOAL - TO PROTECT AND IMPROVE THE SOIL RESOURCES AND SURFACE WATER QUALITY IN THE COUNTY**

**REDUCE EROSION AND SEDIMENT PROBLEMS TO SUSTAINABLE LEVELS BY PROMOTING THE USE OF BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPs).**

**Action:**

- 1. Goal - Promote Best Management Practices in the County:** The SWCD promoted Best Management Practices in the county by writing news articles, conducting presentations, and holding workshops in the county.
- 2. Goal- Reduce the amount of wind erosion on the most severely erodible acres by designing and planting 6,020 feet of field windbreaks and/or living snowfence:** The SWCD planted 2,545 feet of field windbreaks and/or living snowfence in 2014.

**Goal – Plant 10.2 acres of farmstead windbreaks:** The SWCD planted 15.9 acres of farmstead windbreaks in 2014.

**Goal – Install 38,066 feet of plastic mulch:** 36,169 feet of plastic mulch was installed and/or sold this year.

- 3. Goal - Reduce the amount of water erosion on severely eroded acres by installing 20 water and sediment control basins, 2 terrace systems and 3 grassed waterways:** The Natural Resource Conservation Service, along with the SWCD, funded and/or installed the following:
  - 10 Water & Sediment Control Basins
  - 4 terrace systems totaling 1,580 feet
  - 11.54 acres of Grassed Waterways

Funding for these practices was obtained through various agencies and/or programs, such as the Conservation Reserve Program and the Environmental Quality Incentive Program.

The SWCD, through the efforts of the SWCD Farm Bill Assistant, assisted the Farm Service Agency in promoting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) by promoting the installation of grassed waterways and/or installing other conservation practices.

The SWCD assisted the NRCS in promoting the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), and other aspects of the current Farm Bill.

- 4. Goal - Conduct status reviews on CREP and/or RIM Easements:** The SWCD conducted 58 CREP/RIM and 51 State Cost Share status reviews in 2014. 2 Easements were staked in 2014.
- 5. Goal - Establish 150 acres of filter strips/buffers:** 245.66 acres of filter strips/buffers were established through the Conservation Reserve Program and Conservation Stewardship Program.
- 6. Goal – Promote the Riparian Buffer Clean Water Fund RIM Reserve Program:** 5 applications were processed. None were funded.
- 7. Goal - Educate landowners/operators about erosion and sediment control, the importance of installing conservation practices and encourage enrollment into conservation programs by providing information and options about BMP's through newsletters, news releases and individual contacts:** The SWCD did not publish any newsletters in 2014 but wrote numerous articles promoting and educating landowners on the need to install conservation practices and enroll acreage into conservation programs. The SWCD also sent out direct mailings to individuals in the Florida Creek Watershed and the Curtis Lake Watershed.

## TO PROTECT AND IMPROVE THE SOIL RESOURCES AND SURFACE WATER QUALITY IN THE COUNTY

### REDUCE EROSION AND SEDIMENT PROBLEMS TO SUSTAINABLE LEVELS BY PROMOTING THE USE OF BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPs). Action: Continued

8. **Goal - Serve on the Southwest Prairie Joint Powers Board:** Menno Fokken served on the Southwest Prairie Joint Powers Board as Chairperson for 2014. The SWCD contributed \$1,000.00 towards the overall Joint Power's budget. The SWCD also contributed one half of the cash match (\$2,136.36) for completion of the Terrain Analysis.
9. **Goal - Continue to work with RCRCA on the Redwood River Clean Water Project:** The SWCD continued to work with RCRCA and the SWCDs in the Redwood Watershed to promote conservation. Burton Kuehn serves on the RCRCA Board.
10. **Goal – Restore 50 acres of wetlands into a conservation program:** 325.41 CRP acres of wetlands were enrolled/reenrolled in various conservation programs.
11. **Goal – Replace open intakes with alternative intakes:** In 2014, fifteen open tile intakes were replaced with dense pattern tile utilizing 2012 and 2013 Clean Water Drainage Funds.
12. **Goal – Promote and enroll acres into the Vegetative Management and Enhancement of Conservation Easement Cost Share Program:** Worked with 2 landowners to improve cover on 40 acres on their Easements.
13. **Goal – Work with Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Brown, Nicollet, Redwood and Renville SWCDs to apply for funds to protect Granite Rock Outcrop and Native Prairie Remnants in the Minnesota River Valley:** Unfortunately, a LCCMR grant was not obtained to protect additional Granite Rock Outcrop Areas or Native Prairie Remnants in the Minnesota River Valley,
14. **Goal – Process fifteen (15) RIM/WRP Easements:** The SWCD assisted with processing 7 RIM/WRP Easements. The Farm Bill Assistant continued to promote and encourage enrollment into future WRP/RIM signups.
15. **Goal – Apply for Conservation Corp Apprentice:** The 2014 Conservation Corp Apprentice was Joey Ferber. Joey assisted in conducting status reviews for Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), RIM Rock Outcrop, and/or Wetland Reserve Program/RIM easements. He also assisted with the SWCD Tree Program by planting trees for conservation purposes and installing tree fabric for better weed control and moisture retention. Joey went through RIM/CREP Easements and updated the folders and started developing new aerial photos.

## ENHANCE AND RESTORE THE COUNTY'S WATER QUALITY

### REDUCE PRIORITY POLLUTANTS TO SUSTAINABLE LEVELS.

#### Action:

1. **Goal - Work with MPCA to get waters off the Clean Water Act's Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) 303d list of impaired waters:** The SWCD worked with their partners to help get the Minnesota River Basin, Redwood Watershed, Lac qui Parle Watershed and the Yellow Medicine Watershed off the Clean Water Act's TMDL list of impaired waters.
2. **Goal - Continue to support the upgrading of Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems (SSTS):** The SWCD administered the Ag BMP Loan Program for the county, offering loans to fix fourteen (14) non-conforming Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems. The SWCD sought technical assistance from the Yellow Medicine County Zoning Office staff to determine if projects were eligible and submitted applications to local lenders.
3. **Goal - Assist in planning and installing Ag Waste Systems:** No ag waste systems were fixed in 2014.
4. **Goal – Work with other agencies to discuss developing watershed plans and identifying priority areas and projects in the Yellow Medicine River Watershed, Lac qui Parle River Watershed and the Redwood River Watershed:** The SWCD worked with both the Yellow Medicine River Watershed and the Lac qui Parle River Watershed with their WRAPs planning, as well as attend their meetings to develop goals and objectives for each watershed.



## ENHANCE AND RESTORE THE COUNTY'S WATER QUALITY

### REDUCE PRIORITY POLLUTANTS TO SUSTAINABLE LEVELS.

#### Action:

5. **Goal – Work with Yellow Medicine Watershed District to provide information for the Yellow Medicine River Watershed Restoration and Protection Project Strategy (WRAPS).** The SWCD worked with the Yellow Medicine River Watershed District, and the Lincoln and Lyon SWCDs to provide information for the Yellow Medicine River Wetland Restoration and Protection Project. This process identifies priority areas and concerns in the Yellow Medicine River Watershed.
6. **With data from MPCA HSPF Modeling of the Yellow Medicine Watershed, identify at risk areas and landowners:** Tyler Knutson served on the Yellow Medicine Watershed District Technical Committee that identified scenarios for HSPF Modeling for the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies Plan.
7. **Work with Lac qui Parle Watershed District and surrounding SWCDs to provide information for the Lac qui Parle Watershed Restoration and Protection Project Strategy (WRAPS):** Attended Lac qui Parle Watershed District meetings to discuss and provide information for the Lac qui Parle Watershed Restoration and Projection Strategy.
8. **Assist in implementing a Clean Water Targeted Watershed Demonstration for the Upper Yellow Medicine River and South Branch Yellow Medicine River Sub-Watershed if funded.** Unfortunately, the Upper Yellow Medicine River and South Branch Yellow Medicine River Sub-Watershed were not selected for the Clean Water Targeted Watershed Demonstration Funding.

## PROTECT AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF GROUNDWATER IN THE COUNTY

### EXPAND GROUNDWATER MONITORING.

#### Action:

1. **Goal - Monitor three (3) groundwater observation wells designated by DNR:** The SWCD entered into a contract with DNR to monitor three groundwater observation wells.
2. **Goal - Comment on DNR water permits:** The SWCD commented on DNR water permits as requested.
3. **Goal - Encourage testing of wells in order to identify the extent of groundwater pollution problems:** The SWCD encouraged testing of wells.
4. **Goal - Encourage sealing of abandoned wells:** The SWCD, along with the Yellow Medicine County Planning & Zoning Coordinator, encouraged sealing of abandoned wells in the county. Funds were obtained through the Water Plan for assistance in sealing abandoned wells.
5. **Goal - Participate in the state rainfall-monitoring program with thirteen (13) rainfall monitors to record daily precipitation:** The SWCD participated in the state's rainfall monitoring program. Yellow Medicine County currently has fourteen (14) rainfall monitors that record precipitation daily. These reports were sent monthly to the State Climatologist.
6. **Goal - Work with Yellow Medicine Water Task Force to educate the public on sensitive groundwater areas and promote proper use of management to protect these areas:** Wrote articles for the August 2014 Water Task Force Newsletter.

## IMPROVE SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT TO DECREASE FLOODING IN THE COUNTY

### MINIMIZE LOSSES ASSOCIATED WITH THE FLOODING OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS.

#### Action:

1. **Goal - Address the smaller flood events, such as 2 and 5 year events, by restoring 50 acres of wetlands through various conservation programs:** 325.41 acres of wetlands were enrolled/re-enrolled into various conservation programs.
2. **Goal - Take flood prone land along rivers, streams and/or waterways out of crop production:** The SWCD assisted in processing 7 WRP/RIM Easements. There are still another 4 WRP/RIM Easements left to process.

**IMPROVE SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT TO DECREASE FLOODING IN THE COUNTY  
MINIMIZE LOSSES ASSOCIATED WITH THE FLOODING OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS.**

**Action:**

3. **Goal - Work with Area II, RCRCA, Watersheds, and surrounding counties to assess, prioritize, and pursue funding through various agencies for water storage opportunities.** The SWCD worked with all of our partners to minimize flooding. The SWCD accompanied Area II in conducting the annual inspection on the Fales-VanHyfte Dam (Lake John).
4. **Goal - Cooperate with Lac qui Parle Yellow Bank Watershed District, the Yellow Medicine Watershed District, the Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Area, and the 639 Study Areas concerning flooding in the county:** The SWCD worked closely with the above organizations to address flooding issues in the county.
5. **Goal - Work with Area II, RCRCA, the Lac qui Parle Watershed District, the Yellow Medicine Watershed Districts, landowners and the county to seek funding for streambank stabilization projects where needed and feasible:** The Southwest Prairie Technical Service Area engineer and technician looked at sites needing streambank stabilization.

**IMPLEMENT SOUND SURFACE WATER AND DRAINAGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN THE COUNTY  
APPLY WATERSHED BASED PRINCIPLES WHILE PROPERLY MANAGING DRAINAGE SYSTEMS.**

**Actions:**

1. **Goal - Seek funds to repair small dams in the county:** Several were reviews for urgent needs.
2. **Goal –Replace open intakes with alternative intakes; such as dense pattern tile and risers:** Fifteen (15) open tile intakes were replaced with dense pattern tile systems in 2014.
3. **Goal – Administer the 2012 Conservation Drainage Grant for the Lower Yellow Medicine River Sub-Watershed by:** The SWCD requested and received approval to amend the 2012 CWF Drainage grant to include two adjacent watersheds and to extend the grant completion date to December 31, 2015. Individual letters were sent to landowners in the two adjacent watersheds informing them of this funding opportunity.
4. **Goal – Administer the 2013 CWF Target Drainage Water Management Grant on behalf of Lac qui Parle and Yellow Medicine SWCDs:**
  - a. One landowner cancelled his contract to develop a CAP130 Plan. His technical service provider said he did not need a CAP 130 plan for what he was planning on installing.
  - b. Offered up to 75% cost share to install fifteen (15) control drainage structures improving water quality in the MN River Watershed within the boundaries of Yellow Medicine and Lac qui Parle Counties.
  - c. Offered up to 75% cost share to replace fourteen (14) open surface tile inlets with dense pattern tile systems reducing sediment and phosphorus loads thus improving water quality.
5. **Goal - Educate landowners/operators on the importance of keeping buffers in place to protect the drainage ditch systems and concerns about farming right next to the ditch systems in the county:** Educated the public on the need to maintain the minimum one-rod grassed areas as it applies to the drainage policy. Also encouraged landowners to enroll their riparian buffer areas into a conservation program establishing filter strips on these areas.

**PROTECT SURFACE WATER QUANTITY IN THE COUNTY**

**PRESERVE EXISTING WETLANDS AND RESTORE LEGALLY DRAINED WETLANDS HAVING POTENTIAL FOR FLOOD DAMAGE REDUCTION, WILDLIFE, RECREATIONAL, AND GROUNDWATER RECHARGE BENEFITS, WHERE PRACTICAL.**

**Actions:**

1. **Goal - Administer the 1991 Wetland Conservation Act (WCA):** Yellow Medicine County appointed the SWCD as the local government unit to administer the Wetland Conservation Act and the rules of the Board of Water and Soil Resources adopted under the act. The SWCD served as chair of the WCA Technical Panel. In 2014, 28 hours of training were obtained for the District Technician; staff spent over 109.5 hours administering WCA; made over 496 landowner contacts; 175 tiling requests; 136 building and zoning requests; 47 on-site investigations; received 5 basic applications; made 4 decisions; 5 potential violations were investigated; and 26 drainage maintenance were approved.