



YELLOW MEDICINE  
SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

**Clarkfield, Minnesota**

# **2016 ANNUAL REPORT**

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 2016.

### **YELLOW MEDICINE SWCD SUPERVISORS**

<b>Hollis Weber</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>
<b>Menno Fokken</b>	<b>Vice Chairperson</b>
<b>Jerry Nelson</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Burton Kuehn</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
<b>Darwyn Bach</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>District Conservation Technician</b>
<b>Ian A. Olson</b>	<b>Farm Bill Assistant</b>

### **COOPERATING AGENCIES**

#### **Board of Water & Soil Resources**

<b>John Jaschke</b>	<b>Director</b>
<b>Jason Beckler</b>	<b>Board Conservationist</b>
<b>Kane Radel</b>	<b>Wetland Specialist</b>

#### **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service**

<b>Catherine Pullman</b>	<b>State Conservationist</b>
<b>Gary Watson</b>	<b>Area Conservationist</b>
<b>Danielle Waldschmidt</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>Amber Knutson</b>	<b>DNR Wildlife Habitat Specialist</b>
<b>Lucas Youngsma</b>	<b>DNR Area Hydrologist</b>
<b>Alicia Webb</b>	<b>MN Extension 4-H Program 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 2016 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 Reserve Programs.
- 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.
- 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 Clean Water Fund Grants.
- Promotion and signup landowners for the Walk in Access Program.
- Administration of DNR Observation Well Monitoring Program.
- Development of Yellow Medicine Watershed One Watershed One Plan
- Administration of Minnesota Buffer Law
- Administration of Soil Loss Law
- 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 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 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 Quality in the County
  - Implement Yellow Medicine County Aquatic Invasive Species Plan
- 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
- 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)
- Yellow Medicine Watershed - One Watershed One Plan
- Aquatic Invasive Species Program

## GOAL & OBJECTIVES

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

1. Held regular board meetings the fourth Thursday of each month.
2. Developed a budget, annual plan of work and annual report.
3. Staffed a District Manager, District Technician, District Conservation Technician, District Administrative Assistant, and Farm Bill Assistant Technician.
4. Held regular staff meetings
5. Provided and sought training for all personnel in order to carry out the SWCD's programs.
6. Conducted annual employee evaluations and updated job descriptions.
7. Reviewed policies and developed priorities.
8. Reviewed various memorandums of understanding.
9. Provided representation to various organizations, such as but not limited to: Yellow Medicine Watershed Policy Committee, RCRC, Yellow Medicine County Water Task Force, Yellow Medicine River Watershed Advisory Board, Yellow Medicine River Watershed Clean Water Technical Committee, Lac qui Parle Yellow Bank Watershed Clean Water Technical Committee, Southwest Prairie Joint Powers Board, Lac qui Parle Watershed WRAPS committees, One Watershed One Plan for Yellow Medicine Watershed committees, Yellow Medicine Watershed WRAPS committees, etc.
10. Utilized web based reporting system to report progress.
11. Utilized district website to publish annual and other reports.
12. The SWCD applied for Clean Water Funds with One Watershed One Plan partners. The Clean Water grant was not funded.
13. Installed cost share practices according to standards and specifications required by the program.
14. Conducted annual status reviews for CREP/RIM, State Cost Share and Clean Water Fund Projects.

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

1. **Goal – Published newsletters:** A SWCD newsletter was published in February covering Soil Health Workshops, Drainage Water Management, Easement Signup and Cover Crops.
2. **Goal - Select a conservation farmer:** Charles and Marla Timm were nominated as the 2016 Yellow Medicine SWCD Conservationist of the year.
3. **Goal – Work with SWMACDE to co-sponsor for Environmental Fair for all 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> graders in a 14 county area:** The Environmental Fair for all 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders in a 14 county area was held on September 22 and 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Murray County Fairgrounds. No schools from Yellow Medicine County participated this year. They participate when it is held in Marshall every other year.
4. **Goal – Publish news articles to address conservation issues and concerns:** News articles were written throughout the year addressing conservation issues and concerns. A paid advertisement was put in the Advocate Tribune's Spring Farm Focus Edition. A paid advertisement was put in a Land Stewardship Publication on the Ag Water Quality Certification Program.
5. **Goal – Contact landowners/operators regarding current programs:** In 2016, the Yellow Medicine SWCD made direct contact about specific conservation programs with 197 different landowners.
6. **Goal – Assist and promote the SWMACDE Area Envirothon:** Due to lack of participation for the last several years, SWCDs in Area V opted not to promote an Area Envirothon in 2016.

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

7. **Goal – Work with Pezuta Zizi Environmental and Cultural Learning and Resource Center:** The Pezuta Zizi Environmental and Cultural Learning and Resource Center used our Enviroscope Display.

- 8. Goal – Meet with county FAC Committee during year to discuss resource concerns and building issues:** Periodic FAC meetings were held in 2016 to discuss resource concerns, building concerns, etc.
- 9. Goal – Assist Yellow Medicine River Watershed, Lac qui Parle -Yellow Bank Watershed District and the Redwood Cottonwood River Control Area and Area II in their educational efforts:** The SWCD continued to work closely with the Yellow Medicine River Watershed District to promote the One Watershed One Plan. We also worked with the Lac qui Parle Yellow Bank Watershed District with their educational efforts.
- 10. Goal – Hold SWCD retreat to discuss goals and objectives:** A retreat was held on November 30, 2016 with participation from both staff and supervisors. The focus of discussion was the future staffing needs of the SWCD to accommodate future programming.
- 11. Goal – Develop promotional presentations, tours and/or education activities for local organizations in the county:** The third annual Women’s Day Event, entitled “Backyard, Bees, Buffers & Beyond” was hosted by the Yellow Medicine SWCD, NRCS & FSA on July 14, 2016 at the Clarkfield City Building. Speakers included Dr. Dan Cariveau, bee specialist with the U of M; Danielle Waldschmidt, District Conservationist with YM NRCS, speaking on backyards and butterflies, along with NRCS programs; Lou Ann Nagel, YM SWCD District Manager, spoke regarding the new Buffer Law; and Liz Ludwig, FSA, shared info regarding FSA programs. The event was attended by approximately 20 people. The YM SWCD provided complimentary drink cups to all participants and door prizes were awarded.
- 12. Goal – Continue to maintain the SWCD’s website:** The District Manager maintained and updated the SWCD’s website monthly.
- 13. Goal – Meet with other agencies and organizations to prioritize resource concerns, setting goals, and objectives:** The SWCD attended the Local Work Group Meeting which was held on June 23, 2016 in Clarkfield to review NRCS’s programs and concerns. The SWCD also is part of the Policy and/or Work Group for the One Watershed One Plan for the Yellow Medicine Watershed and our setting goals and objectives for that plan.
- 14. Goal – Work with SWCDs, Watersheds, and County Officials to develop watershed based planning:** The SWCD served on the Policy Committee, Advisory Committee and Technical Committee for the One Watershed One Plan for the Yellow Medicine Watershed.
- 15. Goal – Present at the Ag in the Classroom event:** The Ag in the Classroom was held on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016. This event is organized by Roger Dale. Ian A Olson played an AIS trivia game with the 4<sup>th</sup> graders in attendance.
- 16. Goal – Promote Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Plan:** The above mentioned AIS trivia game was developed by District staff to help educate youth in a fun and interactive way on the effect of aquatic invasive species on our waterways. The District purchased traffic counters for the counties public accesses to help determine highest traffic areas. This will help staff assess where the strongest focus will need to go for future AIS prevention. In addition, holders were purchased to be distributed with fishing licenses. These vinyl holders promoted AIS prevention and the Yellow Medicine Soil and Water District.

**PRIORITY CONCERN: EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL**

**GOAL: TO PROTECT & IMPROVE THE SOIL RESOURCES AND SURFACE WATER QUALITY IN THE COUNTY.**

**OBJECTIVE: Reduce erosion and sediment problems to sustainable levels by promoting the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs).**

**ACTIONS:**

- 1. Goal - Promote Best Management Practices in the County.** Best management practices were promoted through efforts of the NRCS and the SWCD.
- 2. Goal – Reduce the amount of wind erosion on the most severely erodible acres by designing and planting field windbreaks, living snowfence, wildlife plantings, and farmstead windbreaks in 2016:** The SWCD planted 2,192 feet of field windbreaks and 17.42 acres of farmstead windbreaks. The SWCD also installed/and or sold 29,102 feet of plastic mulch.
- 3. Goal – Reduce the amount of water erosion on severely eroded acres by installing best management practices:** Through the efforts of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Southwest Technical Service Area and the SWCD, best management practices have been installed to reduce the amount of water erosion on severely eroded areas as follows:
  - 2 water & sediment control basins
  - 0 terrace systems
  - 0 acres of grassed waterwaysFunding for these practices was obtained through the State Cost Share 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 staff conducted site inspections on 130 easements.
- 5. Goal – Work with local technical team to implement the MN Prairie Conservation Plan:** Farm Bill Technician, Ian Olson participated with the MN River and Prairie Choteau local technical teams.
- 6. Goal – Establish filter strips/buffers along ditches and stream to capture sediment as it leaves the fields:** Through CRP, 708.58 acres of CRP CP-21 filter strips were established on 155 Yellow Medicine County and surrounding tracts administered by the Clarkfield FSA Field Office. Most of these were the result of SWCD promotion and conservation planning.
- 7. Goal - Educate landowners/operators about erosion and sediment control and 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:** Education efforts were accomplished by writing news articles for local papers, Water Plan newsletters and SWCD newsletters. Workshops were also held.
- 8. Goal - Serve on the Southwest Prairie Technical Service Joint Powers Board.** SWCD contributed \$3,800 towards the Southwest Prairie Technical Services's overall budget. Supervisor Menno Fokken served as the Chair for the Southwest Prairie Technical Service Joint Powers Board. He attended meetings throughout the year.

**PRIORITY CONCERN: EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL**

**GOAL: TO PROTECT & IMPROVE THE SOIL RESOURCES AND SURFACE WATER QUALITY IN THE COUNTY.**

**OBJECTIVE: Reduce erosion and sediment problems to sustainable levels by promoting the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) – cont.**

**ACTIONS Continued:**

9. **Goal –Work with RCRCRA on improving water quality in Redwood River Watershed.** Supervisor Burton Kuehn served his final year on the RCRCRA committee making decision for the Redwood River Watershed.
10. **Goal - Restore wetlands into various conservation programs.** 427.26 acres of hydric soils were restored to wetland vegetation through CRP and also enrolled 1,709.05 acres of contiguous buffer around those hydric soils.
11. **Goal - Replace open intakes with alternative intakes, such as dense pattern tile and risers, thus reducing phosphorus and sediment throughout the county.** No intakes replaced in 2016.
12. **Goal - Promote and enroll acres into the Vegetative Management and Enhancement of Conservation Easement Cost Share Program.** Worked with landowners to improve existing cover on RIM/CREP acres.
13. **Goal – Apply for Conservation Corp Apprentice:** The SWCD applied for a Conservation Corp Apprentice in the fall of 2015. Garrett Wee from Cottonwood served as the Conservation Corp Apprentice in 2016. Garrett had the opportunity to work with farmers to conserve and protect our natural resources. Some of the knowledge Garrett obtained through this experience included: tree varieties, methods of planting trees and tree care and maintenance; the State of Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act; native plants; aquatic invasive species in Minnesota;
14. **Goal – Develop guidelines for Soil Loss Law:** The SWCD is awaiting more Buffer Law progress before implementing.
15. **Goal – Implement the Minnesota Buffer Law:** Roughly 70% compliance with the Buffer Law has been achieved at year end.



**PRIORITY CONCERN: REDUCING PRIORITY POLLUTANTS**

**GOAL: ENHANCE AND RESTORE THE COUNTY'S WATER QUALITY**

**OBJECTIVE: Reduce priority pollutants to sustainable levels.**

**ACTIONS:**

- 1. Goal – Work with MPCA to get impaired waters off the Clean Water Act's Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) 303d list of impaired waters.** The SWCD continues to promote the implementation of best management practices to help improve waters in the county that are listed on the MPCA's Impaired Waters of the State. The SWCD also has representation on the Yellow Medicine WRAPS Committee, and the Lac qui Parle WRAPS Committee that works with getting impaired waters off this list.
- 2. Goal - Support the upgrading of Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems (SSTS) by administering the Ag BMP Loan Program.** The SWCD administered the Ag BMP Loan Program for the county. Loans offered through the program replaced 7 non-conforming Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems (SSTS) and replaced 2 wells in 2016. 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 in 2016.** The SWCD did not assist with installation of any ag waste systems in 2016.
- 4. Goal - Work with SWCDs and Counties in Lincoln, Lyon, Lac qui Parle and Yellow Medicine, along with the Yellow Medicine Watershed District and Area II, to develop the One Watershed One Plan for the Yellow Medicine River Watershed.** The SWCD had a representative on the Policy Committee, Advisory Committee, Technical Committee and the Local Work Plan Committee. The SWCD put in numerous hours working on developing of this plan. The Yellow Medicine River Watershed One Watershed One Plan will be adopted in 2017.
- 5. Goal - Work with Lac qui Parle Watershed District to provide information for the Lac qui Parle River Watershed Restoration and Protection Project Strategy (WRAPs).** Both Lou Ann Nagel and Tyler Knutson attended the Lac qui Parle River Watershed WRAPS meetings.

**PRIORITY CONCERN: GROUNDWATER PROTECTION**

**GOAL: PROTECT AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF GROUNDWATER IN THE COUNTY**

**OBJECTIVE: Expand Groundwater Monitoring.**

**ACTIONS:**

- 1. Goal - Monitor three (3) groundwater observation wells designated by DNR:** The SWCD monitored three groundwater observation wells throughout the year.
- 2. Goal - Comment on DNR water permits:** Comments were made on DNR water permits when requested.
- 3. Goal - Encourage testing of wells in order to identify the extent of groundwater pollution problems:** Testing of wells are encouraged.
- 4. Goal - Encourage sealing of abandoned wells:** The SWCD continues to promote the County's well sealing program.
- 5. Goal - Participate in the state rainfall-monitoring program with 10 rainfall monitors to record daily precipitation:** The SWCD participated in the state's rainfall monitoring program. Yellow Medicine County currently has ten (10) 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:** Ian Olson attended a groundwater workshop in August.

**PRIORITY CONCERN: IMPROVE SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT TO DECREASE FLOODING IN THE COUNTY**

**GOAL: IMPLEMENT SOUND FLOOD MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES.**

**OBJECTIVE: *Minimize losses associated with the flooding of agricultural lands***

**ACTIONS:**

- 1. Goal - Address the smaller flood events, such as 2 year and 5 year events, by restoring wetlands through various conservation programs. Target sites within the watersheds to achieve strategic flood storage in conjunction with water quality and wildlife benefits.** 427.26 acres of hydric soils were restored to wetland vegetation through CRP and also enrolled 1,709.05 acres of contiguous buffer around those hydric soils.
- 2. Goal - Take flood prone land along rivers, streams and/or waterways out of crop production by encouraging enrollment into land retirement programs, such as CRP, RIM, WRP, etc., and applying best management practices to those areas.** About 140.42 acres of CRP filter strips, wetland and WRP/RIM acres will have a positive effect on stabilizing and buffering the 100 year floodplain.
- 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 Area concerning flooding in the county. Assist with flood damage recordings.** The SWCD worked closely with the above organizations to address flooding issues in the county.
- 5. Goal - Work with Area II, RCRCA, Watersheds, landowners and the county to seek funding for streambank stabilization projects where needed and feasible.** No funds were sought in 2016 for streambank stabilization projects.

**PRIORITY CONCERN: SURFACE WATER AND DRAINAGE MANAGEMENT**

**GOAL: IMPLEMENT SOUND SURFACE WATER AND DRAINAGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

**OBJECTIVE: *Apply watershed-based principles in properly managing drainage systems.***

**ACTIONS:**

- 1. Goal - Seek funds to repair small dams in the county that were previously constructed by landowners, Area II, SWCD, and/or NRCS.** No small dams were repaired in 2016.
- 2. 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 water courses in the county. Maintain the minimum one-rod grassed areas as it applies to drainage policy.** Encouraged landowners to enroll their riparian buffer areas into a conservation program establishing filter strips on these areas.

**PRIORITY CONCERN: SURFACE WATER QUALITY**

**GOAL: IMPLEMENT YELLOW MEDICINE COUNTY AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PLAN**

**OBJECTIVE: Prevent the introduction and spread of Aquatic Invasive Species within Yellow Medicine County**

**ACTIONS:**

- 1. Goal - Assess pathways and vulnerabilities to Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) in Yellow Medicine County:** The SWCD installed counters and signs at the following sites: Curtis Lake Access, Del Clark Lake Accesses (By boat landing and by beach), Kinney Access in Minnesota Falls, Lake John Access in Norman, Memorial Park Access in Granite Falls, Roe Access in Stony Run East, Spellman Lake Access in Normania, Timm Lake Access in Posen, Tyson Lake Access in Posen, and Wood Lake Access in Wood Lake. Revised and updated AIS Plan for 2016.
- 2. Goal - Increase public awareness of AIS:** Conducted research on AIS threats such as: how close threats are to Yellow Medicine County; how they move; background info about them; and ways to prevent the spread of AIS. Compiled an organized informational data base. Reviewed list and map of current recorded AIS infestation. Sent out newsletter on AIS and prevention. Developed and played AIS trivia game at Ag in the Classroom. All schools in YMC except Echo participated. Reached approximately 300 students. Working with YME teacher, Jake Sutter, to develop a monitoring site program with senior high students from YME and Canby.
- 3. Goal - Participate in AIS preventions, early detection and rapid response.** The SWCD purchased traffic counters for public access sites. These counters were installed in 2016 and will be rotated on a two year cycle.

**PRIORITY CONCERN: SURFACE QUANTITY IN THE COUNTY**

**GOAL: PROTECT SURFACE WATER QUANTITY IN THE COUNTY**

**OBJECTIVE: 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 - Educate and 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 2016 the SWCD spent a total of \$9,716.23 and matched it with another \$9,716.23 to complete the following:
  - 125 1026's approved
  - 30 1026's approved with restrictions
  - 1 1026's denied
  - 8 COE/DNR maintenance requests
  - 101 Building permits approved
  - 2 Building permits approved with restrictions
  - 10 On site investigations conducted
  - 78 Contacts without decisionsIn 2016, staff spent 472 hours administering this program. Of those hours, 26 hours were training hours for Kurt Johnson.