

# OLMSTED SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT



Photos courtesy  
of NRCS

## 2011 ANNUAL PLAN



## **I. MISSION STATEMENT:**

The mission of the Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District is to promote sustainable resource utilization and protection of natural resources in the County. The District assists farmers, communities, watershed planners and landowners in developing and implementing conservation and resource management systems and practices. The District also serves as a source for conservation and resource information and provides environmental education for county residents.

## **II. INTRODUCTION:**

The purpose of Olmsted SWCD's Annual Plan is to provide guidance and direction to the District staff and supervisors for the goals and mission set forth by Olmsted SWCD. The Annual Plan is the "working plan" for the District and is utilized through the comprehensive plan for determining important program applications, staffing, and financial requirements for District Operation.

## **OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 1:**

The Water Management Plan for Olmsted County will be the main objective for the District. Connected with this item is the County's land use plan that has water quality elements. It will assist the Zumbro Watershed Partnership in identifying key sub-watersheds in the County that are of concern and in working with their water management goals, providing technical assistance to the Whitewater Watershed and to begin to address its role in the targeted Root River Watershed. The District will serve and function as a cooperative technical agency for these major watersheds.

### **ACTIONS:**

1. Bear Creek, Cascade Creek, South Zumbro and the Lake Shady watersheds have been identified as potential sub-watersheds, assist in developing an organizational structure that can focus on their management needs.
2. Assist these watersheds in developing an organizational structure, finding partners with similar interest and objectives to further the watershed effort. The partners will include organizations and consultants to assist in the process.
3. Serve its technical role with the SE MN Joint Powers Board, the Olmsted County Environmental Commission and state programs such as BALMM.
4. Continue to provide technical assistance through the State Cost Share Program and administer the Reinvest in Minnesota Program.
5. Promote the Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program to address failing septic systems, no-till equipment, land use practices that include upland treatment measures, livestock exclusions and feedlot abatement systems, and ag-waste systems.
6. Serve in its role as a cooperative technical agency with Olmsted County and the City of Rochester for storm water management and suburban erosion control.

### **WORK LOAD ANALYSIS:**

Implementation of this objective will require 30% of total administrative, technical, and clerical staff hours for 2011.

## **OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 2:**

A mission of the County is to promote sustainable resource utilization and protection of natural resources in the County. The district will provide assistance to all landholders to reduce erosion in the upland landscapes and the riparian floodplains adjacent to the streams. A reduction in pollution delivery to streams is also part of this objective.

### **ACTIONS:**

1. Control erosion by promoting upland practices where they apply and assist in their implementation through both the state and federal cost share program.
2. Identify the riparian areas that are not meeting the buffer requirements for streams and assist the landowners with compliance requirements of the County and State ordinance.
3. Identify frequently flooded riparian areas that have been taken over by invasive woody vegetation, display significant stream bank erosion. Encourage the re-establishment of native prairie vegetation.
4. Serve as a cooperative technical agency to both the City and County/Townships in conducting plat reviews and site inspections for all proposed developments with emphasis of controlling both runoff and erosion.
5. Administer and implement the elements of the County Soil Erosion ordinance for both suburban development and rural activities.
6. Promote AGBMP/SRF loan funding for soil and water conservation practices, no-till equipment and ag-waste systems.
7. Promote both the State and Federal Programs (that assist in the expenses relating to all assistance programs).
8. Identify and promote the use of perennial alternative crops that provide permanent cover in buffer areas and in key riparian corridors.

### **WORK LOAD ANALYSIS:**

It is anticipated that the achievement of this goal will take up to 25% of total administrative, technical and clerical staff hours for 2011.

### **OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 3:**

Carry out District responsibilities as the Local Government Unit (LGU) for implementation of the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) of 1991.

#### **ACTIONS:**

1. Provide assistance to the county, municipalities, and landowners on the implementation of WCA rules and regulations.
2. Provide technical assistance with affiliated agencies on WCA issues, i.e. DNR (Department of Natural Resources), FWS (Fish and Wildlife Service), ACOE (Army Corps of Engineers), BWSR (Board of Water and Soil Resource), NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service), MPCA (Minnesota Pollution Control Agency), and County Government.
3. Administer and provide technical assistance in the implementation of the State Permanent Wetland Preserve Program.
4. Provide wetland conservation information to cooperators, including banking opportunities, educational programs, newsletters, and conservation planning.
5. Provide technical assistance for cease and desist orders. Assist landowners with development of restoration/replacement plans within WCA regulations.
6. Integrate GIS and GPS into the above activities of the District.

#### **WORKLOAD ANALYSIS:**

WCA is consuming an increasing amount of staff time, and it is anticipated that WCA activities will take up to 30% of total administrative, technical, and clerical staff hours for 2011.

#### **OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 4:**

It is the objective of the District to maintain existing programs, which have proven effective; and develop new and progressive conservation and educational programs, in the areas of environmental stewardship and natural resource management.

#### **ACTIONS:**

1. Provide for sale the plat book for Olmsted County based on year 2010 data. Price is \$35.00 per book.
2. Continue the Tree and Shrub Sales Program in support of other District Programs for individual landowners.
3. Sell native grass and forb seed to area landowners.
4. Cooperate with DNR and the Zumbro Valley Woodland Council for native tree and shrub seed collection for state nursery propagation. Promote and provide technical assistance to landowners on forestry stewardship.
5. Provide maintenance for the Fugles Mill Plant Materials Center (NRCS). This facility is located in Olmsted County and provides local education and recreation opportunities. The site is scheduled for a native ecosystem restoration due to the completion of NRCS studies on native grass plots. Additional signage and a new brochure are planned as the site restoration and county road construction are complete.
6. Promote vegetated buffers on highly erodible land, riparian zones, wetland restorations, and groundwater protection zones. The District shall cooperate with Hiawatha Valley Resource & Development for a demonstration pilot grazing program in riparian and nonriparian landscape areas.
7. Continue to maintain the precipitation monitoring program-utilizing volunteers in the County.
8. Provide consulting services for landowners in the preservation and restoration of native prairie on private lands through the Minnesota Prairie Stewardship Planning Assistance Program.
9. Integrate GIS and GPS into the above activities of the District.
10. Promote Federal Conservation Programs.
11. Identify and/or nominate either an outstanding conservation farmer or community developer that has established a complete system of conservation or water management practices with an award to be made at the annual state convention.

#### **WORK LOAD ANALYSIS:**

It is anticipated that the achievement of this goal will take up to 10% of total administrative, technical and clerical staff hours for 2011.

## **OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 5:**

It is an objective of the District to provide educational programs in environmental stewardship. In addition, all Supervisors and staff will continue their personal education and training in conservation related areas.

### **ACTIONS:**

1. Conduct training for staff in District operations and programs.
2. Encourage employees to increase skills and abilities, which would benefit the District, by providing compensation for technical and continued education. Take advantage of NRCS and BWSR training programs.
3. Provide an outdoor educational learning opportunity to secondary students through the facilitation of the annual Envirothon held in southeast Minnesota.
4. Provide environmental and agricultural learning opportunities to elementary students through the facilitation of the annual Ag in the Classroom presentations.
5. Provide the Olmsted County Landuse Model display and Groundwater Quality Model as a tool for environmental education to schools and nature centers within the County.
6. Provide education and technical assistance to schools on tree and native grass planting, forestry stewardship practices and Outdoor Learning Classroom (OLC) creation. Fugles Mill Plant Material Center is also available for outdoor on-site educational opportunities.
7. The "Olmsted Ag News", the multi-agency cooperative quarterly newsletter will serve as an educational tool to reach citizens of Olmsted County.
8. Maintain an Olmsted SWCD web page for outreach education.
9. Provide a power point presentation of Olmsted SWCD for educational resources.
10. Provide elected officials a presentation of Olmsted SWCD and tour conservation practices in Olmsted County.
11. Promote, educate, and provide technical assistance to landowners of the value and development of rain gardens and/or sustainable storm water infiltration systems.
12. Promote Graham Park as a demonstration area for storm water infiltration. Work with Local Governmental Units in the calendar year to identify a stormwater demonstration water infiltration system.

### **WORK LOAD ANALYSIS:**

It is anticipated that the achievement of this goal will take up to 5% of total administrative, technical and clerical staff hours for 2011.

### **III. COST SHARE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:**

#### **A. HIGH PRIORITY EROSION AND WATER QUALITY PROBLEMS**

##### **HIGH PRIORITY EROSION PROBLEMS**

When applications exceed available funding, priority for state cost share projects are based on direct evidence of ephemeral and/or gully erosion rather than “T” and soil class (the priority basis in the Olmsted SWCD Comprehensive Plan). Further priority is given to applicants following existing conservation plans and/or demonstrated willingness to apply conservation practices that reduce runoff and sedimentation and improve water quality. State Cost Share assistance is available to landowners to off set the cost for practice implementation. Geographically, priority is given to watersheds identified in the Olmsted County Comprehensive Water Management Plan.

##### **HIGH PRIORITY WATER QUALITY PROBLEMS**

Olmsted SWCD identifies Zumbro, Root River, Bear Creek, Whitewater and the sub-watersheds identified in the County Water Plan above the flood control structures as priority areas for water quality. Promote management of buffers in riparian areas with permanent native vegetation. The District has and will continue to solicit applications for State Cost Share, Rim, CCRP, CRP, EQIP Projects in these areas. Priority will also be given to applicants with existing nutrient management plans, or who have plans in preparation. The District is assisting feedlot operators in understanding the compliance requirements of MPCA. High priority affected waters are expected to be identified in this effort, and they will be targeted in State Cost Share projects.

## **SPECIAL PROJECTS**

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources grant funding will be used to develop a surface water management plan for the South Zumbro Watershed. Olmsted SWCD will work with townships impacted, county and state agencies and consultants hired to identify potential locations and sizes for water and sediment retention structures designed to reduce flooding and damage to the County's roads and bridges. (Such structures would retain water and sediment upon the landscape, reduce peak flows and sediment loads to ditches and streams.) The cost of such structures would be offset by the downsizing and decreased maintenance of ditches, culverts and bridges.

Olmsted SWCD will assist feedlot operators with questions and technical assistance for their feedlot abatement systems so they may reduce pollutants entering into waters of the state. New feedlot rules and regulations set forth by State Legislation have generated many questions and possible changes for feedlot operators. Feedlot operators are required to implement these changes within the next few years. The District will coordinate their efforts with various agencies including Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), Minnesota University of Extension Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Township Officers, and County Officials.

Olmsted SWCD and USDA NRCS has entered into a Cooperative Working Agreement to provide landowners, Federal and State land management agencies, other individuals, groups, and units of government with leadership in resource conservation. In addition the District entered into a Contribution Agreement with USDA NRCS to help bring conservation and wise use of land, water, wildlife and related resources to identified parties in the agreement.

The District will participate in future opportunities as they arise.

**OLMSTED SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
2011 BUDGET**

**REVENUE**

**Intergovernmental Revenue -Federal**

NRCS Contribution Agreement \$ 1,000

**Intergovernmental Revenue -State**

State Technical Services Grant \$ 28,000

State Cost Share Base Grant \$ 29,672

Other State Revenues \$ 1,000

**Intergovernmental Revenue - County**

County Appropriations \$ 220,200

Planning (WCA Grant) \$ 13,000

**Charges for Services**

Plat Books \$ 1,500

Native Seed \$ 2,500

Trees \$ 26,000

Miscellaneous \$ 1,030

**Miscellaneous Revenue**

Wetland Fees \$ 3,000

Miscellaneous Services \$ 300

**Investment Earnings**

Interest \$ 4,000

**Reserves**

\$ 107,854

**TOTAL REVENUES**

\$ 439,056

**OLMSTED SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
2011 BUDGET**

**EXPENDITURES**

<b><u>District Operating Capital Outlay</u></b>	<b>\$ 0</b>
<b><u>District Operating Other Services</u></b>	
Staff Development	\$ 1,000
Telephone/Fax	\$ 1,200
Postage	\$ 1,000
Membership Dues	\$ 5,356
Professional Services	\$ 6,500
Miscellaneous	\$ 206
Mileage	\$ 3,000
Gas	\$ 3,000
Rent – Building	\$ 19,000
Copier Lease	\$ 1,200
Vehicle Maintenance	\$ 1,500
Insurance	\$ 19,666
<b><u>District Operating Personnel Services</u></b>	
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 313,745
Elected Officials	\$ 12,000
<b><u>District Operating Supplies</u></b>	
Office Supplies	\$ 600
Field Supplies	\$ 618
<b><u>District Project Expense</u></b>	
Education	\$ 2,225
Native Seed/Grasses	\$ 2,000
Trees	\$ 14,214
Plat Books	\$ 1,200
Miscellaneous	\$ 154
<b><u>Intergovernmental Payments – State</u></b>	
State Cost Share	\$ 29,672
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 439,056</b>