

# OLMSTED SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT 2011 ANNUAL REPORT



Photos courtesy  
of NRCS



**OLMSTED SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT  
FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2011**

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## Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District

### **SECTION I**

### **INTRODUCTORY SECTION**

Transmittal Letter  
List of Board Supervisors  
Committee Representatives  
District Representatives  
Olmsted County Townships and District Map



## Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District

1485 Industrial Dr. NW, Rm 102  
Rochester, MN 55901  
Phone (507) 280-2850  
Fax (507) 280-2858

March 1, 2012

TO: Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District Board  
Olmsted County Board of Commissioners  
Other interested citizens and parties

The Annual Financial Report of the Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District (OSWCD) is herewith submitted for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2011. The OSWCD treasurer, who is an employee of the Olmsted County Public Works Department, prepared this report. Responsibility for both the accuracy of the presented data and the completeness and fairness of the presentation, including all disclosures, rests with the administration of the Olmsted County Public Works Department and the Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District.

We believe that the data contained in the report are accurate in all material respects and sets forth factually the financial position and results of operations at the Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District, and the financial affairs of the Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District.

The Board of Water and Soil Resources requires an audit of the books of account, financial records and transactions of the District by an independent auditor when our accumulated revenues since the last audit reach \$500,000, or every three years. This requirement is being complied with, and the Auditor's opinion will be included in this report upon completion of the audit. The Auditor will issue a management and compliance letter covering the review made as part of Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District's system of operations. The management and compliance letter will not modify or affect in any way, this report on the financial statements.

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Dorothy Miller, Treasurer  
Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District

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Paul Uecker, Chair  
Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District

**2011 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**Officers**

Chair..... Andy Hart  
Vice Chair..... Paul Uecker  
Secretary.....George Poch  
Member..... Steve Connelly  
Member..... John Keefe  
Treasurer.....Dorothy Miller

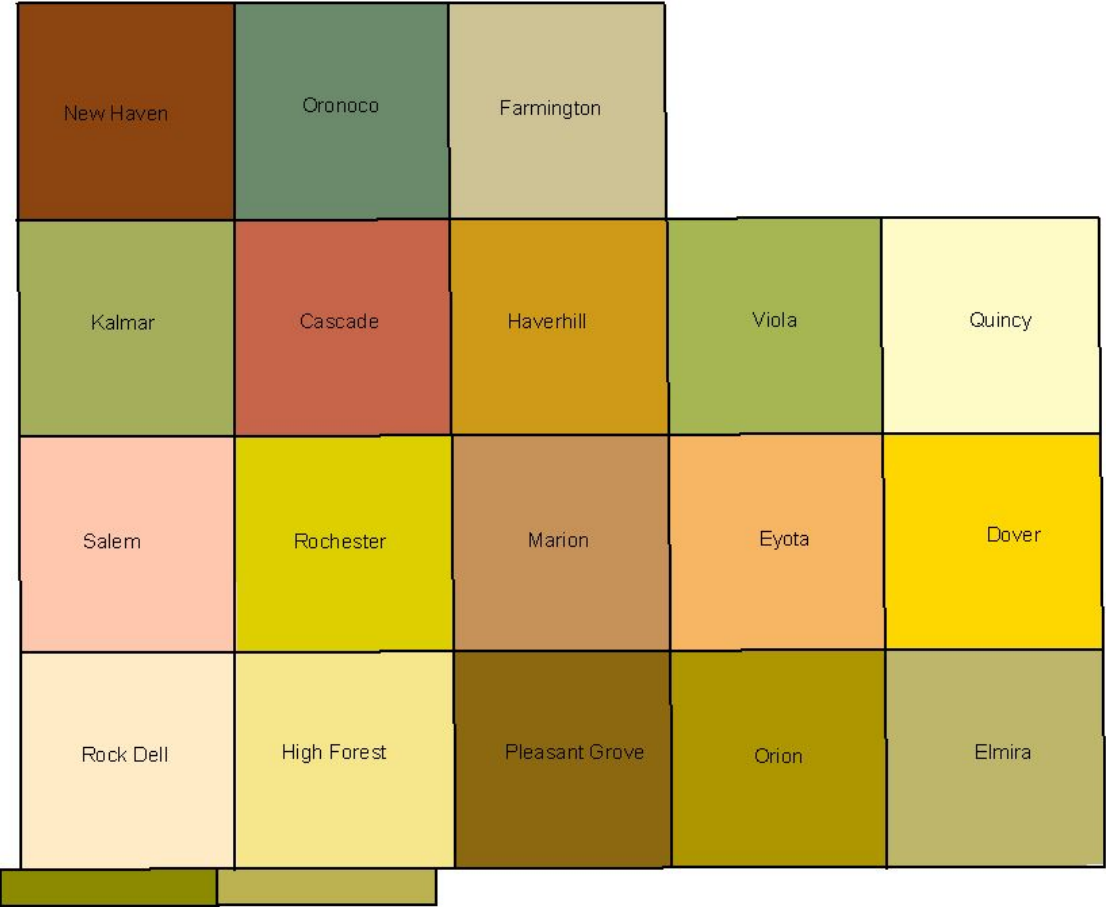
**Committee Representatives**

Hiawatha Valley Resource Conservation  
& Development Board.....George Poch  
SE SWCD Tech Support JPB.....Paul Uecker  
Whitewater Joint Powers Board.....John Keefe  
Zumbro Watershed Partnership.....Andy Hart  
South Zumbro Watershed.....Paul Uecker  
Olmsted County Environmental Commission.....Steve Connelly

**District Representatives**

District 1 George Poch.....Cascade, Rochester  
District 2 Paul Uecker.....Marion, Haverhill  
District 3 John Keefe.....Eyota, Dover, Elmira, Quincy, Viola  
District 4 Steve Connelly.....Rock Dell, High Forest, Pleasant Grove, Orion, Salem  
District 5 Andy Hart.....New Haven, Oronoco, Kalmar, Farmington

**OLMSTED COUNTY  
TOWNSHIPS  
AND  
DISTRICT MAP**



\*\*\* Numbers denote associated district representative on previous page.



Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District

## **SECTION II**

### **FINANCIAL SECTION**

Management's Discussion and Analysis

Basic Financial Statements:

Statement of Net Assets and Governmental Fund Balance Sheet

Statement of Activities and Governmental Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in  
Fund Balance

Budgetary Comparison Schedule Budget and Actual General Fund

Notes to the Financial Statements

Additional Reports:

Breakdown of County Revenue

Deferred Revenue Breakdown

## **MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District discussion and analysis provides an overview of the SWCD's financial activities for the fiscal year ended 2011. Since this information is designed to focus on the current years activities, resulting changes, and currently known facts, it should be read in conjunction with the Transmittal Letter (beginning on page 5) and the SWCD's financial statements (beginning on page 13).

### **FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS**

As of December 31, 2011, Olmsted SWCD assets exceeded liabilities by \$150,382 (total net assets). Of the total assets \$150,382 represents unrestricted net assets that may be used to meet Olmsted SWCD operations.

### **USING THIS ANNUAL REPORT**

This annual report consists of three parts: management's discussion and analysis (this section), the basic financial statements, and required supplementary information. The basic financial statements include a series of financial statements. The Statement of Net Assets and the Statement of Activities (on pages 13 and 14) provide information about the activities of the SWCD as a whole and present a longer-term view of the SWCD's finances. Fund financial statements start on page 15. For governmental activities, these statements tell how these services were financed in the short term as well as what remains for future spending. Fund financial statements also report the SWCD's operations in more detail than the government-wide statements by providing information about the SWCD's most significant funds. Since SWCD's are single-purpose special purpose governments they are generally able to combine the government-wide and fund financial statements into single presentations. Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District has elected to present in this format.

## **THE STATEMENT OF NET ASSETS AND THE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES**

Our analysis of the SWCD as a whole begins on page 10. One of the most important questions asked about the SWCD's finances is, "Is the SWCD as a whole better or worse off as a result of the year's activities?" The Statement of Net Assets and the Statement of Activities report information about the SWCD as a whole and about its activities in a way that helps answer this question. These statements include all assets and liabilities using accrual basis of accounting, which is similar to the accounting used by the most private-sector companies. All of the current year's revenues and expenses are taken into account regardless of when cash is received or paid.

These two statements report the SWCD's net assets and changes in them. You can think of the SWCD's net assets — the difference between assets and liabilities—as one way to measure the SWCD's financial health, or financial position. Over time, increases or decreases in the SWCD's net assets are one indicator of whether its financial health is improving or deteriorating.

In the Statement of Net Assets and the Statement of Activities, the SWCD presents Governmental activities. All of the SWCD's basic services are reported here. Appropriations from the county and state finance most activities.

## REPORTING THE SWCD'S GENERAL FUND

### Fund Financial Statements

Our analysis of the SWCD's general fund begins on page 12. The fund financial statements begin on page 15 and provide detailed information about the general fund—not the SWCD as a whole. The SWCD presents only a general fund, which is a governmental fund. All of the SWCD's basic services are reported in the general fund, which focuses on how money flows into and out of those funds and the balances left at year-end that are available for spending. The fund is reported using an accounting method called modified accrual accounting. This method measures cash and all other financial assets that can be readily converted to cash. The general fund statements provide a detailed short-term view of the SWCD's general government operations and the basic services it provides. Governmental fund information helps you determine whether there are more or fewer financial resources that can be spent in the near future to finance the SWCD's programs.

### THE SWCD AS A WHOLE

The SWCD's combined net assets decreased from \$190,419 to \$150,382. In contrast, last year net assets decreased by \$40,037. Our analysis below focuses on the net assets (Table 1) and changes in net assets (Table 2) of the SWCD's governmental activities.

**Table 1**  
**Net Assets**

	<b>Governmental Activities</b>	
	<b><u>2011</u></b>	<b><u>2010</u></b>
Current assets	\$538,345	\$540,934
Total assets	\$538,345	\$540,934
Current liabilities	\$387,963	\$350,515
Total liabilities	\$387,963	\$350,515
Total net assets	<u>\$150,382</u>	<u>\$190,419</u>

Net assets of the SWCD governmental activities decreased by approximately 21 percent (\$190,419 compared to \$150,382) in 2011. Unrestricted net assets—the part of net assets that can be used to finance day-to-day operations without constraints established by debt covenants, enabling legislation, or other legal requirements changed from \$190,419 surplus on December 31, 2010 to \$150,382 at the end of this year.

**TABLE 2**  
**Changes in Net Assets**

	<b>Governmental</b>	
	<b><u>Activities</u></b>	
	<b><u>2011</u></b>	<b><u>2010</u></b>
<b>Revenues</b>		
Program revenues:		
Charges for service	\$ 77,128	\$39,207
State grants	\$258,468	\$219,118
General revenues		
County Allocations	\$232,540	\$277,446
Other general revenues	\$854	\$750
Total revenues	\$568,990	\$536,521
<b>Program expenses</b>		
Conservation	\$609,027	\$544,797
Total expenses	\$609,027	\$544,797
Excess (deficiency)		
<b>Increase (decrease) in net assets</b>	(\$40,037)	(\$8,276)

Olmsted SWCD's total revenues increased by approximately 6 percent, or \$32,469 in 2011. The increase was due to an increase in revenue from charges for services and state grants. Increases in charges for services were the result of contribution agreements with Natural Resource Conservation Service, MN Resource Conservation and Development and Hiawatha Resource Conservation and Development. State grant revenues were recognized with the completion of conservation projects utilizing those grants. Appropriations received from Olmsted County decreased by \$45,001 or 17 percent; however, funding received from the Wetland Conservation Act Grant remained very close to 2010. There was a slight increase to other general revenues.

The total cost of all programs and services increased \$64,230 or approximately 11.8 percent. With additional revenues received from state grants additional expenses incurred implementing these grants. District operating expenses increased in 2011 with a noticeable increase to insurance and contractual services. It was the District's decision to prematurely pay the expense due to Olmsted County for legal council from prior years which was reflected in the increase to insurance expense. The District utilized reserve funds to overcome the loss for 2011. Olmsted SWCD anticipated a shortfall for 2011 of \$107,854 but with additional revenues and taking into account 2011 expenses was able to decrease this amount to \$40,037. Overall Net assets for 2011 decreased \$40,037.

### **Governmental Activities**

The cost of all governmental activities this year was \$609,027 compared to \$544,797 last year. Overall, the SWCD's governmental program revenues, increased in 2011 from \$536,521 to \$568,990. Olmsted SWCD was able to cover all governmental program expenses with government program revenues, general revenues, and a decrease to net assets of \$40,037.

Table 3 presents the cost of the SWCD's programs as well as each program's net cost (total cost less revenues generated by the activities). The net cost shows the financial burden that was placed on the SWCD's taxpayers by each of these functions.

**Table 3**  
**Governmental Activities**

	<b>Total Cost</b>		<b>Net Cost</b>	
	<b>of Services</b>		<b>of Services</b>	
	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>
Conservation	\$609,027	\$544,797	(\$40,037)	(\$8,276)
All others				
<b>Totals</b>	<u>\$609,027</u>	<u>\$544,797</u>	<u>(\$40,037)</u>	<u>(\$8,276)</u>

**THE SWCD’s FUNDS**

As the SWCD completed the year, its general fund (as presented in the balance sheet on pages 13) reported a combined fund balance of \$150,382 which is below last year’s total of \$190,419. Included in this year’s total change in fund balance is a decrease of \$40,037 in the SWCD’s General Fund. SWCD reported a fund balance of \$150,382 for the end of December 31, 2011. The primary reasons for the General Fund’s decrease mirror the governmental activities analysis highlighted on pages 10 and 11.

**General Fund Budgetary Highlights**

State project revenues and the corresponding expense are difficult to budget. Because these projects are completed over several years the timing of the revenue and expenses cannot be accurately budgeted in a specific year.

Olmsted SWCD anticipated a \$107,854 budget shortfall for 2011 which would have been reflected in unrestricted net assets. General business operations were identified as the reason for this deficit. During 2011 state grants revenues, other program and general revenues increased. District operating expenses were less than budgeted by \$17,530 and project expenses were over budget by \$187,501. Of this amount the state project expenses were \$193,702 over budget. For 2011 Olmsted SWCD unrestricted net assets decreased \$40,037; fund balance for December 31, 2011 is \$150,382.

**CAPITAL ASSET AND DEBT ADMINISTRATION**

**Capital Assets**

Olmsted SWCD does not have Capital Assets.

**ECONOMIC FACTORS AND NEXT YEAR’S BUDGETS AND RATES**

The SWCD’s elected and appointed officials considered many factors when setting the fiscal-year 2011 budget.

**CONTACTING THE SWCD’S FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

This financial report is designed to provide our citizens, taxpayers, customers, and investors and creditors with a general overview of the SWCD’s finances and to show the SWCD’s accountability for the money it receives. If you have questions about this report or need additional financial information, contact Dorothy Miller, SWCD Treasurer at 1485 Industrial Drive NW, Room 102, Rochester, MN 55901 or call 507-280-2850.

OLMSTED SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA

STATEMENT OF NET ASSETS AND  
GOVERNMENTAL FUND BALANCE SHEET  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2011

	General Fund	Adjustments See Notes	Statement of Net Assets
<b><u>Assets</u></b>			
Cash and investments	\$538,045		\$538,045
Prepaid items	\$300		\$300
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b><u>\$538,345</u></b>	<b><u>\$0</u></b>	<b><u>\$538,345</u></b>
<b><u>Liabilities</u></b>			
Current liabilities:			
Accounts payable	\$56,585		\$56,585
Deferred revenue	\$331,378		\$331,378
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b><u>\$387,963</u></b>	<b><u>\$0</u></b>	<b><u>\$387,963</u></b>
<b><u>Fund Balance/Net Assets</u></b>			
Fund Balance/Net Assets			
Nonspendable (Prepays, Inventories)	\$300	(\$300)	\$0
Unrestricted	\$150,082	(\$150,082)	\$0
<b>Total Fund Balance</b>	<b><u>\$150,382</u></b>	<b><u>(\$150,382)</u></b>	<b><u>\$0</u></b>
Net Assets			
Unassigned		\$150,382	\$150,382
<b>Total Net Assets</b>		<b><u>\$150,382</u></b>	<b><u>\$150,382</u></b>

Notes are an integral part of the basic financial statements.

OLMSTED SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND  
GOVERNMENTAL FUND REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND  
CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2011

	General Fund	Adjustments See Notes	Statement of Activities
<b>Revenues</b>			
Intergovernmental	\$491,008	\$0	\$491,008
Charges for services	\$77,128	0	\$77,128
Investment earnings	\$854	0	\$854
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b><u>\$568,990</u></b>	<b><u>\$0</u></b>	<b><u>\$568,990</u></b>
<b>Expenditures/Expenses</b>			
Conservation			
Current	\$609,027	\$0	\$609,027
<b>Total Expenditures/Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$609,027</u></b>	<b><u>\$0</u></b>	<b><u>\$609,027</u></b>
<b>Excess of Revenues Over (Under)</b>			
<b>Expenditures/Expenses</b>	<b>(\$40,037)</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>(\$40,037)</b>
<b>Fund Balance/Net Assets January 1</b>	<b>\$190,419</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$190,419</b>
<b>Fund Balance/Net Assets December 31</b>	<b><u><u>\$150,382</u></u></b>	<b><u><u>\$0</u></u></b>	<b><u><u>\$150,382</u></u></b>

Notes are an integral part of the basic financial statements.

OLMSTED SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA

BUDGETARY COMPARISON STATEMENT  
BUDGET AND ACTUAL  
GENERAL FUND  
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2011

	Original <u>Budget</u>	Final <u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	Variance with Final Budget Positive (Neg)
<b>Revenues</b>				
<b>Intergovernmental</b>				
County	\$233,200	\$233,200	\$232,540	(\$660)
Federal	1,000	1,000	0	(1,000)
State grant	58,672	58,672	258,468	199,796
<b>Total intergovernmental</b>	<b>\$292,872</b>	<b>\$292,872</b>	<b>\$491,008</b>	<b>\$198,136</b>
<b>Charges for services</b>	<b>\$34,330</b>	<b>\$34,330</b>	<b>\$77,128</b>	<b>\$42,798</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>				
Interest earnings	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$854	(\$3,146)
Reserves	107,854	107,854	0	(107,854)
<b>Total miscellaneous</b>	<b>\$111,854</b>	<b>\$111,854</b>	<b>\$854</b>	<b>(\$111,000)</b>
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$439,056</b>	<b>\$439,056</b>	<b>\$568,990</b>	<b>\$129,934</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>				
<b>District operations</b>				
Contracted services	\$325,745	\$325,745	\$313,492	\$12,253
Other services and charges	62,628	62,628	58,347	4,281
Supplies	1,218	1,218	222	996
<b>Total district operations</b>	<b>\$389,591</b>	<b>\$389,591</b>	<b>\$372,061</b>	<b>\$17,530</b>
<b>Project expenditures</b>				
District	\$19,793	\$19,793	\$13,592	\$6,201
State	29,672	29,672	223,374	(193,702)
<b>Total project expenditures</b>	<b>\$49,465</b>	<b>\$49,465</b>	<b>\$236,966</b>	<b>(\$187,501)</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$439,056</b>	<b>\$439,056</b>	<b>\$609,027</b>	<b>(\$169,971)</b>
<b>Excess of Revenues Over (Under)</b>				
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>(\$40,037)</b>	<b>(\$40,037)</b>
<b>Fund Balance - January 1</b>	<b>\$190,419</b>	<b>\$190,419</b>	<b>\$190,419</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Fund Balance - December 31</b>	<b>\$190,419</b>	<b>\$190,419</b>	<b>\$150,382</b>	<b>(\$40,037)</b>

Notes are an integral part of the basic financial statements.

**OLMSTED SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**December 31, 2011**

**Note 1 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**

The financial reporting policies of Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District (District) conform to generally accepted accounting principles. These statements are prepared in accordance with Government Accounting Standards Board Statement 34, which changes the way both the statement of condition and statement of revenues and expenses are reported.

**Financial Reporting Entity**

The Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District is organized under provisions of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103C and is governed by a Board of Supervisors composed of five members nominated by voters of the District and elected to four-year terms by the voters of the County.

The purpose of the District is to assist land occupiers in applying practices for the conservation of soil and water resources. These practices are intended to control wind and water erosion, pollution of lakes and streams, and damage to wetlands and wildlife habitats.

The Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service and other agencies, provides 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.

Each fiscal year the District develops a work plan that is used as a guide in using resources effectively to provide maximum conservation of all lands within its boundaries. The work plan includes guidelines for employees and technicians to follow in order to achieve the District's objectives.

The District is not considered a part of Olmsted County because it does not retain control over the operations of the District. On January 1, 2003 an agreement between Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District and Olmsted County was implemented. The agreement transferred all of the assets and employees to the County. The County is the fiscal agent for the SWCD and contracts all employee services with the District.

Generally accepted accounting principles require that the financial reporting entity include the primary government and component units for which the primary government is financially accountable. Under these principles the District does not have any component units.

## OLMSTED SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

### Note 1- Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

#### Government-wide financial statements

The government-wide financial statements (i.e., the statement of Net Assets and Statement of Activities) report information on all of the non-fiduciary activities of the District.

The Statement of Activities demonstrates the degree to which the direct expenses of a given function or segment is offset by program revenues. Direct expenses are those that are clearly identifiable with a specific function.

The government-wide financial statements are reported using the economic resources measurement focus and the accrual basis of accounting. Revenues are recorded when earned and expenses are recorded when a liability is incurred, regardless of the timing of related cash flows. Grants and similar items are recognized as revenue as soon as all eligibility requirements imposed by the provider have been met.

#### Fund Financial Statements

The government reports the general fund as its only major governmental fund. The general fund accounts for all financial resources of the government.

The Districts financial statements (general fund) are presented on the modified accrual basis of accounting. Under the modified accrual basis of accounting, revenues are recognized when they become susceptible to accrual, that is, both measurable and available. Available means collectible within the current period or soon enough thereafter to be used to pay liabilities of the current period. Revenue sources susceptible to accrual include intergovernmental revenues, charges, and interest. Expenditures are recorded when the corresponding liabilities are incurred.

Intergovernmental revenues are reported in conformity with the legal and contractual requirements of the individual programs. Generally, grant revenues are recognized when the corresponding expenditure is incurred. The District also receives an annual appropriation from the County, which is recognized as revenue when received, unless it is received prior to the period to which it applies. In that case, revenue recognition is then deferred until the appropriate period.

Investment earnings and revenue from sale of trees are recognized when earned. Agricultural conservation fees and other revenue are recognized when they are received in cash because they usually are not measurable until then.

Project expenditures represent costs that are funded from federal, state or district revenues. State project expenditures consist of grants to participants of the Cost-Share Program and other state programs. District project expenditures are costs of materials and supplies in District projects.

## OLMSTED SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

### **Note 1- Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)**

#### **Fund Financial Statements (continued)**

In accordance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 33 *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Non-exchange Transactions*, revenues for non-exchange transactions are recognized based on the principal characteristics of the revenue. Exchange transactions are recognized as revenue when the exchange occurs.

#### **Budget Information**

The District adopts an estimated revenue and expenditure budget for the General Fund. Comparisons of estimated revenues and budgeted expenditures to actual are presented in the financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Amendments to the original budget require board approval. Appropriations lapse at year-end. The District does not use encumbrance accounting.

#### **Use of Estimates**

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and reported amounts of revenues and expenditures during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

#### **Assets, Liabilities, and Equity Accounts**

##### **Assets**

Investments are stated at fair value, except for non-negotiable certificates of deposits, which are on a cost basis, and short-term money market investments, which are stated at amortized cost.

Capital assets are reported on a net (depreciated) basis. General capital assets are still valued at historical or estimated historical cost.

##### **Liabilities**

Long-term liabilities are accounted for as an adjustment to Net Assets.

##### **Equity**

Non-spendable fund balance indicates the portion of fund equity that has been legally segregated for specific purposes or is not appropriate for spending.

Unrestrictive, committed or assigned account indicates the portion of fund equity that the District has set aside for planned future expenditures.

Unrestricted, unassigned fund balance account indicates the portion of fund balance that is available for budgeting and spending in future periods.

## OLMSTED SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

### **Note 1- Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)**

#### Employee Benefits

The District contracts with Olmsted County for all district staff requirements.

#### Risk Management

The District is exposed to various risks of loss related to tort; theft of, damage to, and destruction of assets; errors and omissions; injuries to contracted employees; worker's compensation claims and natural disasters. Property and casualty liabilities and workers' compensation are insured under the policy of Olmsted County, who is self-insured.

#### Deferred Revenue

Deferred revenue represents the unearned advances from Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Service Grant, \$19,040.82; State Cost Share Program \$307,313.55; United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) EQIP \$2,768.72; and deposits on trees \$2,254.95. Revenues will be recognized when the related program expenditures are recorded. Total Deferred Revenue as itemized on "Deferred Revenue Breakdown" is \$331,378.04.

#### Deposits

All of the District's cash and investments are on deposit with Olmsted County.

### **Note 2- Stewardship, Compliance and Accountability**

#### Uncollateralized Deposit

During 2011, the District's deposits with Olmsted County did not exceed insurance, surety bond or collateral.

### **Note 3- Operating Leases**

The District leases office space on a yearly basis. Under the current agreement, total costs for 2011 were \$17,018.77.

**BREAKDOWN OF COUNTY REVENUE  
2011**

COUNTY REVENUES (breakdown):

ANNUAL ALLOCATION	\$ <u>220,200</u>
WATER PLAN MONEY	\$ _____
WETLAND MONEY	\$ <u>12,340</u>
FEEDLOT MONEY	\$ _____
ABANDONED WELL	\$ _____
DNR SHORELAND	\$ _____
OTHER (specify)	\$ _____
TOTAL	\$ <u><u>232,540</u></u>

NOTE: The total should agree with amount reported as **County Revenue** in the "Budgetary Comparison Schedule."

List other "non-cash" county support (i.e. rent, health insurance, etc.) that does not show up anywhere on your annual report.

**DEFERRED REVENUE BREAKDOWN  
2011**

Balance of BWSR Service Grants: \$ 19,040.82

Balance of unencumbered BWSR Cost-Share Grants: Current fiscal year \$ 227,323.31  
 Previous fiscal year \$79,979.41

Balance of encumbered BWSR Cost-Share Grant (list each contract separately):

FY	Contract No.	Contract Amount	TE & A Encumbered
2012	BW12-01	1,000.00	250.00
2011	01-2011	3,480.00	870.00
2011	5-2011	242.50	60.63
2011 CWF Feedlot Water Quality			6,890.00
2011 GF Feedlot Water Quality			3,145.00
2011 S MN Flood Relief	FL11-01	11,250.00	2,812.50
2011 S MN Flood Relief	FL11-04	5,250.00	1,312.50
2011 S MN Flood Relief	FL11-05	10,750.00	2,687.50
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-08	1,200.00	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-09	825.00	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-11	1,425.00	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-13	1,350.00	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-14	1,125.00	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-15	1,125.00	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-18	543.75	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-19	2,250.00	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-23	525.00	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-24	525.00	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-25	1,350.00	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-26	1,350.00	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-27	1,125.00	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-28	1,200.00	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-29	525.00	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-30	525.00	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-31	1,312.50	
2011 CW Assistance	CW11-32	525.00	
2011 CW Assistance			9,749.00
2010	18-2009	894.92	223.73
2009	18-2009	252.58	63.15
<b>Subtotal</b>		51,926.25	28,065.01
Less Rounding Adjustments			-.02
<b>Total of all Cost-Share Encumbrances</b>			<b>\$ 79,990.24</b>

**DEFERRED REVENUE BREAKDOWN  
2011**

Balance of County WCA Funds:	\$ _____
Balance of County Water Plan Funds:	\$ _____
Balance of <u>other</u> funds being deferred (list if any):	
<u>Tree Deposits</u>	\$ <u>2,254.95</u>
<u>EQIP Grant</u>	\$ <u>2,768.72</u>
Subtotal of other funds:	\$ <u>5,023.67</u>
TOTAL OF ALL DEFERRED REVENUE:	\$ <u><u>331,378.04</u></u>



## **Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District**

### **SECTION III**

#### **DISTRICT INFORMATION SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS**

Mission Statement  
Services Provided by Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District  
Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District Staff  
Cooperating Agencies  
Wetland Conservation Act  
Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program  
Feedlot Enhancement and Inventory  
District Tree Program  
Precipitation Monitoring Program  
Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program  
Native Grass Seed Program  
Conservation Easement Program  
State Cost Share Program  
Educational Programs  
Geographical Information System  
Fugles Mill Plant Material Site  
NRCS Activity/Assistance Report  
Whitewater Watershed Project  
Resource Conservation & Development Program (RC&D)  
Clean Water Legacy Grants  
Feedlot Water Quality Grants

## **OLMSTED SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

### **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.

### **Services Provided By the Olmsted District**

- Planning, Layout and Design of Conservation Practices
- Implementation of Annual Tree and Shrub Sale
- Planning of Windbreaks, Shelterbelts and Living Snow Fences
- Olmsted County Plat Book
- Olmsted County Soil Information
- Administration of the State Cost-Share Programs for Installation of Conservation Practices
- Administration of the Conservation Easement Programs, RIM (ReInvest in MN), in Olmsted County
- Administration of the Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program (AgBMP)
- Assist with Resource Management and Planning
- Participation in the Implementation of the Food Security Act (FSA) and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Conservation Security Program (CSP), Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)
- Conservation Education through Newsletters, News Articles, Classroom Presentations, Ag in the Classroom, and Envirothon
- Coordination of the Olmsted County Precipitation Monitoring Program
- Participates in the Olmsted County Comprehensive Water Plan
- Participates in SE MN Water Resource Board
- Participates in South Zumbro Watershed Partnership
- Participates in Whitewater Watershed Technical Committee
- Participates in Zumbro Valley Woodland Council
- Local Governing Unit for the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) in Rural Areas and Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP)
- Provide Assistance to Landowners with Feedlot Issues
- Planning Native Prairie Planting and Sale of Native Prairie Seed Mixes
- Participates in Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP) with Olmsted County and MS4
- Participates in the Cascade Lake Advisory Committee
- Partners with Olmsted County to educate and assist landowners in complying with the State Shoreland Setback Law.
- Partners with Zumbro Watershed Partnership in education and outreach and grant opportunities.
- Maintains Fugles Mill Plant Materials Site
- Seek grant funds for on-going conservation projects or initiatives in Olmsted County

## **Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District Staff**

Floyd Whitaker.....District Coordinator  
Dorothy Miller.....District Office Manager/Treasurer  
Skipton Langer.....District Technician  
Scott Bennett.....District Technician  
Jim Stannard.....Olmsted Feedlot Technician

### **Cooperating Agencies**

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)  
Farm Service Agency (FSA)  
University of Minnesota Extension Service  
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)  
Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources (BWSR)  
Whitewater Joint Powers Board  
Zumbro Watershed Partnership  
Olmsted County  
US Army Corp. of Engineers (ACOE)  
Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA)  
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)  
Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)  
Hiawatha Valley Resource Conservation & Development (RC & D)  
SE MN Water Resources Board  
Area VII Soil and Water Conservation Districts  
Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD)  
City of Rochester  
Rochester Public Utilities (RPU)  
Township Cooperative Planning Association (TCPA)  
Olmsted County Communities  
Olmsted County Planning  
Olmsted County Public Works

## **Wetland Conservation Act**

Since Minnesota's statehood in 1858, debate on the importance of wetlands has been an issue. Early on, wetlands were considered wastelands and as such draining for more desirable farm land began. The significance of wetlands has been realized through the years resulting in the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) of 1991. Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) recognized the importance of wetlands and accepted the delegation as Local Government Unit (LGU) for Olmsted County in 1994. Service areas were defined and working relationships have been developed with Olmsted communities since that time. Currently Olmsted SWCD is the delegated LGU for rural service areas in Olmsted County and the communities of Chatfield, Dover, Eyota, Oronoco and Stewartville. The City of Byron has delegated themselves the LGU administering WCA, with technical assistance from Olmsted SWCD.

Activities include:

- Conduct Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) meetings with BWSR, MnDNR, ACOE, and LGU's.
- Provide guidance to consultants and developers pertaining to WCA rules and regulations.
- Provide guidance to Olmsted County Public Works for road development and construction projects.
- Provide technical assistance to private landowners for wetland protection and enhancement projects.
- Review and comment on all development projects impacting wetlands within the county.
- Investigation of wetland filling and impact complaints and violations of the WCA statute.
- Write Restoration Plans for violations or provide exemptions where they apply.
- Attend annual wetland training sessions.

During 2011 Olmsted SWCD addressed 5 no-loss applications, 9 ag-exemptions and 1 replacement application.

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## **Agricultural Best Management Practices Loan Program**

The Agriculture Best Management Loan Program (AgBMP) was established by the State Legislature in 1994, providing farmers, rural landowners, and agri-businesses with low interest loans for mitigation and prevention of non-point source pollution. The Olmsted SWCD role has been two-fold as staff promotes and educates as well as assists applicants with the implementation of practices.

Since the inception of the program, Olmsted SWCD has received \$1,220,865.67 in new funding from Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Additional low interest loans of \$1,375,771.75 were provided to landowners in Olmsted County by re-loaning original funding. Total project dollars were \$4,522,361.37 of which loans were administered of \$2,596,637.42. During 2011, Olmsted SWCD provided eligibility to 2 landowner, Ag Waste Systems totaling \$69,645.00, 2 landowner s for conservation tillage equipment \$50,000.00, and 1 landowners failing septic systems, \$12,150.00. The District strives to administer funding to landowners on a continual basis to prevent non-point source pollution.

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## **Feedlot Enhancement and Inventory**

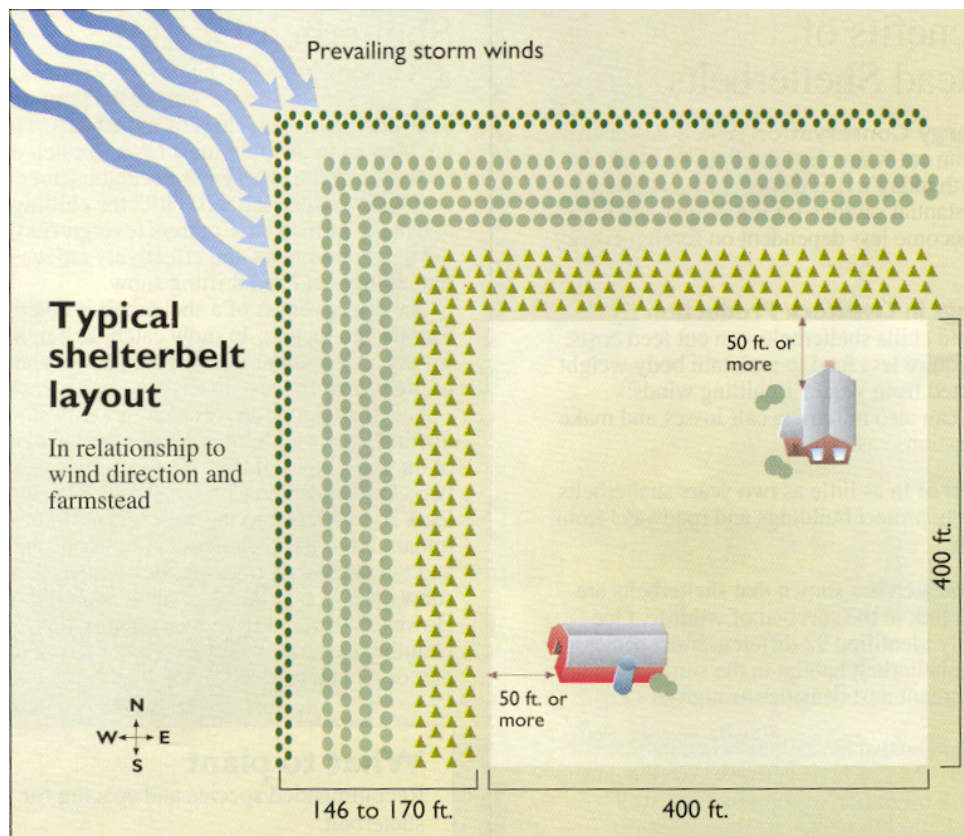
The feedlot inventory is maintained by the County Feedlot Technician with the District offering several supporting roles to assist the livestock industry here in Olmsted County. District technicians assisted SRF engineers with Best Management Practice surveys, data gathering, and producer meetings. Database and mapping support has also been included in the staff's workload.



## District Tree Program

Olmsted SWCD implements their annual tree program each spring, selling and distributing trees to landowners promoting conservation planting. In addition, District staff provides year round information and technical assistance to landowners for species selection and design for establishing shelterbelts, windbreaks, living screens in urban areas, and wildlife plantings. The program also offers clients the option to promote the growth of the young trees they have purchased by making available weed barrier tree mats, tube type tree shelters, and fertilizer.

In 2011, Olmsted SWCD sold 17,300 trees and shrubs to approximately 220 landowners living in and around Olmsted County. The District also rented the tree planter to landowners to assist them with their planting needs.



## Precipitation Monitoring Program

Olmsted SWCD actively participates as a cooperating agency in the Minnesota State Climatology (MNDNR) Precipitation Monitoring Program. The district has organized a network of volunteers within Olmsted County to monitor precipitation amounts within their townships. Rain gauges are provided by the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) for volunteers to document daily precipitation measurements which are submitted to the District each month. District staff compiles local data for entry into the state climatology web database and maintains its own county database. Data collections throughout the state are assembled for modeling and prediction of precipitation trends and to monitor weather conditions across Minnesota. For 2010, Olmsted County had sixteen active monitoring sites; 2011, Olmsted County had fifteen active monitoring sites located throughout Olmsted County's eighteen townships.

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## Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP)

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program assisting landowners in the establishment of conservation practices to improve fish and wildlife habitat in our area.

In 2011 one contract of 8 acres for timber stand improvement. Buckthorn was removed to encourage native stand regeneration.



## Native Grass Seed Program



The Olmsted SWCD native grass and forb seed program has continued for a tenth season, serving those with interest in prairie restoration. The program is designed to provide a one-stop shop service to clients involved in native prairie seeding through conservation programs such as RIM, WHIP, CRP or the state cost share native buffer program. We have also provided seed to a number of landowners interested in establishing their own private prairies. The District is offering six varieties of native grasses and a 21 species forb mix. We are able to assemble mixes that grow well in a wide range of soils for differing levels of prairie and habitat restoration.

During 2011, Olmsted SWCD worked with 7 landowners on 2 native wetland and 5 native upland prairie plantings.

## Conservation Easement Programs

The ReInvest in Minnesota Reserve Program (RIM) is a land retirement program designed to protect and improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, set aside marginal agricultural lands and provide wildlife habitat under a perpetual conservation easement. This program retires sensitive land from production and returns it to natural, wildlife habitat. The perpetual nature of this easement program will have lasting environmental impacts in Olmsted County for future generations.

Olmsted County had a special RIM Flood damaged lands program sign-up at the close of 2007. Many landowners inquired about the program. Three applications were submitted to BWSR in early 2008. One application was approved in early 2008 for 2.1 acres. A second sign-up for the RIM flood program took place during 2009; one application was submitted and approved totaling 28.5 acres. In 2010, a grant was written through the DNR conservation partners' legacy (CPL) grant program to place 103.8 acre easement on the Root River consisting of 60.1 acres of tillable and 43.7 acres of non-crop on farmland. This easement will permanently protect the floodplain from erosion, improve water quality and provide wildlife habitat and connectivity. The Nature Conservancy is providing cash for the project, partnering with the Soil and Water Conservation District and the Board of Water and Soil Resource. Two additional riparian RIM easements have also been secured providing 14.5 acres of permanent buffer along the North Fork of the Whitewater River. Status reviews were conducted on 13 easement sites totaling 174.2 acres. All easements were found to be in satisfactory condition for 2011.



## State Cost Share Program

The Minnesota Legislature approved the State Cost Share Program in 1977 (MS 103C.501). Olmsted SWCD provides “financial and technical assistance to land occupiers for application of conservation practices that reduce soil erosion, control sedimentation, or improve and protect water quality to ensure the sustainable use of Minnesota’s natural resources.”<sup>1</sup>

Locally, landowners may apply for cost share dollars to establish conservation practices. The cost share dollars available cannot exceed 75% of the eligible established practice cost or 50% of the eligible cost for well sealing as adopted by the Olmsted SWCD Board. Flood related practices are eligible for cost share assistance up to 100%. Each approved and implemented conservation contract has a ten to fifteen year maintenance life the landowner is required to meet.

Olmsted SWCD Board approved 37 new conservation projects for the year 2011. As of December 31<sup>st</sup> 22 landowners completed their practices with a total cost of \$114,784.09. State Cost Share funds disbursed during 2011 totaled \$79,690.81

1 Water Sediment Control Basin/ Grade Stabilization Structure	\$18,542.59
1 Grade Stabilization Structure	\$10,938.75
1 Native Buffer	\$962.65
4 Terrace Systems	\$28,699.44
2 Waterways	\$5,684.25
13 Well Sealing	\$14,863.13
Total	\$79,690.81



Olmsted SWCD received \$39,835.00 for 2011-2012 State Cost Share Base Grant.

Olmsted SWCD received \$22,849.00 for 2011-2012 General Services Grant

Additional Grants awarded:

2011 Clean Water Fund Feedlot Water Quality Grant	\$103,955.00
2011 General Fund Feedlot Water Quality Grant	\$ 43,101.00
2011 Clean Water Assistance Grant	\$114,446.00
2011 Southern Minnesota Flood Relief	\$ 50,000.00

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<sup>1</sup> Minnesota Board of Soil and Water - [www.bwsr.state.mn.us](http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us)

## Educational Programs

### Land-use Model and Groundwater Flow Model

An excellent opportunity to enhance our Educational Program came in late summer of 1993. Mr. Harry Buck, a long time environmental educator and former Quarry Hill Nature Center Director, developed a three-dimensional model landscape, which illustrates land use practices and conservation principles.

The model is a miniature landscape divided into nine separate “neighborhood” cubes, each with a protective cover, mounted on a wooden base. The land surface and underlying geology are clearly shown. The model comes with teacher resources and supporting materials, including directions for its use, landscape data, quizzes and answers, guides for discussion and follow-up activities, as well as additional curriculum resources. The landuse model travels in a set of protective wooden carrying cases.

The District also acquired a Groundwater Flow Model created by the Iowa State University Soil and Water Conservation Club. The model demonstrates the movement of water and contaminants through earth’s soils and natural and artificial drainage systems. This model is ideal for use by schools and groups interested in water quality issues.

A brochure is available to provide local educators with an overview of the educational possibilities for the landuse model. The District has made this educational resource available throughout the county.

### Joint Agency Newsletter

A Joint Agency Newsletter is another part of the District’s Education Program. Cooperating agencies participating with Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District are Farm Service Agency, and Natural Resource Conservation Service. The newsletter includes articles of interest from all agencies as well as a calendar of upcoming events. The newsletter currently goes out to approximately 3000 residents and to neighboring county agencies. Olmsted SWCD posts the newsletter on their website.

<http://www.co.olmsted.mn.us/pw/oswcd/Pages/RegionalAgNews.aspx>

### Envirothon

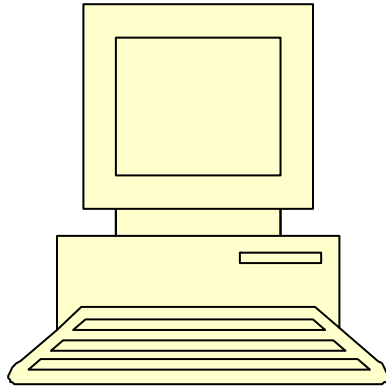
On May 5, 2011 the SE Minnesota Area 7 SWCD’s sponsored its seventeenth Annual Envirothon at Chesterwoods Park in Eyota, Minnesota. The Envirothon is an outdoor, hands-on learning experience for high school students, grades 9-12. It is centered on six different environmental learning stations, one of which is an oral presentation regarding a current environmental issue. Since the event takes place outdoors, questions involve actual contact with the natural resource rather than just providing a paper and pencil approach.

Schools in the eleven southeast Minnesota districts were invited to participate in this event. Eight teams participated in this Envirothon in 2011. Medford High School team took first place, Goodhue High School took second place, and Zumbrota – Mazeppa High School took third place. All SE MN Area 7 participants received a free t-shirt and lunch on-site prior to the awards ceremony at the park. The 3 winning area teams were provided with financial assistance to attend and compete at the state competition held May 16, 2011 at Spirit Mountain Recreation Area in Duluth, MN.

### Education

The District provides environmental education to school aged children and special interest groups around the county. The Ag in the Classroom program brings the farm to the classroom and Olmsted SWCD presented materials on soils, landuse, soil erosion, recycling, wetlands, water quality issues and stormwater to hundreds of elementary aged children throughout the county last year. The district also visits local schools to provide classroom presentations, slideshows, and demonstrations for all ages.





### **Geographic Information System (GIS) Program**

GIS has become an integral part of daily district operations. Acquisition of high resolution, rectified photos for the entire county, and a large variety of geo-spatial data, give this tool particularly high value in planning and preliminary design work for many projects. In 2011 USDA updated the high powered Trimble GEOXT GPS units and data collector providing a powerful in-field GIS tool for staff use. This gives us the ability to gather extremely accurate spatial data. Some program areas utilizing our GIS are:

- State Cost Share
- RIM
- CRP, CCRP, WRP, WHIP
- WCA
- Whitewater Watershed Projects
- ZWP Watershed Planning
- Crop Equivalency Rating (CER) requests
- Soil and Parcel Map requests
- Tree and shrub planting plans including shelterbelts and windbreaks
- Plat reviews
- Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) requests
- Watershed Planning and Grant Projects

#### **Data Contributing Agencies:**

- Olmsted County
- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Farm Service Agency (FSA)
- MN Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR)
- University of Minnesota Extension Service
- Whitewater Watershed

In the fall of 2008 flights were conducted to create the LIDAR topographic feature which gives elevation modeling up to 1 foot accuracy. Olmsted County is now utilizing this feature.

## **Fugles Mill Plant Materials Site**

The Fugles Mill Plant Materials Evaluation Site consists of 40 acres where a variety of plants are grown and evaluated for their suitability in conservation plantings in southeastern Minnesota. The site was established on state forest land in Pleasant Grove Township of Olmsted County in 1985.

Not unlike an arboretum, the site is a place where farmers, sport and wildlife groups, teachers, students and other citizens can see and learn about different species and varieties of warm season grasses, cover crops, shrubs and trees used for conservation.

A storage building/educational kiosk is on the site for storage of equipment and provides information for self-guided tours. The plant site is open to the public. Supporters of the site include the Olmsted SWCD, NRCS, Hiawatha Valley RC&D, and the MN DNR. Olmsted SWCD is responsible for the maintenance of the site.



Aerial Photo by: Mark Fredrickson, Fall 2002

In 2006, the NRCS Plant Materials Center staff from Bismarck, ND conducted the final round of plant evaluation that will take place through the PMC program. All species were evaluated for growth and vigor and a final report is available for review.

As that stage of activity comes to a close the site is being looked at closer to reduce noxious species that have invaded parts of the site. A work day in June 2006 has seriously reduced the amount of those species. Also, additional new plantings are planned and old ones will be revamped to continue providing landowners today with the benefits of the efforts that were started here twenty years ago.

All the Black Locust were cut and ground into woodchips. The Autumn Olive continues to be an ongoing problem in need of attention due to its invasive behavior. The native grass plots have been killed with herbicide and a new prairie will be planted in 2009 using local genotypic species and a diverse selection of native forbs. A meandering walking trail is also planned.

The County re-graded a portion of County Road 1 around the site in 2008. The ditch banks were sloped and planted with a native prairie mix and a new sign was erected at the parking entrance. In 2010, the parking lot was also re-graded and graded to provide more parking and easier ingress/egress to the site. A metal roof was installed on the building with the help of County STS crews. Hiawatha Resource Conservation District provided the capital to replace the roof.

## Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Activity/Assistance Report

The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical assistance to Olmsted SWCD through a Mutual Agreement signed by the SWCD, the USDA Secretary of Ag, and the state's Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). The NRCS staff works directly with land managers to provide technical and financial conservation assistance. Our guiding principles are service, partnership, and technical excellence. NRCS provides advice to landowners on the design, installation, and operation of conservation practices. This assistance is provided primarily by two permanent full-time NRCS staff and a Soil Conservationist Trainee located in the Ag Service Center in Rochester. Additional technical assistance is provided through various specialists staffed in the NRCS Area Office in Rochester.

In addition to technical assistance the NRCS Field Office staff is currently providing financial assistance primarily through five key program areas. These programs are: the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), the Conservation Security Program, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), or federal economic stimulus bill), and the Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP).

EQIP provides financial and technical assistance to landowners on private land to protect soil, water, and related resources. In 2011 the Olmsted NRCS and SWCD staff provided assistance with the implementation of 85 practices resulting in EQIP financial assistance payments of \$288,932. Twenty four new EQIP contracts were approved for a total of \$373,181.

In the fall of 2009, NRCS held the first sign-up for the new Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), which replaced the Conservation Security Program. The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) contracts are five year agreement that require maintaining existing conservation practices; and at least one new conservation practice or activity. CSP enrollment and payments are based on conservation performance. Payments are based on both existing conservation practices and the number and extent of new activities. In 2011 there were 29 CSP contracts and 12 Conservation Security Contracts resulting in financial assistance payments of \$559,413.

In the spring of 2009, NRCS, through an agreement signed with the Whitewater Watershed Joint Powers Board, provided \$220,000 in ARRA (federal stimulus bill) funding for the development of long term agreements with individual farmers for the implementation of conservation practices. In Olmsted County 6 agreements were developed for a total of \$88,305 in federal cost-share funds. The program is drawing to a conclusion with final practices nearly completed resulting in \$24,951 in financial assistance in 2011.

The NRCS provides technical assistance for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) which is administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Through CRP, landowners receive annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource conserving covers on eligible farmland. In 2011 NRCS and SWCD staff developed 43 conservation plans resulting in enrollment of 648 acres into CRP.

The following figures represent some of the conservation achievements in Olmsted County through the NRCS/SWCD Partnership in 2011:

Conservation Plans Written	8,955 acres
Grassed Waterways	14 acres
Terraces	3900 feet
Water & Sediment Control Basins	2 (No.)
Seasonal High Tunnel Systems	2 (No.)
Well Sealings	5 (No.)
Cover Crops	579 acres
No till/Strip till	535 acres
Tree/Shrub Plantings	19 acres
Nutrient Management Plans Implemented	1,620 acres
Fencing installed for grazing systems	12,000 feet
Pipelines Installed for grazing systems	9,000 feet
Prescribed Grazing Systems Implemented	576 acres

## **Whitewater Watershed**

The Whitewater Watershed Project encompasses the northeastern portion of Olmsted County in conjunction with Winona and Wabasha Counties. The main goal of the Project is defined in its mission statement as follows:

The Whitewater Watershed Project exists to continue to nurture a land stewardship ethic among those that live, work, and recreate in the watershed. The project will focus on improving water quality, reducing sedimentation and flooding, and improving habitat for all plants and animals. The project will accomplish this mission by developing a partnership among watershed citizens, governmental agencies, environmental groups, and business. The Whitewater Watershed Project also recognized the importance of private property rights and that agriculture is an economic backbone of the watershed. The project is committed to maintaining that.

Olmsted SWCD is an active participant on the three county Joint Powers Board, which oversees the project. SWCD Staff provides technical and GIS assistance to landowners in the watershed enabling them to reduce erosion and enhance natural resources.

## **Resource Conservation & Development Program (RC&D)**

The RC&D program is unique in that it helps people care for and protect their natural resources in a way that improves the area's economy, environment and living standards. RC&D is a "People Program" devoted to meeting local people needs and desires toward "Making Things Happen".

Olmsted County is a part of the Hiawatha Valley RC&D, along with nine other counties in the southeast part of the state. The office is headquartered in Rochester. The following is a brief summary of the types of general and recent project assistance provided through this program:

- Information and Education Help through Conferences, Seminars and Tours
- Develop and Coordinate Locally Identified Projects
- Provides Support for SE MN Resource Efforts to State and Federal Commissions
- Grant Writing Assistance
- Multi-County Planning Assistance
- Wind and Biomass Energy Assistance
- Fugles Mill Plant Materials Evaluation Site
- Backyard Conservation Workshop
- Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative Assistance
- Root River Watershed Restoration
- Invasive Terrestrial Weed Project

In 2008 Hiawatha RC & D and Olmsted SWCD entered into an agreement which retains Olmsted SWCD as their fiscal agent. In 2011, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) ceased funding Resource Conservation and Development nationwide. Many RC&D's no longer exist. Hiawatha RC&D is looking at various ways to continue into the future.

