

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 and Oronoco. The cities of Byron, Eyota and Stewartville have delegated themselves LGUs 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.