

2015 Annual Plan of Work

SWCD Mission Statement

“To Meet the Public’s Needs by Protecting the Land and Safeguarding the Water”

Equal Opportunities Statement

*Todd County is an Equal Opportunity Employer.
USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.*

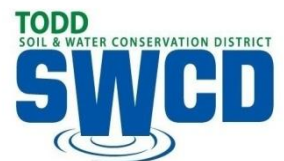


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Program Summary

Introduction

This Annual Plan of Work is adopted by the SWCD Board of Supervisors and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as their annual plan of work. It is designed to be one year of work toward achieving the Todd County Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan Action Items and will be used by the SWCD and NRCS to guide staff activities for 2015. The Annual Plan of Work is used to state current natural resource problems and trends, includes basic budget information (Attachment #1), and maps of Todd County showing priority areas that will receive extra attention based on the best available information regarding natural resources (Attachment #4).

Land Use

Todd County is a large rural county covering almost 1,000 square miles, located in the geographical center of Minnesota. It is part of the transitional area where the eastern forest meets the western prairie. It is located between the regional centers of Alexandria, Brainerd and St. Cloud. Although the County is somewhat removed from the more urbanized areas in the state, its water resources connect it to the larger communities in a critical way. Several watersheds flow through Todd County, so what occurs in these watersheds not only affects the water resources used by the citizens of the County, but other Minnesotans living along the Mississippi River corridor, including the Twin Cities.

Land use in Todd County falls into four main categories: 42% agriculture, 25% woodlands, 5% water and wetlands, and 28% other uses. Agriculture is the largest economic driver with row and hay crops supporting animal feeding operations (CAFOs) and commercial processing facilities. There are 215 lakes in the county with total water surface covering approximately 38 square miles are on the DNR's 303 Protected List. Lakes are used extensively for recreation and cabin sites near water are highly valued.

Trends in water quality indicate that an increasing number of water bodies are being identified as not meeting state standards. No real evidence indicates that quality is currently declining but rather systematic monitoring on a watershed basis is identifying lakes and streams not meeting state standards. Traditionally, projects have been prioritized based on proximity to waters that are impaired. Land use trends are related to agriculture such as the large increase in tile drainage, a shift in recent years toward more row crops and reduced hay and grains in the rotation, and an increase in new irrigation wells being installed. The high commodity prices in recent years has reduced enrollment in CRP and many buffers and filter strips have been removed to facilitate large row crop fields and irrigation systems. There is a state wide trend that is also occurring in Todd County for lake cabins being converted into full time residences. Generally this also brings about loss of shoreline vegetation and increased impervious surfaces which has negative lake impacts.

The Local Work Group is an ongoing effort to determine what the most pressing natural resource concerns are in Todd County. This group is convened by Todd SWCD with the results being used by USDA-NRCS to prioritize cost share programs in the coming year. The seven areas listed below were identified at Todd Counties Local Work Group meetings held August 10th, 2012 and August 22, 2013, and July 24th, 2014. The top concerns have not changed over the past three years. The Local Work Group is convened by SWCD with partners and the public invited to provide input. The results of these meetings have focused down the natural resource priorities listed below.

- #1 Water quality impacts from nutrients and sediment.
- #2 Soil erosion – sheet, rill, gully, and stream bank.
- #3 Groundwater quantity – impacts from irrigation and other land use practices.
- #4 Soil Quality & Health.
- #5 Ground water quality.
- #6 Invasive species management – in forest land and non-cropland.
- #7 Wildlife Habitat - upland grass, corridors, shrub plantings, management plans for forested lands.

Todd County Strategic Issues

Four strategic issues were identified through a strategic planning process completed in 2013 with supervisors, staff, and partners to focus staff efforts for the next 3 to 5 years. All four strategic issues relate to surface water quality.

Erosion Control

- Nutrient Management
- Stream bank and Buffer Strips
- Urban Water Management

Key Players

The Soil Water Conservation District is governed by a Board of five elected supervisors who develop policy, long range plans, and district budgets. Todd SWCD does not have any independent staff, however the district board is served by dedicated county staff that focus their time on district projects and priorities. Todd County Board of Commissioners are key players as are USDA-NRCS staff, Pheasants Forever, West Central technical Service Area staff, and Lake Associations.

SWCD Board of Supervisors (Voted in from 5 voting district areas – see attachment #2)

Area 1: Norman Krause **Area 2:** Kenneth Pesta **Area 3:** Dale Katterhagen
Area 4: Leland Buchholz **Area 5:** Thomas Williamson

SWCD Staff

Tim Stieber, Division Director
Sarah Katterhagen, Program Coordinator
Greg Ostrowski, Conservation Technician
Deja Anton, Feedlot Officer
Shannon Haasser, Water Planner
Mitchell Ness, Wetlands / Conservation Technician

Todd County Board of Commissioners (Voted in from 5 voting district areas – see attachment #3)

District 1: Barbara Becker **District 2:** Gary Kneisl **District 3:** Rod Erickson
District 4: David Kircher **District 5:** Randy Neumann

Key Partners

USDA-NRCS

Russell Kleinschmidt, District Conservationist
Darlene Drayna, Soil Conservation Technician
Grant Pearson, Nutrient Management Specialist
Justin Lindner, Soil Conservationist
Cariss Benning, Administrative Assistant

Todd County Planning and Zoning

Tim Stieber, Division Director
Linda Bleess, Planning and Zoning Specialist
Chris Arens, Land Use Planner
Galen Gruber, Land Use Planner

Pheasants Forever

Sabin Adams –Farm Bill Biologist

West Central Technical Service Area Staff

Ross Reiffenberger
Luke Herkenhoff
Gary Borash?

Cooperating SWCD's on Projects and Activities

Douglas SWCD
Hubbard SWCD
Morrison SWCD
Ottertail SWCD
Stearns SWCD
Wadena SWCD

Annual Work Plan Goals and Objectives For 2015

Goal 1: Maintain organizational effectiveness through planning, maintaining staff skills and standards, budgeting and financial management, excellent customer service, responsiveness to elected officials and the public, and partnering with others to reach common goals.

Achieving This Goal: Organizational direction will be set through annual and long-range planning. A strategic plan was developed in 2013 and will serve the district for 3 to 5 years. A motivated and trained staff that have the training and tools necessary to complete SWCD work will be maintained. Staff will develop a realistic budget annually and submit to SWCD supervisors for review and adoption. Income and expenditures will be tracked and reported at each scheduled board meeting. Annual audit and agency reporting work will be completed and results made available to the board of supervisors and the public. Excellent customer service to county residents will be the basis of operation. The District will be responsive to elected officials and the public and will partner with other federal, state, and local entities to protect natural resources throughout the county.

Objective 1. Establish SWCD direction through annual and long range planning.
Produce an annual SWCD work plan that includes SWCD and USDA-NRCS.
Track progress for all main activities and report at year-end.
Hold regular staff meetings discussing policy, procedures, workload, and safety.
Objective 2. Maintain professional standards and procedures for staff.
Abide by Todd County Personnel and Procedures Manual.
Follow Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) in the workplace.
Reach 200 hours of SWCD staff training for 2015.
Develop job sheets and other tools to allow SWCD and other office staff to better assist the public.
Objective 3. Budget, administer, and develop funding sources wisely.
Develop an annual budget for the SWCD keeping Commissioners and SWCD Supervisors informed.
Administer funds using county procedures, vouchers, etc.
Have SWCD supervisors review financial information at each scheduled meeting.
Track and report grant expenditures, progress, and match contributions.
Complete annual reporting to BWSR
Develop and submit grants for Clean Water Legacy Funding
Have funds audited annually by an independent auditor.
Continue to investigate new funding sources as they become available and fit identified needs.
Administer the AgBMP Loan Program
Objective 4. Provide excellent customer service.
Provide complete and accurate information in a friendly, timely and respectful manner.
View landowner situations and project sites through 500+ field site visits during year.
Retain and control the release of confidential information.
Objective 5. Be responsive to elected officials.
Hold/attend joint meeting (March & October) with Board of Commissioners and SWCD Supervisors.
Review annual work plan at semi-annual liaison committee meetings.
Develop resolutions as needed to promote conservation programs through legislation using MASWCD.
Have one-on-one meetings with Soil and Water Supervisors and work to maintain Todd SWCD identity.
Objective 6. Partner with local, state, and federal partners to achieve common goals.
Hold monthly meetings with USDA-NRCS for communication and collaboration.

Continue financial support for the West Central Technical Service Area
Maintain and develop partnership opportunities with agencies, groups and counties.
Participate in Sauk River Watershed District planning and programs.

Goal 2: Protect and improve the quality and quantity of Todd County water resources.

Achieving This Goal: Surface and ground water protection measures will be implemented using cost-share, partnering with other agencies, and by providing technical assistance to landowners. Emphasis will be on high priority areas identified through monitoring as not meeting state water standards. Water quality protection will be central to planning efforts for the county water plan, wellhead protection programs, TMDL plans, and erosion control plans as necessary to protect water.

Objective 1. Implement practices and systems designed to protect and improve surface water quality.
Establish soil erosion protection on 1000 acres of cropland including 200 acres of no-till, 100 acres of cover crops, 500 acres of prescribed grazing, and 10 water and sediment control basins.
Establish irrigation management plans for 100 acres
Establish sound nutrient management systems on 2500 acres. And two Comprehensive nutrient mgt plans.
Establish sound Pest management on 400 acres of crop land.
Install 2 waste management systems. (S&W has Berscheit, Hauer, Buderus, Kunstleben, Pollema)
Complete wetland restoration activities on 30 acres.
Establish riparian buffers on 5 acres.
Develop prescribed grazing plans for 500 acres.
Complete non-crop land erosion projects on 25 sites.
Complete 2 stream bank erosion projects (Fletcher and Wettstein)
Assist cities and urbanized county areas with phase 1 NPDES issues.
Establish four feedlot vegetative treatment areas
Complete 8 shoreline improvement projects using CWL funds.
Objective 2. Implement practices to protect and improve groundwater quality.
Establish sound nutrient management systems on 3000 acres .
Establish 5 new livestock waste storages and close six outdated animal waste impoundments.
Assist cities in implementing Wellhead Protection Programs as requested.
Promote and offer cost share for sealing wells.
Promote irrigation scheduling assistance program to provide scheduling information for landowners to utilize.
Objective 3. Evaluate surface and groundwater and develop plans to address problems.
Update the Todd County Local Water Management Plan for 2015 – 2020.
Cooperate with MPCA in ongoing TMDL development and implementation efforts.
Monitor 13 DNR observation wells to track ground water levels over time (was 14 wells in 2014)
Support Lake Association water quality monitoring efforts.
Develop methods to track soil erosion, nutrient management, stream bank erosion, buffer strips, and urban water management over time.
Promote the stalk nitrate program with Todd County farmers as a way to improve nutrient management.

Goal 3: Provide technical assistance to landowners, partners, and county departments and officials.

Achieving This Goal: We will support landowners seeking to enroll in cost-share and other programs designed to improve water quality, protect natural resources, and enhance wildlife habitat. We support development and operation of businesses that rely on natural resources. We will administer the Feedlot and Wetlands programs county-wide, offer an annual conservation tree and shrub program to landowners, and assist partners, county departments, and officials with programs and information that improves and protects natural resources. We will promote the availability of Ag BMP low interest loans and other programs to landowners.

Objective 1. Provide technical support related to wetlands.
Coordinate and administer wetland laws including swamp buster, 1985 Food Security Act, CWA-404, WCA.
Administer and perform wetland determinations related to proposed projects.
Assist landowners eligible for WCA exemptions to evaluate alternatives and minimize impacts.
Report WCA activities in Elink.
Schedule and hold Wetland Technical Evaluation Panels (TEP).
Objective 2 . Manage Todd County Feedlot Program
Complete at least 56 feedlot compliance inspections.
Complete re-registration of 75 feedlots.
Assist livestock producers with feedlot compliance with MN7020 feedlot rules.
Attend and contribute to Todd County livestock advisory committee meetings.
Complete feedlot reporting using MPCA's Tempo system (also in e-link for NRBG)
Hold an annual county feedlot meeting to educate livestock producers in the County.
Collaborate with associated agencies, citizen groups, respond to questions, assist in finding resolution to issues pertaining to feedlots, manure management, water quality.
Assist producers in identifying potential funding sources and technical resources.
Issue CSF and interim permits in a timely manner.
Maintain complaint log and refer to MPCA cases that represent a flagrant or imminent threat to public or environmental health.
Maintain records of notifications from feedlot producers claiming air quality exemptions.
Attend trainings necessary to ensure successful performance of feedlot related duties and responsibilities.
Objective 3. Assist other county departments, agencies, and groups with technical advice.
Assist Lake Associations in lake management outreach and projects as requested.
Assist Sauk River Watershed District with planning efforts and with other activities as requested.
Assist state climatologist with volunteer rainfall monitoring program.
Review tax forfeited parcels submitted by the Auditor's office.
Assist ditch inspector with wetland issues and through TEP reviews of planned ditch maintenance.
Assist Todd County Park Board in implementing the Parks and Trail plan as requested.
Coordinate with Planning and Zoning to help manage floodplains.
Maintain USDA-NRCS technical approval authority for staff.
Effectively work with Planning and Zoning staff with shoreland alteration projects and other activities that benefit natural resources.
Objective 4. Assist USDA-NRCS and FSA with conservation program implementation, delivery, and promotion.
Develop contracts, administration, and provide assistance for Conservation Reserve Program and sign up 15 landowners..
Develop contracts, administration, and provide assistance related to EQIP And establish 20 new contracts.
Develop contracts, administration, and provide assistance related to the RIM program.

Develop contracts, admin., and provide assistance related to the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) .
Provide assistance and oversight related to Mississippi River Basin Initiative (MRBI)
Provide assistance and oversight related to Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and establish 10
Complete conservation and compliance plans using eFOTG standards and specifications.
Participate in project planning meetings with NRCS as needed.
Chair USDA's Local Work Group to set conservation priorities.
Administer and assist in HEL and wetland compliance as it relates to USDA programs.
Provide outreach support for USDA programs.
Establish 3 Ag Energy plans and 2 seasonal high tunnels.
Objective 5. Support development of wildlife habitat and shelterbelts.
Support tree and shrubs plantings with landowners on 50 acres.
Organize an annual tree and shrub sale that supplies native stock to landowners.
Support Pheasant Forever Farm Bill Biologist tasked with establishing riparian buffers and grassland areas.
Increase service to landowners related to wildlife habitat establishment on private lands.
Target key erosion concern areas for establishment of buffers using FBAP technical staff

Goal 4: Provide conservation education and information to citizens and public representatives.

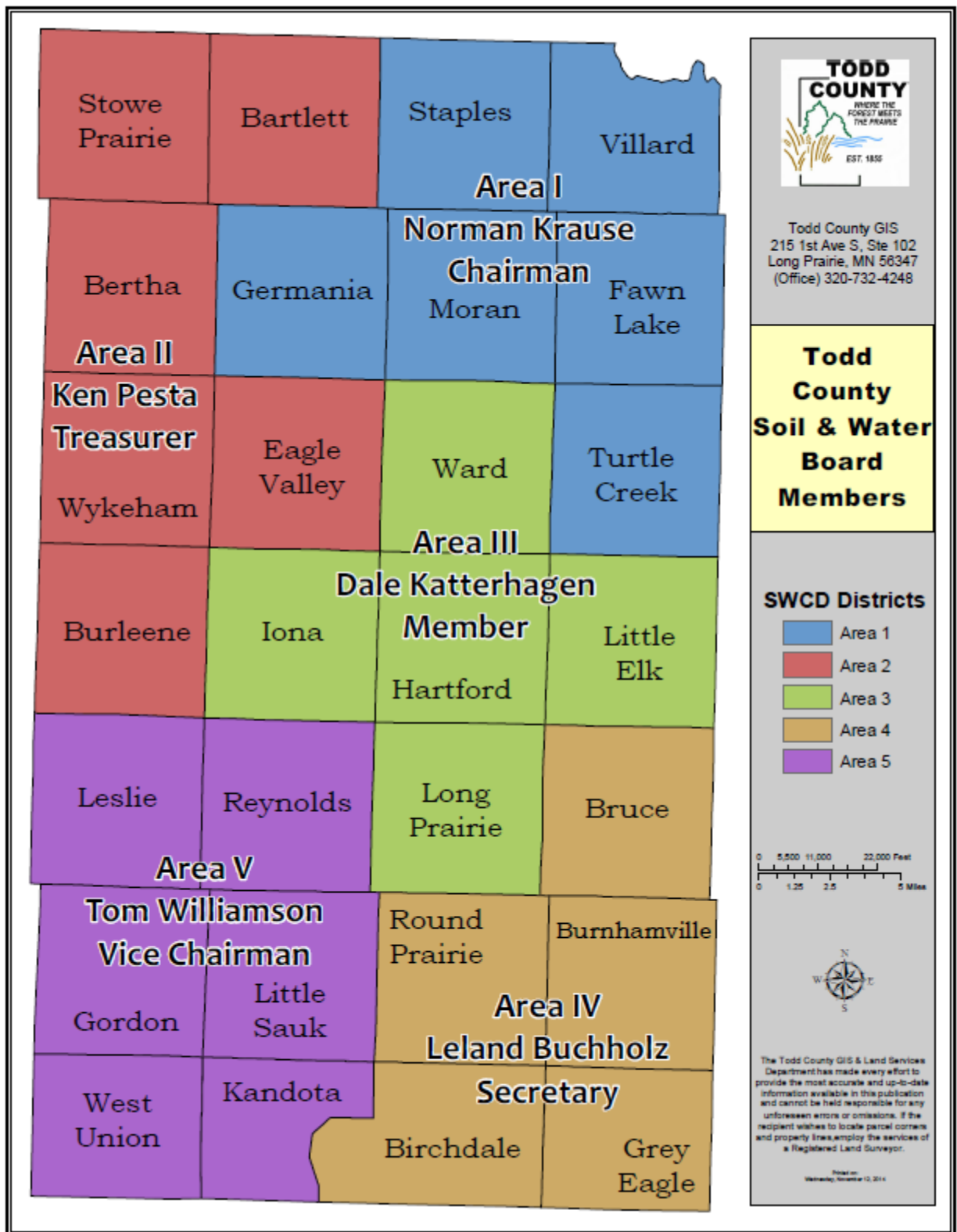
Achieving This Goal: Landowners and the general public will be informed using displays, newsletters, news articles, the radio, internet, workshops, events, and tours. School aged citizens will be educated through Enviro-fest and by presentations made to class rooms. Elected officials will be kept informed on issues through one-on-one meetings, tours, and presentations. SWCD will actively seek to provide information and services to minorities and traditionally under-served groups.

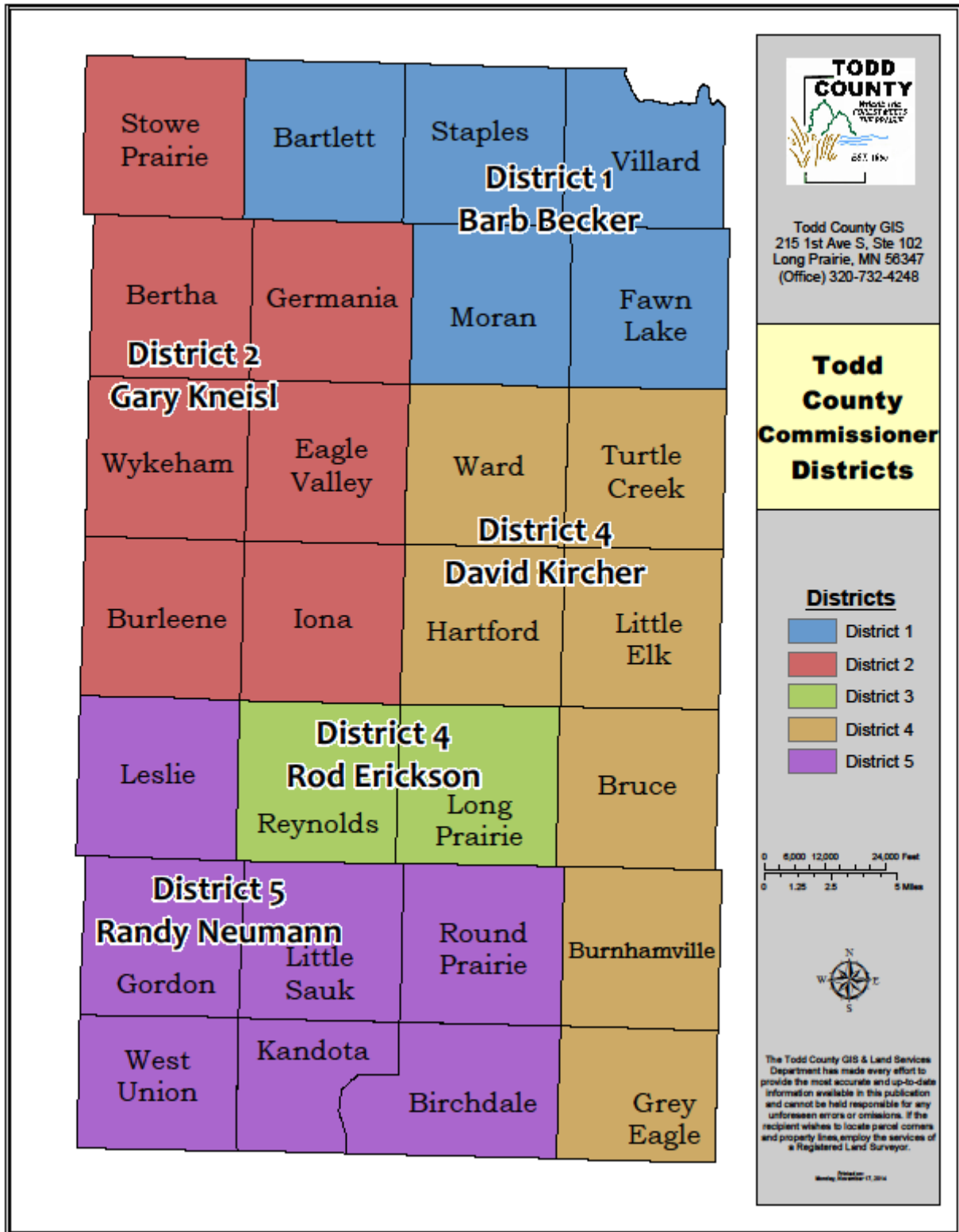
Objective 1. Educate school aged citizens.
Sponsor Enviro-Fest for Todd County 6th graders.
Distributed Water Plan Survey to high school students.
Objective 2 . Inform the general public and landowners.
Prepare and distribute a Soil and Water newsletter bi-annually.
Display conservation booth at fairs and events.
Provide periodic conservation news on talk radio.
Provide regular news articles to media.
Sponsor nitrate testing clinics for private wells. Target date
Participate in recognition programs for Conservationist of Year & Land Stewardship Award.
Maintain and update SWCD web site.
Reach out to minority groups and Amish community.
Participate in a Soil Health Tour ask NRCS
Organize a River and Lake Day educational event for lake landowners and lake associations.
Hold Conservation Tour—july/august
Objective 3. Reach elected officials and community leaders with conservation information.
Correspond with the federal and state elected and appointed officials throughout the year via letters, email, and personal contact to promote SWCD priorities.
Participate and meet with legislators during the "Day at the Capitol" and at other events as needed.
Invite elected and appointed officials to tours, demonstrations, and meetings.
Keep legislators informed of the need for grants & cost share opportunities
Participate in annual Township meeting in April of each year.

Attachment #1: Todd SWCD Budget for 2015

Budget Line Item		Budget	2015
79-603-000-0000-5530	Dept Sales	\$	9,000
79-603-000-0000-5711	Interest Income	\$	600
79-603-000-0000-5801	Misc. Revenue	\$	4,000
79-603-000-0000-5432	NRCS Federal	\$	-
79-603-000-0000-6103	Per Diem For Supervisors	\$	(6,000)
79-603-000-0000-6174	Workers Comp Insurance	\$	(100)
79-603-000-0000-6245	Membership/Dues	\$	(4,000)
79-603-000-0000-6263	Professional Services	\$	(4,000)
79-603-000-0000-6331	Travel & Expense	\$	(1,500)
	Insurance	\$	(2,530)
79-603-000-0000-6356	Other Misc Charges	\$	(1,000)
79-603-000-0000-6365	Exp-Dept Projects	\$	(9,000)
79-603-551-0000-5301	NRBG Feedlot Income	\$	72,443
79-603-551-0000-5801	Misc. revenue - county match double check #	\$	50,711
79-603-551-0000-6845	NRBG Feedlot Expense	\$	(123,154)
79-603-563-0000-5301	NRBG Water Plan income	\$	14,676
79-603-563-0000-5301	LEVY income—this # was changed	\$	4,777
79-603-563-0000-6845	Water Plan Expense	\$	(19,568)
79-603-564-0000-5301	NRBG WCA Income	\$	21,641
79-603-564-0000-5301	NRBG WCA Match Income	\$	6000
79-603-564-0000-6845	NRBG WCA Expense	\$	(43,282)
79-603-567-0000-5301	MN State Grant/Cost Share	\$	36,859
79-603-567-0000-6801	Misc. Expenses	\$	(23,000)
79-603-567-0000-6807	Cost Share Expense	\$	(10,000)
79-603-569-0000-5301	Mn grant	\$	153,663
79-603-569-0000-6807	Cost share expense	\$	(149,597)
79-603-569-0000-6849	Technical Assistance	\$	(13,249)
79-603-571-0000-5301	MN Ob Well Program	\$	3,120
79-603-571-0000-6845	OB Well Program Exp	\$	(3,120)
79-603-573-0000-5301	FY13-15 Livestock Management income	\$	120,490
79-603-573-0000-6807	Cost Share	\$	(160,000)
79-603-573-0000-6806	Admin	\$	(160)
79-603-573-0000-6849	T/A	\$	(19,600)
79-603-574-0000-5301	MN Grant	\$	45,000
79-603-574-0000-6282	Contracted Services	\$	(45,000)
79-603-575-0000-5301	MN Grant - FY 14-FY17 MPCA	\$	53,000
79-603-575-0000-6806	MN Grant - FY 14-FY17 MPCA Admin	\$	(5,000)
79-603-575-0000-6807	MN Grant - FY 14-FY17 MPCA cost share	\$	(40,000)
79-603-575-0000-6849	MN Grant - FY 14-FY17 MPCA TA	\$	(8,000)
	Total SWCD Income including	\$	595,014
	Total SWCD expense including grants	\$	(690,860)
	Projected Net for 2015 (not including carry forward)	\$	(94,880)

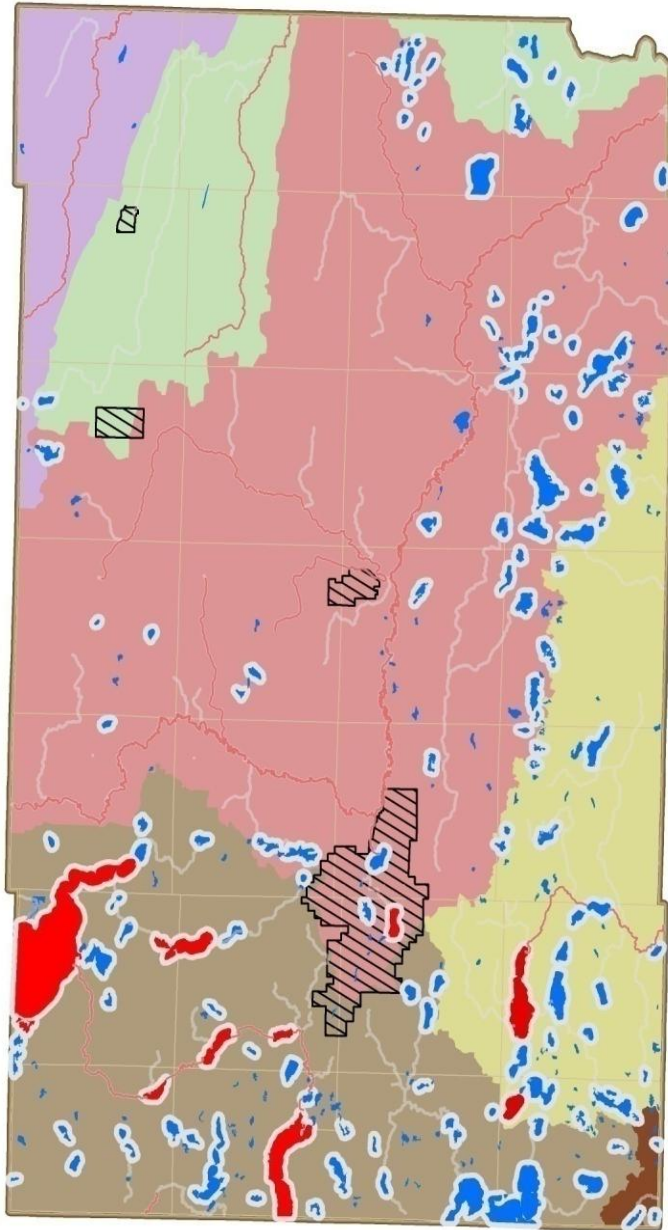
Attachment #2: SWCD Board Supervisors Zones





Todd SWCD

2015 Priority Areas



-  Impaired Waters
-  Shoreland Zone
-  Drinking Water Supply Management Area
-  Long Prairie River Watershed
-  Mississippi River--Brainerd Watershed
-  Crow Wing River Watershed
-  Redeye River Watershed
-  Mississippi River--Sartell Watershed
-  Sauk River Watershed



Sources:
Todd GIS
MN DNR
MDH



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