



CLEARWATER SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT | SUMMER 2023

# Clearwater's Conservation Chronicles



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Photo by: Chester Powell





# Watch 'em Grow!

## First Graders Learn about Planting Trees

First grade classes at Bagley Elementary and Clearbrook-Gonvick Schools had the chance to learn about planting trees while taking home a Black Cherry Tree of their very own.

First graders learned about what a tree needs to become successful, how pollinators have an impact on trees and the food they produce. They also learned how to take care of their own trees. First graders were able to plant their own Black Cherry in a peat pot with potting soil and received informational handouts about their trees, pollinators, and planting steps (along with some snacks, of course!).

Every spring before school lets out, Clearwater SWCD holds our annual Watch 'em Grow educational program for the first graders in Clearwater County.

## Well Sealings A Cost Share Program

Do you have an abandoned well that needs sealing? Or maybe you're thinking of putting in a new well and won't be using the old one anymore? Clearwater can help with costs for well sealings in Clearwater County!

Clearwater SWCD can help reimburse 50% of well sealing costs up to \$500.00 as long as our program guidelines are followed. First a contract must be signed BEFORE sealing the well and a quote must be received stating what the project could cost. After the well is sealed, a receipt from the sealer's company is needed to get you on our board meeting agenda to get you reimbursed for 50% (up to \$500) of the final project cost. After our monthly board meeting, you'll be notified about your reimbursement.

We cannot, however, pay for any state notifications or other well costs, just the actual sealing of the well. For any questions, please contact our office.







# Rain Barrels

## Helping the Environment One Class at a Time

This spring on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Clearwater SWCD hosted a Rain Barrel Education class at Bagley's Community Education room. Participants were instructed on how a rain barrel works and the environmental benefits of conserving rainwater. Staff explained how to install one on the participants own property and how to maintain rain barrels throughout the year. Each participant was then able to construct their own rain barrel with provided supplies with help of SWCD staff. The class was successful, and every participant was able to take home their fully constructed rain barrel after the class!

A rain barrel captures water from rooftops and collects it in order to use it for gardening uses. Collecting water runoff from roofs can reduce the amount of water that can damage lawns and therefore prevent soil erosion. Rain barrels can help entire communities by reducing storm runoff which can accumulate pesticides, fertilizers and pet waste that can harm local natural bodies of water. Natural debris like sticks and leaves can also collect in the runoff and clog storm drains when it heavily rains. With rain barrels you can save money on water bills and conserve water during droughts.

Clearwater SWCD hopes to hold more community education classes in the future, so keep an eye out on our Facebook page or website for any more classes. We hope to expand into rain garden, pollinator gardens, composting and other urban conservation classes eventually.

A special thank you to the Bagley Public School Community Education for allowing us to put on this rain barrel class and NRCS for helping with the class!

# Coming SOON!

## Helping to Keep our Lakes Healthy with a Watercraft Cleaning System

Clearwater SWCD along with Clearwater County, Clearwater Lake Area Association and the MN DNR has come together to provide a watercraft cleaning station known as a CD3 at the Clearwater Lake Access. A CD3 is a self-service watercraft cleaning system that anyone can use to help reduce the spread of AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species) like Zebra Mussels. CD3's come with vacuums, grabbers, brushes, lights and other tools to help remove pesky, clinging aquatic plants and animals from your boat and trailer. Reducing the risk of spreading AIS is important to keep our lakes healthy and our local landowners and vacationers happy. While not there just yet, maybe next time you visit Clearwater Lake you'll have the chance to easily clean your boat!

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## See You at the Fair!

### Come Join Us!

The Clearwater County Fair will be from August 2<sup>nd</sup> through the 6<sup>th</sup> at Clearwater County fairgrounds. We'll have our brand-new no-till drill alongside our booth this year! So come give us a visit and learn about all our programs while grabbing pollinators seeds, brochures, AIS information and all kinds of fair food!



## Grazing & Grasslands Workshop

### What We Can Accomplish When We Work Together

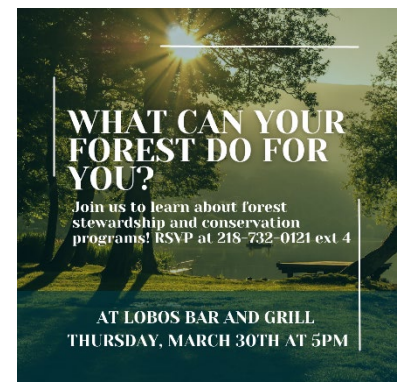
On June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Clearwater SWCD along with NRCS, US Fish & Wildlife, Pheasants Forever and Ducks Unlimited came together to host a Grazing and Grasslands Workshop at the Clearwater County Fairgrounds with local farmers and landowners. Staff talked about common livestock operations and how to improve them as well as financial and technical assistance opportunities.

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## Forestry Workshop

### What Can Your Forests Do for You?

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Clearwater and Hubbard SWCD banded together to hold a Forestry Workshop at Lobo's Bar and Grill to discuss forestry with local landowners. Staff went over forest stewardship and conservation. Though forestry was the main goal it was not the only topic of discussion that night.







# Our Ever-Expanding Soil Health Program

## A New No-Till Drill Means More Opportunities

Clearwater SWCD staff has continued to work diligently to continue to expand our soil health program and available resources to interested producers in Clearwater County and beyond. In 2022 Clearwater SWCD was asked to expand our existing soil health program to the East and run the implementation of practices through the Mississippi Headwaters Watershed. In doing so, we were able to purchase a new no-till drill to be housed in Bemdiji and available for rent by producers in the Mississippi Headwaters Watershed with eligible practices receiving a \$40/acre payment to boot.

With the continued growth in Clearwater County and new growth to the East thanks to watershed planning, Clearwater SWCD was easily able to justify the purchase of a second no-till drill to be house here in Bagley. Our new drill was received in early May and since its delivery it has spent very little time sitting in the district parking lot and most days in the field doing what it does best. The new Esch 1256 is a carbon copy of what was purchased for Beltrami in 2022. Following a year of reliable use and happy renters we viewed it as a simple decision of what to purchase for Clearwater SWCD's second drill. The new drill has a few key differences from the Great Plains 1006NT that the district has had for rent since 2015. One small but significant difference between the new Esch and the Great Plains drill is the two and a half feet of additional planting width. A very frequent request by our renters has been a larger drill to cover more acres with less seat time and we aimed to please with this larger drill. The second key difference setting this new drill apart from the Great Plains (and what is definitely most appreciated by district staff who tow them around the county) is the Esch drill pivots 90 degrees for transportation making it only a little more than eight and a half feet wide. Allowing for much safer and easier towing for district staff and renters.

Expanding the rental fleet is not the only change to the soil health services Clearwater SWCD is offering in 2023. With the recent completion of the Clearwater River Watershed One Watershed One Plan, Clearwater SWCD is now able to offer a county wide cost share flat rate of \$40/acre for eligible practices in Clearwater County. If you have considered trying no-till, cover crops, soil testing or have question on what the phrase Soil Health means for your operation please give our office a call.

# Clearwater County Rain Gauge

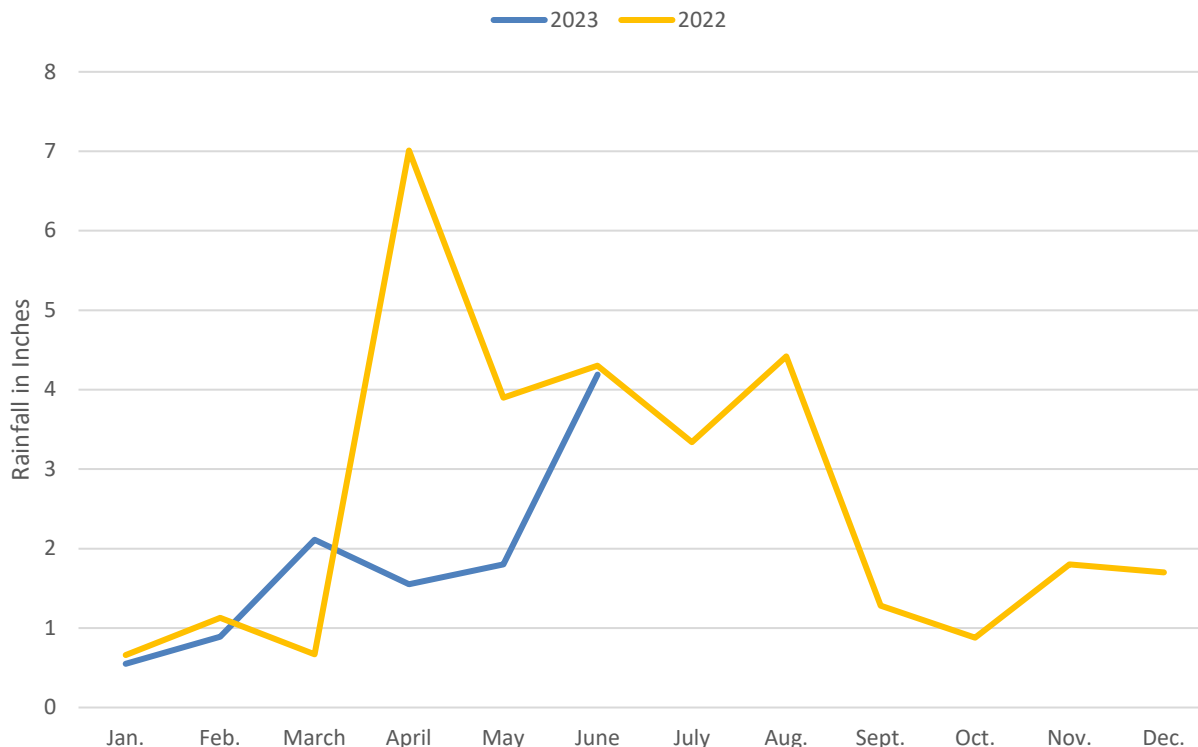
## A Look at Rainfall for 2022 and 2023

Clearwater County had an averaged total of 31.09 inches of rainfall in 2022. April was our wettest month with roughly 7 inches of precipitation and March being our driest with 0.67 inches of precipitation (converted from snow). Even though there was major flooding during spring, as a result of the high heat there was still some dryness during the summer months. Of course, nobody was thinking about that heat during the very snowy winter months, including a blizzard in December.

So far in 2023, March has been our wettest month with 2.11 inches (converted from snow) all thanks to that very snowy “spring” (though I’m not sure if you can really say we even had a spring this year) with some extreme wetness. Yet because of the record dryness of May and, so far, June, it seems that drought conditions are back in Minnesota for the 3<sup>rd</sup> straight year. Luckily, we’ve been getting some much-needed moisture during the end of June that will hopefully help with the dryness. It has also been a very warm year so far with temperatures reaching past 70 F in early April! Fingers crossed we keep getting a hearty amount of rain the rest of the year.

Clearwater SWCD, along with local volunteers have been working with the Minnesota Climatology Network to gather rainfall data since 1978. We currently have volunteers collecting rainfall data in Falk, Greenwood, Minerva, Moose Creek, Popple, Itasca, Eddy and Rice townships. If you are in a township that does not have a volunteer and would like to become a part of our rain monitoring volunteers, give the office a call for more information.

## Clearwater County Average Annual Rainfall 2022 & 2023



# ✳ Clearwater's Puzzle Page! ✳

This newsletter's event: **Brain Teasers**

**Hint:** The riddles are loosely based on our programs here at the Soil & Water

1. What can run but never walks, has a mouth but never talks, has a mouth but never eats, has a bed but never sleeps?

2. How do you spell COW in thirteen letters?

3. What gets a year older whenever it rings?

4. I run all around the pasture but never move. What am I?

5. I have no eyes, no legs, or ears, and I help move the earth. What am I?

6. What do an island and the letter "t" have in common?

7. I have a thousand ears but am a terrible listener. What am I?

8. What tree has two eyes but cannot see?

9. A woman stood on one side of a river and her dog on the other side. The woman then called her dog, who immediately crossed the river without getting wet and without using a bridge or a boat to meet the woman. How did the dog do it?

10. A man was walking in the rain. He was in the middle of nowhere. He had nothing to cover with and nowhere to hide. He arrived at home completely drenched, but not a single hair on his head was wet. How could that be?



ANSWERS:

1. A river
2. "SEE O DOUBLE YOU"
3. A tree
4. A fence
5. An earthworm
6. They are both in the middle of "Water"
7. A cornfield
8. White Pine
9. The river was frozen
10. The man was bald





# CLEARWATER

Soil & Water Conservation District

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# CLEARWATER

Soil & Water Conservation District

Visit Our Website



## Mission:

Our mission is simple - to promote the wise use and improvement of our county resources, in order that future generations will inherit an economically viable county that has made wise choices in resource management.

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