



PIPESTONE CONSERVATION & ZONING OFFICE



**"TO PROMOTE CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES THROUGH
EDUCATION, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, & STEWARDSHIP."**



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2022 Marked 70 Years of Conservation!

The Pipestone Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) celebrated 70 years of conservation in 2022! The SWCD got its start in 1952 as a series of informal and educational meetings learning about new methods of soil and water conservation at farmers' homes. Today, the SWCD office has merged with the Pipestone County Planning and Zoning office where we work jointly with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to install conservation practices and provide technical assistance to producers.

Land Retirement Programs

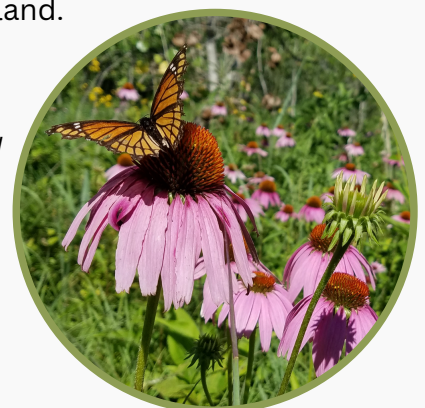
"Building a lasting legacy and enjoyment for generations to come"

Conservation easements involve the acquisition of limited rights in land for conservation purposes. Landowners who offer the state a conservation easement receive a payment (Payments are most often based on average land values and vary by township and land use history) to stop cropping and/or grazing the land, and in turn the landowners establish conservation practices such as native grass and forbs, trees, or wetland restorations. The easement is recorded on the land title with the county recorder and transfers with the land when the parcel is sold.

How do I know if a conservation easement is right for me?

There are many reasons why you might want to consider a conservation easement on your land. Below are just a few examples.

- *You are tired of consistently farming around a wet spot in your field every year, perhaps a wetland restoration would be a good fit*
- *You are close to retirement and have no future plans for your land*
- *You want to improve the habitat for fish, deer, pollinators, and other wildlife*
- *You are an avid hunter and want to create your own private hunting sanctuary*



2022 Outstanding Conservationist of the Year

Mike and Kathy Hachmann along with son Allan and his wife Peyton Hachmann are 3rd and 4th generation farmers. They have a beef cattle operation with stock cows and finish cattle as well as crop production that is certified in Minnesota's Ag Water Quality Certification Program through Department of Agriculture to mitigate any identified risks to water quality. They have a diversified rotation including corn, soybeans, winter rye, millet, alfalfa, perennial grass and pasture. They utilize cover crops in their rotation when possible.



The Hachmann's have continually worked toward conservation; implementing practices such as no-till and minimum tillage, creating and maintaining waterways, improving pasture, enhancing wildlife and utilizing integrated pest management. Since Allan has joined the operation after graduating from college, they have integrated more technology to assist in tillage reduction, planting capabilities and nutrient management such as split application of nitrogen. They have worked with Pipestone NRCS to install a 3-acre tree planting for wind erosion in addition to improving wildlife habitat; this was since enhanced with Allan's Eagle Scout project of creating prairie swallow houses. Other wildlife improvements have been creating a vernal pond, utilizing a flush bar when cutting and adding fence markers for the upland birds; they are able to enjoy partridge, pheasant, deer, turtles, turkey and much more with these practices. They have also worked with NRCS and Pipestone SWCD to install waterways, improve pest management and technology, enhance water and runoff capabilities in the cattle yard and upgrade manure management.



The Rising Trend: Soil Health

With the rising popularity of soil health practices such as no-till, strip till, and cover crops, more and more producers are beginning to see the additive benefits these types of conservation practices can bring to their operation.

Benefits:

- increased crop yield over time
- increased soil aggregate stability
- decreased soil erosion potential
- increased water infiltration into the soil
- weed and pest control
- increased biodiversity promotes soil health

The 5 Principles of Soil Health

1. Keep the soil covered
2. Minimize soil disturbance
3. Increase crop diversity
4. Keep living roots in the soil
5. Integrate livestock

Cost-Share and Other Available Funding

Our office currently has multiple funding sources available to assist producers with their conservation needs. For structural practices such as grassed waterways and basins, cost-share is typically at a 75% or 90% cost shared rate and for non-structural practices such as cover crops, cost share is typically at a flat-rate that closely follow NRCS's EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentive Program) rates. Projects that submit an application for funding are ranked for points and funded based on priority.

Our funding can be used for a variety of things such as...

- SRAM - a program that utilizes 6-month deferred grazing methods along riparian sources in order to promote water quality conservation and livestock health
- Conservation crop rotation - For example: adding a small grain rotation into your classic corn/soybean rotation
- Tillage Management Practices - such as strip-till or no-till
- Cover Crops
- Grassed Waterways
- Sediment Control Basins
- Split application of Nitrogen
- Precision Nitrogen Application
- Controlled Drainage Structures
- Prescribed Grazing
- Rain Gardens
- Nutrient Management
- Alternative Tile Intakes
- Filter Strips



Agricultural Best Management Practices Loans Available

The Agricultural Best Management Practices (AgBMP) Loan Program is a water quality program that provides low interest loans to Minnesota farmers, rural landowners and agriculture supply businesses.

AgBMP loans are meant to encourage water quality protection. Any practice that improves water quality may be eligible. These practices can include conservation tillage equipment, erosion control practices, manure management equipment, septic systems, wetland restoration, chemical management, and feedlot improvement projects.

- Loan amounts are limited to \$200,000 to any one individual or project.
- Borrowers may have multiple outstanding loans.
- Maximum loan term length is 10 years.
- The maximum interest rate is 3 percent plus other normal and customary charges.
- The frequency and number of payments are flexible and are negotiated with the lender.

If you are interested in learning more about the AgBMP program, contact our office for more information.



SEPTIC SYSTEM GRANT & LOAN DOLLARS AVAILABLE

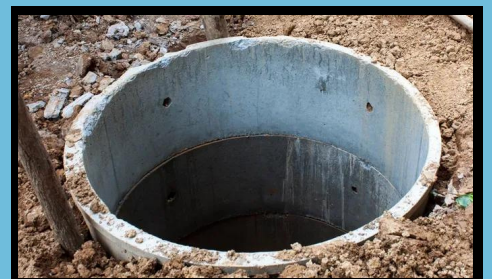
Do you have an outdated, failing septic system that could be contaminating your ground water? We have grant funds available, **up to \$10,000.00 per system**, for low income rural landowners in Pipestone county to help with the costs of replacing these failing systems and improving the quality of our water. We also have low interest loans available to all Pipestone County landowners.

To see if you qualify, visit our website to view the applications with the income limits and details of the grant, or call us and we can discuss the guidelines with you.



WELL SEALING COST-SHARE

We will cost-share on well sealing's **up to 90%** of the total cost, not to exceed \$800 payout per well without board approval. Funding is on a first come basis. All cost-share applications must be received prior to project completion.



Soil Health Financial Assistance Pilot Program Grants

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture recently launched a new pilot program grant that provides cost-share for the purchase and retrofit of soil health equipment. Adopting soil health practices often requires expensive and specific pieces of equipment, creating a need for a cost-share opportunity to offset those costs.

- Covers purchase of new equipment, used equipment, and parts to retrofit existing equipment
- Awards range from \$500-\$50,000 (up to 50% cost share)
- Individual producers, producer groups, and local government units are eligible to apply
- Eligible equipment purchases must advance soil health in Minnesota
- These grants are competitive. Awarded contracts will last for 12 months



How to apply:

Visit www.mda.state.mn.us/soil-health-grant
(or scan QR code) for more information.

Application deadline:
4:00 PM on March 20, 2023



Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program

MAWQCP is a voluntary opportunity for farmers and agricultural landowners to take the lead in implementing conservation practices that protect our water. Those who implement and maintain approved farm management practices will be certified and in turn obtain regulatory certainty for a period of ten years.

Through this program, certified producers receive:

- **Regulatory certainty:** certified producers are deemed to be in compliance with any new water quality rules or laws during the period of certification
- **Recognition:** certified producers may use their status to promote their business as protective of water quality
- **Priority for technical assistance:** producers seeking certification can obtain specially designated technical and financial assistance to implement practices that promote water quality



Interested in becoming a
Minnesota Agricultural Water
Quality Certified Farm?
Contact Danielle Evers in our
office to learn more or to fill
out an application!

Join the 25 already certified producers in Pipestone County today!



Pipestone Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors

Left to Right:

Ken Christensen - Vice Chair

Ian Cunningham - PR & I

Cal Spronk - Chairman

Bill Folger - Secretary/Treasurer

Brad Kruisselbrink - Programs



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- Melissa Rosendahl - Administrative Assistant
- Nicole Schwebach - Technician
- Danielle Evers - MAWQCP Specialist

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- Levi Champion - Soil Conservationist
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