

Fillmore Soil and Water Conservation District



2020 ANNUAL PLAN

1/29/19

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Fillmore Soil and Water Conservation District is to promote natural resource stewardship by providing educational, technical and financial assistance.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Fillmore SWCD Annual Plan is to provide direction to and set goals for District staff and supervisors for the year. It serves as a tool to prioritize the workload of the district so those goals can be achieved.

The annual plan is used in conjunction with the Root River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan to help determine needs for staffing, funding and program priorities to best ensure that the district is able to implement the Root River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan, which is also the District's Comprehensive Plan.

Development of the annual plan is accomplished through an annual planning meeting conducted by staff, supervisors and other partners where all participants provide input so that the best plan with common goals can be developed.

All programs and activities are subject to funding.

	SWCD Partners	Cooperative Projects and Programs
Federal	NRCS	EQIP (MRBI, RCPP), CSP, Local Work Group
	FSA	CRP, CCRP
State	BWSR	Grant funds (State Cost Share, Easement Delivery, Conservation Delivery, Farm Bill Assistance, Local Capacity, Buffer, Clean Water Fund), WCA Technical Evaluation Panel, RIM/CREP, Root River One Watershed, One Plan
	MPCA	Watershed Pollutant Load Monitoring Network (WPLMN), Surface Water Assessment Grant, Citizen Stream Monitoring Program (CSMP), Root River One Watershed, One Plan
	MDA	Ag BMP Loan Program, Root River Field to Stream Partnership monitoring grant, BWSR Clean Water Fund Phase II Implementation grant and Targeted Watershed grant, SE MN Nitrogen BMP Outreach, Township Nitrate Testing, Root River One Watershed, One Plan
	DNR	Springshed mapping, Observation Well Network, water permit review, Root River Landscape Stewardship Plan, SE Landscape Committee, Minnesota State Climatology Office Precipitation Monitoring Program, SWCD Forestry Committee and Field Day partner, , Root River One Watershed, One Plan
	MDH	Wellhead Protection Area Plans, Root River One Watershed, One Plan
	MASWCD	Envirothon; Outstanding Conservationist awards
	Grazing Lands Conservation Association	Grazing field days; soil health partner
	U of M Extension	Grazing Gazette (online version), Ag in the Classroom, nutrient management/N BMP outreach, noxious weed programs, Fillmore County Integrated Roadside Management
	Conservation Corps MN	Crew projects
	MN Forestry Association	Root River Woodland Council membership
Regional	SE MN Water Resources Board	Volunteer Nitrate Monitoring Network, 319 Feedlot Grants, , Ag Water Quality Certification Program, N BMP Outreach Grant
	SE SWCD Technical JPB	Nutrient Management Specialist grant, NRCS Conservation Collaboration Grant for Soil Health, , engineering assistance, RCPP/BWSR Feedlot Grant
	BALMM	Network for sharing information and regional think tank
	Hiawatha Valley RC&D	Soil health, civic engagement support, Root River One Watershed, One Plan
Local	Fillmore County	Root River One Watershed, One Plan, Local Water Management delegation, Wetland Conservation Act delegation, Feedlot Program technical support, Soil loss

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		Ordinance, Sinkhole Ordinance, Decorah Shale Overlay District, Frac Sand Technical Evaluation Panel, Household Hazardous Waste collections, East Willow Creek flood control structures, Buffer compliance
	Watershed projects	Root River One Watershed, One Plan coordination, Rush-Pine Farmer Led Council, Upper Iowa River Watershed: Water quality monitoring; Root River Cycle 2 monitoring
	Land Stewardship Project (LSP):	Soil health, women landowner workshops
	National Trout Center	Nitrate clinic, education
	4-H	Sponsor County Fair awards
	Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center	Education and outreach
	Bluff Country Hiking Club	Lost Creek Hiking Trail interpretive signs and brochure
	Friends of the Root River	Citizen group education and outreach

2020 Annual Plan Outline

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Goal #1: Control soil erosion and sustain soil productivity.....8

Objective #1: Provide funding and technical resources for soil erosion BMP's.....8

- Assist with implementing practices identified in USDA Conservation Plans and refer requests to the Root River Conservation Planner.
- Program and practice implementation (Federal, State, District technical and financial assistance).
- Assist with county soil loss ordinance.
- Identification of high priority areas for implementing BMPs in the Field to Stream Partnership study watersheds.
- Identification of high priority areas for implementing BMPs in the Root River One Watershed, One Plan
- SWCD funding for set aside acres for summer construction.
- Establish and maintain permanent vegetation and native plant species for vegetative buffers in sensitive areas; buffer law implementation.

Objective #2: Conduct education and outreach activities about soil resources.....9

- Field days, workshops in partnership with other organizations for women landowners, soil health, cover crop use, N management
- Soil stewardship materials
- Conduct research and field trials related to soil health and nutrient management
- Implement the annual SWCD education plan

Water Resources 10

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- Animal feedlots/manure storage technical and financial assistance
- Nutrient and manure management planning and practices
- Practices to reduce runoff volumes
- Pesticide reduction and disposal practices

Objective #2: Reduce urban sources of water pollution.....10

- Administer rain barrel program
- Outreach and demonstrations about reducing urban storm water volume and contaminants

Objective #3: Reduce risk of water pollution from sewage and hazardous materials.....10

- Hazardous waste disposal

Objective #4: Reduce ground water contamination risk due to karst topography.....11

- Fillmore County sinkhole ordinance
- Fillmore County Decorah shale overlay ordinance

- Well sealing
- Ground-water mapping projects
- Frac sand mining application reviews

Objective #5: Participate in watershed management planning and implementation.....11

- Monitoring activities and studies (MDA, MPCA, DNR, Upper Iowa)
- MDA Root River Field to Stream Partnership Phase II implementation activities
- East Willow Creek flood control structures
- Root River civic engagement efforts
- Root River One Watershed, One Plan implementation

Objective #6: Protect drinking water supplies.....12

- SWCD Bacteria Testing Lab
- SE MN Volunteer Nitrate Monitoring Network
- Wellhead Protection Plans
- Nitrate clinics and other drinking water protection information to a variety of audiences
- MDA Township Nitrate Testing Program; follow up support

Healthy Natural Communities 12

Goal #3: Promote land stewardship to preserve and improve natural areas.....12

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- District Tree Program and Windbreak Program
- Permanent, diverse native species vegetation (e.g. pollinator habitat) and invasive species control (Japanese hops, poison hemlock, wild parsnip, and others)
- Annual Forestry Field Day co-sponsored by the Root River Woodland Council (new membership as of January 2018)
- Annual Prairie Walk
- Living Snow Fence program
- ~~Permaculture information~~
- Decorah Shale monitoring project
- Coordination with MDA, DNR and CCM re: treatment for Japanese hops and poison hemlock along the Root River corridor
- Conduct wild parsnip study along county highways

Objective #2: Enhance the benefits of wetlands, floodplains and shoreland.....13

- MN Wetland Conservation Act and associated activities
- Provide assistance for landowner compliance with the MN Buffer Law and County Shoreland and Buffer Ordinances

Objective #3: Conduct education and outreach activities that promote land and water stewardship.....14

- Utilize media: newspaper ads, news releases, newspaper insert, commentaries, newsletters, radio ads, PSA's, website, Facebook
- Outstanding Conservationist and volunteer recognition
- Ask cooperators if they would be willing to make their project available to the public for a field day or other promotion/outreach for a practice they have installed.
- Two annual Scholarships, high school and college
- Annual events: 6th Grade Conservation Field Day, Envirothon, Ag in the Classroom, Earth Day, County Fair
- School presentations and activities
- Coordination of activities with other organizations (Bluff Country Hiking Club, LSP, 4-H, FFA, rain gauge monitors, CSMP, Ag Water Quality Certification Program, DNR Observation Well Network, etc.)
- Canoe trip/streambank tour for Board and staff; conservation practice site visits with Board
- Communication with Federal and State legislators

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Goal #4: Maintain the efficient use of district resources and staff.....16

Objective #1: Support staff and Board activities that increase the District's capacity.....16

- Staff and board training and development
- Support of and partnership with regional and local organizations
- Annual reviews: By-Laws, Annual Plan, staff performance evaluations, customer satisfaction surveys
- Long term programs: Ag BMP, Observation Well Network, summer interns, Local Work Group
- Coordination of 1W1P implementation efforts with watershed LGU partners.
- Improve local capacity utilizing Local Capacity Grant and other funding
- Provide internship opportunities

Fillmore County Soil and Water Conservation District: 2019 Annual Plan

Section #1: Soil Resources

Goal: Control Soil Erosion and Sustain Soil Productivity

Objective #1: Provide funding and technical resources for soil erosion BMPs

Actions	Timeline	Lead staff/Partners
<p>1. Assist landowners and operators with practices identified for implementation in their USDA Conservation Plans; refer to Root River Conservation Planner for plan updates as requested.</p> <p>2019 Results: Assisted NRCS with Conservation Plans in regard to implemented projects with EQIP/RCP (Number of landowners)</p>	Ongoing	AK, DK, AM, WG / NRCS
<p>2. Assist landowners with establishment of practices through the State Cost Program, Local Capacity Cost Share and NRCS EQIP.</p> <p>2019 Results: State cost share projects completed: 1975' grassed waterways (1), and 3 grade stabilization; 1 well decommissioning. Local Capacity: 1510' grassed waterway, 4 grade stabilizations.</p>	Ongoing	DK, AK, AM, WG
<p>3. Assist Fillmore County with enforcement of the county's Soil Loss Control Ordinance.</p> <p>2019 Results: No activity.</p>	Ongoing	DK, AK, AM / Fillmore County
<p>4. Continue to use results from LiDAR and Stream Power Index and farm walkovers for implementing programs and practices in FSP watersheds.</p> <p>2019 Results: Field to Stream Partnership: Clean Water Fund grant: ~5270' waterway; 4.4 acres contour buffer strip; 1 feedlot roof structure; Targeted Watershed Grant: completed restoration of E-3 Structure.</p>	Ongoing	DK, AK, AM, WG / MDA
<p>5. Assist landowners with implementing cover crops, managed grazing and other soil health practices.</p> <p>2019 Results: Implemented 4 cover crop plans and 1 grazing management plan.</p>	Ongoing	DT, SW / NRCS, Extension
<p>6. Provide SWCD funds for set aside acres for summer construction of grassed waterways and other practices</p> <p>2019 Results: No funds expended.</p>	Annually	DK, AK, AM
<p>7. Assist with establishing and maintaining vegetative buffers in sensitive areas such as shoreland, sinkholes and HEL, utilizing existing conservation programs including RIM and CRP; provide technical assistance for state buffer law compliance</p> <p>2019 Results: Buffer law – status reviews conducted, complaints investigated, compliance follow-up, updates to BuffCAT</p>	Ongoing	DK, AK, AM
<p>8. In cooperation with Root River 1W1P partners, identify priority areas for BMP implementation in the 1W1P planning area using PTMAApp and other tools and provide technical and financial assistance for implementation of practices and programs.</p> <p>2019 Results: 1W1P work plan and budget for \$1,469,595 approved and funded with BWSR Watershed Based Funding Implementation grant. PTMAApp work contracted to Winona State University. Rush Pine Farmer Led Council held outreach event. Priority watersheds identified using TMDL results and WCPI focus areas.</p>	Ongoing	NS, Admin, DK, AK, AM, DT, SW, WG / RR1W1P partners

9. Prepare resolution(s) to MASWCD

Admin, Board

2019 Results: 2 resolutions moved and seconded for adoption at MASWCD convention regarding Education on Impacts of N Inhibitors and Education for No Fall Tillage Soybeans.

Objective #2: Conduct education and outreach activities about soil resources

Actions	Timeline	Lead staff/Partners
1. Provide Soil Stewardship information to area churches, if available. 2019 Results: Unknown.	April 2020	Admin, DT
2. Co-sponsor a workshop for women landowners if funding/partners available. 2019 Results: No activity.	Summer 2020	Admin / partners
1. Assist with soil health (including grazing and minimum/no till) field days, workshops, studies and soil health information programs with NRCS and Extension; share soil temperature research results. 2019 Results: Helped lead 5 day grazing training for 41 state and federal employees. Helped lead Tech Note 31 statewide training reaching 143 staff. Helped lead Soil Health NEDS training reaching 231 employees.	Summer/Fall 2020	DT / NRCS, GLCA, Extension
2. Conduct side-by-side comparisons of various tillage practices and N practices (SE MN N BMP Outreach) 2019 Results: Assisted with 4 plots installed and monitored- pre-plant soil samples, field scouting for pre-side dressing N testing (PSNT), collected PSNT samples, took SPAD readings, collected samples for basal stalk nitrate testing and whole plant samples.	Spring-Fall 2020	SW
3. Partner with Tour de Forage event with Midwest Forage Association. 2019 Results: Sara West represented Fillmore SWCD at this event	Summer 2020	DT, Board
4. Update and implement the annual SWCD education and outreach plan. 2019 Results: Completed and activities tracked as completed (Radio and newspaper ads, Forestry Field Day at Bailey Brothers, October Prairie Walk at Gossman Farm, etc.)	March 2020	AM, Education Committee, staff

Section #2: Water Resources

Goal: Maintain and Improve Surface and Ground Water Quality

Objective #1: Reduce agricultural sources of water pollution

Actions	Timeline	Lead staff/Partners
1. Provide financial and technical assistance to feedlot operators for feedlot run-off control and ag waste storage facilities. 2019 Results: 1 feedlot roof structure installed; also assisted CFO with site inspections and construction checks.	Ongoing	AK, CFO
2. Provide technical assistance to develop new and update existing nutrient and manure management plans focusing on vulnerable wellhead protection areas and nitrate impaired watersheds. 2019 Results: 28 plans completed covering over 17,000 acres.	Ongoing	SW
3. Promote practices, such as those that improve soil health, that reduce the need for pesticides. 2019 Results: included with other soil health education.	Ongoing	DT
4. Provide information on the SWCD website about waste pesticide disposal.	Ongoing	SueW

[2019 Results: Unknown.](#)

5. Provide technical assistance for upland treatment and water retention practices to reduce runoff volumes; priority to the FSP watersheds following farm walkovers.

[Duplicate of Section 1, Objective 1, Action 1](#)

Objective #2: Reduce urban sources of water pollution

Actions	Timeline	Lead staff/Partners
1. Administer the SWCD rain barrel program and promote at the county fair (door prize) and other events. 2019 Results: 4 sold.	Ongoing	NS, AM
2. Pursue funding for community assessments, outreach and demonstrations for reducing volume of and contaminants in urban stormwater, including designs by the Center for Changing Landscapes. Follow up: Community Partners Grant recipients. 2019 Results: Maintenance and rehab was completed at Harmony rain garden and technical assistance provided at Kingsland School District rain garden. No funding for the Fillmore County Office Building retention pond; County will maintain.	Ongoing	AM

Objective #3: Reduce risk of water pollution from sewage and hazardous materials

Actions	Timeline	Lead staff/Partners
1. Assist with the semi-annual Fillmore County Household Hazardous Waste Collections. 2019 Results: Staff helped at both events in May and October	May/Oct 2020	Staff

Objective #4: Reduce ground water contamination risks due to karst topography

Actions	Timeline	Lead staff/Partners
1. Assist Fillmore County with enforcement of the county's sinkhole ordinance. 2019 Results: Two inquiries in 2019.	Ongoing	DK, AM
2. Assist Fillmore County with investigating sites for development in the Decorah Shale Overlay District; review ordinance with Zoning staff. 2019 Results: No activity.	Ongoing	NS, AM
3. Provide cost share for sealing abandoned wells; review eligibility criteria for use of state cost share funds. 2019 Results: Two requests; one sealed. Secured SE MN Well Sealing grant funds. Two contracts encumbered from this grant in 2019.	Ongoing	DK, NS, AM, AK
4. Assist with dye trace studies and ground water research. 2019 Results: Assisted MDA and DNR with maintaining continuous nitrate monitoring equipment in springs in Fillmore County.	Ongoing	NS, AM, intern/ DNR, U of M
5. Participate in the Technical Evaluation Panel for frac sand mining permit application reviews. 2019 Results: No permit applications in 2019.	As needed	Admin, NS, AM / DNR, BWSR

Objective #5: Participate in watershed management planning and implementation

Actions	Timeline	Lead staff/Partners
1. Continue partnership with MDA in the Field to Stream Partnership with monitoring and the BMP implementation phase in the Headwaters, Bridge and Crystal Creek watersheds in cooperation with Root River and Mower SWCDs. 2019 Results: Water quality monitoring continues. Work plan and budget prepared for new contract to continue the monitoring to June 30, 2021.	Ongoing	Admin, NS, AM, DK, AK, WG / MDA
2. Continue partnership with MPCA to monitor Watershed Pollutant Load Monitoring Network (WPLMN) sites. 2019 Results: WPLMN completed for the sampling season. Two-year contract renewal to come in 2020.	Ongoing	Admin, NS, AM / MPCA
3. Support civic engagement efforts in the Root River watershed (Friends of the Root River, Rush-Pine Farmer Led Council, Watson Creek nutrient management BMP implementation , MDA FSP, etc.) 2019 Results: LC helped to coordinate Rush-Pine Farmer Led Council event.	Ongoing	NS, Extension, MPCA, Winona Co.
4. Assist with water quality monitoring in the Upper Iowa Watershed. 2019 Results: Completed Upper Iowa sampling once per month (April-October) in cooperation with IA DNR.	April -Oct 2020	NS, AM
5. Continue to oversee maintenance of the East Willow Creek flood control structures with Fillmore County and NRCS; 2019 Results: Trees removed from dike of two structures by as directed by NRCS. 2019 structure inspections completed by Aaren Mathison and Willis Goll; inspection information submitted to NRCS. Light maintenance completed.	Ongoing	AM, WG / Fillmore Co./ NRCS
6. Coordinate implementation of the Root River One Watershed, One Plan; facilitate Advisory Committee meetings (1-2/year), quarterly Policy Committee and Planning Work Group meetings; grant tracking and reporting and other admin/coordination. 2019 Results: Admin coordinated meetings of the Planning Work Group, Advisory Committee, and Policy Committee. Grant tracking completed by LC. Reporting completed by staff.	Ongoing	NS, Admin

Objective #6: Protect drinking water supplies

Actions	Timeline	Lead staff/Partners
1. Maintain operation of the SWCD Bacteria Testing Lab and provide nitrate screening as requested. 2019 Results: Internal audit completed in March. Ongoing lab services maintained; 112 total samples analyzed. Ongoing nitrate screening provided. Reviewed sample acceptance procedure with new staff.	Ongoing	NS, AM, Admin, SueW
2. Continue to coordinate Fillmore County's participation in the SE MN Volunteer Nitrate Monitoring Network. 2019 Results: Participation list updated.	Ongoing	NS / Olmsted SWCD
3. Conduct at least two nitrate testing clinics. 2019 Results: 3 Nitrate clinics completed: Preston Equipment and National Trout Center in February, Mabel Farmers' Market in October	Spring/Summer 2020	NS, AM, / Public Health
4. Provide information on water treatment systems as requested. 2019 Results: Information provided as needed.	As needed	NS, AM
5. Review Wellhead Protection Plans and provide assistance as needed. 2019 Results: Unknown. Attendance at Chatfield Field Day.	As needed	NS, SW, Public Water Suppliers

Section #3: Healthy Natural Communities

Goal: Promote land stewardship to preserve and improve natural areas

Objective #1: Promote practices that enhance high quality permanent vegetative cover

Actions	Timeline	Lead staff/Partners
1. Administer the District Tree Program. 2019 Results: 12,729 trees sold; net profit \$5,640	Ongoing	SueW, AK
2. Administer District Windbreak Program. 2019 Results: 8 contracts completed for 8,180', total paid \$4,818.50.	Ongoing	AK, AM
3. Sponsor annual Forestry Field Day on July 29, 2020. 2019 Results: Field day held July 24 at Bailey Brothers outside of Chatfield; ~60 people in attendance.	July 29, 2020	AM, Intern, Forestry Committee
4. Sponsor annual Prairie Walk. 2019 Results: Prairie Walk was held in August at Tim and Susan Gossman farm, outside of Chatfield. ~30 people in attendance.	Summer/Fall 2020	AM, Forestry Committee-Board members
5. Promote the use of native plants and CSP/EQIP pollinator species habitat plantings. Post a list of available vendors on the SWCD website along with pictures of successful plantings. Investigate the use of native plants on mound systems. Add information with update of SWCD website. 2019 Results: Unknown. Remove?	Ongoing	SueW, AM, NS
6. Promote invasive species control with funding and assistance from DNR, MDA and Conservation Corps Minnesota for treatment of Japanese hops and poison hemlock along the Root River; also conduct wild parsnip roadside integrated management project with Fillmore County Highway Department, Extension, Prairie Smoke, and a summer intern. 2019 Results: Updated county map for integrated roadside project and inspected plots. Contractor was unable to complete Japanese hops control work on Root River. MDA Noxious Weed grant extended through 2020.	Ongoing	AM, intern, Forestry Committee, Extension, County Highway, MDA
7. Provide support to the Living Snow Fence Program and other snow fence options with MnDOT and the county to identify areas suitable for the practice as opportunities become available. 2019 Results: None State does the promotion. Remove?	As needed	DK, AM
8. Investigate permaculture practices and post information on the SWCD website about permaculture. 2019 Results: No activity. Remove?	As needed	AM
9. Monitor Decorah Shale outcrop on Timm property on County Road 5 following planting of deep-rooted natives to stabilize slumping area that periodically fills the road ditch 2019 Results: Survey completed. Fillmore County worked with landowner on improvements.	Ongoing	AK, AM, County Highway, Timm family

Objective #2: Enhance the benefits of wetlands, floodplains and shoreland

Actions	Timeline	Lead staff/Partners
1. Administer the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act and associated activities (wetland banking, restorations, etc.); begin shared staffing for WCA with Wabasha SWCD.	Ongoing	AM, Admin, NS

2019 Results: See WCA annual report to BWSR; Mathison served on TEP; Contract with Wabasha for WCA shared services position; monthly meetings held either in person or by phone.

2. Identify areas lacking a vegetative buffer in the shoreland impact zone and promote establishment of buffers. Educate landowners about the buffer law and work with them to achieve compliance.
2019 Results: Buffer information included in annual newspaper insert.

Objective #3: Conduct education and outreach activities that promote land and water stewardship

Actions	Timeline	Lead staff/Partners
1. Update and maintain the SWCD website and Facebook page. Redesign the website to better reflect SWCD programs. 2019 Results: Investigation of options for website update continues.	Ongoing	SueW, Admin, Staff
2. Submit periodic news releases or commentaries from the Board and staff to the local newspapers about SWCD priorities 2019 Results: See education plan.	Ongoing	Admin, Board
3. Publish annual newspaper insert and at least two online newsletters. 2019 Results: Newspaper insert published in February in the Fillmore County Journal; 1 online newsletter completed in 2019.	Annually	Admin, SueW, Staff
4. Select and promote a county Outstanding Conservationist (from District 2 in 2020) and other award candidates. Hold annual recognition event. 2019 Results: January event at F&M Bank; Johnson Rolling Acres selected in 2019, and attended the 2019 state convention.	Annually	Staff, Board
5. Sponsor the annual 6th Grade Conservation Day. 2019 Results: Held September 18 with 120 kids attending from two schools.	Annually	AM, Staff
6. Assist with annual Farm Safety Day Camp. 2019 Results: Dean assisted in 2019.	Annually	DT, Staff
7. Support and assist with the Area 7 Envirothon. 2019 Results: Aaren attended the planning meetings and helped at the Area event. He also contacted all the Vo Ag teachers in the county with information about the Envirothon.	Annually	AM
8. Promote and provide two \$500 scholarships, one to a graduating senior and one to a returning college student. 2019 Results: Both scholarships awarded. High School: Madeline Smith; College: Taylor Ruen	Annually	SueW, Admin, Board
9. Provide information on natural resources conservation at the county fair. 2019 Results: Location in the Commercial Building; summer apprentice conducted kids' activities: stream table, groundwater model and edible soil Wednesday through Friday afternoons.	Annually	SueW, AK, Staff, Board
10. Participate in Ag in the Classroom, Earth Day and other activities in the schools and communities. Contact the schools to encourage them to utilize SWCD staff as presenters and plan other activities. 2019 Results: Kingsland HS Fish and Waters class in October: stream table and groundwater model demonstrations and demonstrated water monitoring during their field day to the Lanesboro hatchery. About 350 tree seedlings were distributed to 5 th graders in 7 schools in the county in May; a tree was planted at 3 schools (Fillmore Central, Kingsland and Chatfield).	Annually	NS, AM, Admin, SW, Staff
11. Promote the MPCA Citizen Stream Monitoring Program. 2019 Results: Information at the county fair.	Annually	NS
12. Coordinate the Volunteer Precipitation Monitoring Network. 2019 Results: Volunteer data collected and submitted to the state.	Annually	DK

13. Work with the FFA and 4H organizations to promote soil conservation and to provide information about BMPs, careers, forestry, water testing, etc. Demonstrate the rain simulator at the FFA soils competition. Invite students to job shadow with staff. 2019 Results: Contact with Fillmore Central but no activities.	Spring/Fall 2020	Staff
14. Provide opportunities for Board members to visit or tour sites where conservation practices are being implemented. 2019: No activity.	Spring-Fall 2020	Staff
15. Distribute information to hunter safety classes about how to reduce tree damage from tree stands; also post on Facebook in August and include an article in one of the online newsletters. 2019 Results: Information provided to the Spring Valley class in March.	Spring 2020	AM, DNR
16. Communicate with state and federal legislators about conservation programs and their effectiveness. 2019 Results: MASWCD Legislative Briefing and Day at the Capitol attended by Administrator.	Spring 2020	Admin, Staff, Board
17. Schedule a canoe trip/streambank tour for Board and staff on the Root River to view areas of special interest for specific educational purposes. Could participate in the Friends of the Root River float planned for summer 2019. 2019 Results:	Summer 2020	Staff
18. Continue sponsoring the awards for forestry and other conservation practices through 4H and work with the leaders to encourage better participation in these programs among their members. 2019 Results:	July 2020	Board
19. Coordinate efforts with the Bluff Country Hiking Club to maintain interpretive information for the Lost Creek Hiking Trail. 2019 Results: No activity.	Summer 2020	AM, Intern, Forestry Committee
20. Coordinate activities with other conservation organizations that help meet the goals of the SWCD (e.g. Eagle Bluff, Project Get Outdoors, Land Stewardship Project, National Trout Center, The Nature Conservancy, etc.) 2019 Results: SWCD historical display was in the county courthouse April- May, karst trunk updated.	As needed	Staff, Board
21. Provide scholarships or incentives to attend local or regional educational events that are consistent with the SWCD's mission. 2019 Results: No activity	As needed	Staff, Board
22. Assist MDA with Minnesota Ag Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP). 2019 Results: Inform landowners of and out brochures.	As needed	Staff, AK
23. Provide information about resources that assist in making good land use decisions (ex: Geologic Atlas, Root River Landscape Plan, Root River WRAPS and 1W1P, etc.) to local officials, homeowners, realtors, lenders, etc. 2019 Results: Information available at SWCD office.	Ongoing	Staff / Zoning
24. Create Root River 1W1P education/outreach program and/or templates in cooperation with 1W1P Planning Work Group. 2019 results: Development of civic engagement plan with assistance from Extension and U of M.	Ongoing	NS, Admin
25. Ask cooperators if they would be willing to make their project available to the public for a field day or other promotion/outreach for a practice they have installed. 2019 results: (Would be inquired on a per need basis.)	Ongoing	All staff

Section #4: SWCD Capacity

Goal: Maintain the efficient use of District resources and staff

Objective #1: Support staff and Board activities that increase the District's capacity

Actions	Timeline	Lead staff/Partners
1. Provide funding for employee and supervisor training and development as budgeted. 2019 Results: Staff attending WPLMN, Nutrient Management, and NRCS design tool trainings.	Ongoing	Staff, Board
2. Conduct annual performance evaluations and review staff work plans. 2019 Results: Six month evaluations completed with two staff, annual evaluation completed for one staff. IDPs updated in eLink for technical staff. Exit interview held with retiring staff person. One-on-one staff meetings held in process of Classification/Compensation study.	Ongoing	Admin
3. Support staff and supervisor attendance at meetings of regional organizations that help achieve SWCD goals (SE Technical Support JPB, BALMM). 2019 Results: The SWCD was represented by staff and board members at several regional meetings of the Technical JPB, Hiawatha Valley RC&D, Water Resources Advisory Committee, Water Resources Board, District Managers' meetings, and BALMM.	Ongoing	Staff, Board
4. Administer the Ag BMP Loan Program. 2019 Results: 19 loan applications for \$673,103; 13 completed for \$591,503.25: 3 manure equipment (\$297,357), 2 completed (\$294,856.50); 2 feedlot fix (\$15,248), 1 completed (\$13,747.70); 10 septic systems (\$129,496) , 6 completed (\$61,896.23); 1 no till equipment (\$64,000), completed; 3 well replacement (\$55,583), 2 completed (\$45,482.82); (1 Variable Rate Technology (\$111,420), completed	Ongoing	AK, Admin
6. Attend County Technology Committee meetings, and when applicable, Department Head meetings. 2019 Results: Anne Koliha attended the monthly meetings and received information about the county's phone system in the event that USDA phones will no longer be available. Remove?	Ongoing	AK, Admin
7. Annually review and approve the District By-Laws. 2019 Results: Completed in February.	Annually	Board
8. Financially support the Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) including SE Area 7, the Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees (MACDE), including the SE Area 7, the SE MN SWCD Technical Support Joint Powers Board, Hiawatha Valley RC&D Council, and the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). 2019 Results: Dues were paid to all organizations.	Annually	Board
9. Continue participation in the DNR Observation Well Network. 2019 Results: Two wells were monitored by staff.	March-Nov 2020	DK
10. Participate in Local Work Group for federal programs (EQIP, CRP, etc.) 2019 Results: LWG meeting was held in coordination with the Root River 1W1P Planning Committee meeting.	Spring 2020	Staff, Board / NRCS
12. Pursue funding to hire a summer intern to assist with SWCD projects and programs. 2019 Results: Set aside marginal funding in annual budget for seasonal intern.	Nov. 2020	Admin, Personnel Committee
13. Provide technology/devices for increasing efficiency of field work and data collection and continuing education for use; investigate time tracking options that can better summarize information for grant applications and reporting. 2019 Results: Purchase of water monitoring Sonde device, tablet purchased for water monitoring, new computers and Microsoft software purchased.	Ongoing	Staff

14. Develop work plan for use of 2020 Local Capacity Grant Funds. 2019 Results: 2019 grant allocation: \$4,000 technology expenditures, \$56,000 technical assistance, \$40,000 cost-share projects	July 2020	Staff and Board
15. Distribute customer satisfaction surveys and compile results for an annual report to the SWCD staff and Board. 2019 Results: Surveys distributed; results to be compiled. What gets done with results? Comment card available?	Ongoing	SueW and staff

Fillmore Soil and Water Conservation District
Comprehensive Plan Addendum – 2019 High Priority Issues and Special Projects

High Priority Erosion Problems

The rolling and often steep topography of the county creates erosion problems if proper land use practices are not used. The Fillmore SWCD has targeted and will continue to target the majority of its state cost-share funds to the construction of grassed waterways that will minimize gully erosion. The remainder of the funds will continue to be used for such practices as terraces, water and sediment control basins and gully control structures. If demand exceeds funding, priority for these projects will be given to projects where the landowner can control upland treatment of cropland that maintains soil loss to T or less as determined by NRCS RUSLE2 calculations. The Root River water quality studies are helping to identify areas for prioritization. With the completion of the Root River One Watershed, One Plan, PTMApp will be field verified and used as a tool for targeting practices. USDA HEL conservation plans that have been updated also identify areas of need for conservation practices.

High Priority Water Quality Problems

High priority water quality problems and their primary sources identified in the Fillmore County Local Water Management Plan and the Root River 1W1P are listed below. Strategies for reducing water quality problems from these sources are embedded in the actions above as part of ongoing SWCD programs and special projects listed below.

Turbidity (sediment)

Primary sources: Upland erosion from agricultural fields
Stream bank erosion due to high flows and floods
Urban storm water runoff adding sediment and increasing flow volumes

Fecal coliform bacteria

Primary sources: Feedlot runoff
Manure applications
Malfunctioning septic systems

Nitrates

Primary sources: Nitrogen fertilizer applications
Manure applications
Malfunctioning septic systems

Pesticides

Primary sources: Row crop pesticide applications
Urban storm water runoff

Special Projects

Fillmore SWCD Programs:

- Windbreaks: Cost share rate is 50% per tree based on the cost of potted stock offered by the SWCD; maximum cost-share of \$1000.
- Summer construction set aside funds are available to seed down areas where a conservation practice is to be installed in the summer months. The payment is \$163/acre for up to 10 acres of set aside.

Area 7 Soil Health Technician:

- Funded by FY2014 Clean Water Fund (CWF) Shared Services Grant to the SE SWCD Technical JPB which ended in 2018. NRCS Conservation Collaboration Grant awarded to continue to fund 85% of the position for 3 years. Remaining 15% will be funded by the Root River 1W1P grant and other sources. Currently housed in the Fillmore SWCD office to offer technical assistance for managed grazing, cover crops and other soil health practices in 11 counties with financial and in-kind support from NRCS, the SWCDs and other local organizations and canning companies.
- The Soil Health Technician is responsible for operation and maintenance of the BWSR rain simulator.

USDA HEL Conservation Plan updates:

- Updates will continue, as needed, funded by the FY2014 BWSR Soil Erosion Compliance Grant, which ended in April 2018. Assistance continues to be provided to landowners with installing practices identified in their conservation plans. A Root River Watershed Conservation Planner funded by the Watershed Conservation Planning Initiative is housed in the Root River SWCD office. Torkelson Creek was identified as a priority watershed by the Local Work Group for EQIP and conservation planning efforts.

Nutrient Management:

- Activities will support the strategies in the MN Nitrogen Fertilizer Management Plan.
- On-farm N BMP comparison study plots installed with MDA and Extension will continue with four sites planned for 2019. The MDA N BMP Outreach grant is administered through the SE MN Water Resources Board as of January 2018. It funds 20% of the NMP position.
- Nutrient Management Specialist position was funded by a BWSR CWF grant, which ended in 2018, so funding from the Root River 1W1P watershed-based grant began funding 80% of the position in August 2018.

Buffers

- Maintaining CRP buffers, grassed waterways and perennial cover in sensitive areas is a priority.
- Complete compliance checks for the buffer law.
- Assist Fillmore County Zoning with any enforcement procedures related to the buffer law. Funding was approved for buffer work again in 2019: \$30,000 buffer grant plus \$2000 from the Local Capacity Grant matched by \$2000 from Fillmore County.
- All information is entered into BUFFCAT, the statewide database that serves as the annual reporting mechanism for the grant. As of the end of 2018, 99% of parcels are in compliance, and just one landowner remains to come into compliance.

Feedlots:

- Continue to complete runoff control projects utilizing 319 grants. Another 319 grant was awarded for feedlot projects starting in 2018 and continuing through 2020.
- BWSR was awarded federal RCPP funding to be matched with state funds for feedlot projects in SE MN. Communication will continue with the County Feedlot Officer regarding potential projects.

Root River Watershed:

- The Root River One Watershed, One Plan Pilot was completed in 2016 with approval of the watershed implementation plan by the BWSR Board on December 14, 2016, and by the Root River 1WIP Policy Committee on December 19, 2016. All 13 LGUs adopted the plan and the Joint Powers Agreement in 2017.
- In 2018, Fillmore SWCD continued to provide day-to-day coordination; Winona SWCD continued as fiscal agent. A watershed implementation grant was awarded in June 2018 in the amount of \$851,301. A work plan and budget were approved by the Policy Committee and implementation activities have commenced.
- Root River Cycle 2 Intensive Watershed Monitoring: 2018 marked the second round of intensive watershed monitoring in the Root River watershed. Olmsted, Fillmore and Root River SWCDs are partnering to conduct the chemistry and bacteria monitoring at 14 sites in 2018 and 2019 with Olmsted serving as the fiscal agent.
- MPCA Watershed Pollutant Load Monitoring Network:
 - Two SWCD staff are partially funded for monitoring activities at five sites on the main stem and major tributaries of the Root River. A new budget and work plan were approved to continue the work in 2018-2019.
- SE MN Volunteer Nitrate Monitoring Network:
 - The Water Management Coordinator will assist with maintaining the volunteer list, filling empty nodes, and distribution of volunteer newsletters.
- MDA Root River Field to Stream Partnership:
 - Two SWCD staff are partially funded to conduct monitoring activities.
 - A contractor will continue to work with the farmers in all three study watersheds who completed the farm walkovers and have one or more practices identified as priorities.
 - Projects are being completed and are being planned for 2019 using funding from MRBI-EQIP for the Lower South Fork, a BWSR Clean Water Fund Grant, and a BWSR Targeted Watershed Grant.
 - Funds left from the E-3 project will be used for water storage structures or other practices in the watershed.
 - Future monitoring will measure BMP effectiveness by comparing to baseline data collected in the first eight years of the project.

Upper Iowa Watershed:

- Meetings were held regarding the WRAPS document for the Upper Iowa expected to be completed in 2019.
- Continue monitoring with Iowa DNR.

Healthy Forests for Healthy Water:

- The portion of the funds transferred to BWSR were spent in 2018. The final financial report and project results were entered into eLINK.

Summer Intern:

- An application was not submitted to Conservation Corps Minnesota to be a worksite for an apprentice position for 2019 because of cuts to state funding which would require the SWCD to fund the position entirely.
- The interns gain experience with water quality monitoring, doing outreach and education on forestry and storm water management, data management for the bacteria testing lab, and implementing conservation practices.
- With the SWCD Forestry Committee, the annual field day is planned for July 24, 2019 at Lost Creek Trail west of Chatfield.

- An intern will continue to work with the SWCD, Fillmore County Highway Department, Extension and Prairie Smoke volunteers in 2019 to study options for treating wild parsnip along county roads using integrated management practices and to provide education on these practices to landowners and road maintenance personnel; a county database will be established to identify areas not to be sprayed where landowners agree to be responsible for wild parsnip control.

Ag Water Quality Certification Program (AWQCP):

- Promotional activities were conducted in 2018 with funds to be requested from the SE MN Water Resources Board. Additional funds are available in 2019 if needed.

MDA Township Nitrate Testing Program:

- The second round of township testing was conducted by MDA in 2018. Assistance will be provided with follow up if requested by MDA.