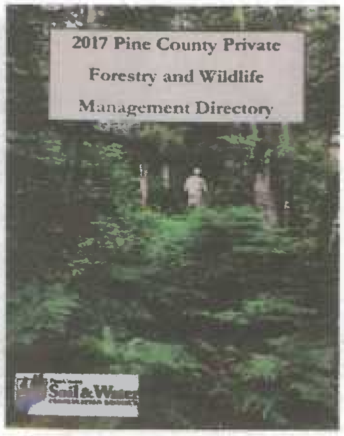
Pine County
Soil & Water
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

formerly knows as the Pine County Waters

VOLUME 27 ISSUE 1 CIRCULATION 24,768 FEBRUARY 2018

Completed Forestry and Wildlife Management Directory



During the Fall of 2017, the "2017 Pine County Private Forestry and Wildlife Management Directory" was completed.

The purpose of this directory is for private landowners in Pine County to connect with private organizations in the field of natural resources as needed to accomplish their land management goals.

The types of private organizations that can be found in this directory include foresters, loggers, tree planters, invasive species control specialists, nurseries, soil and water quality organizations, wildlife habitat managers, land surveyors, tree removal specialists, trail and firebreak clearing organizations, brush management organizations, and conservation organizations.

Most of the organizations listed in the directory do business in Pine County on private land. This directory can continue to be updated over time as needed.

This directory is available in PDF form at http://www.pineswcd.com/ under "Forestry News" or by clicking on the Forestry tab.

If you or someone you know is an individual or organization who works on private land in Pine County in the field of natural resources, you can be included in this directory by contacting Pine Soil & Water at (320) 216-4245.

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Pine County Soil & Water Conservation District
130 Oriole Street East
Sandstone, MN 55072

Inside this issue....

Pine County Soil & Water Conservation District

The Pine SWCD Newsletter is published by the Pine Soil & Water Conservation District, 130 Oriole Street East, Sandstone, MN 55072.
Telephone: (320) 216-4240 www.pineswcd.com
Editor: Jill Carlier Printed by North Star Media

Pine County Waters is funded through state and local grants for water plan implementation. All programs and services of the Pine SWCD are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, political beliefs, sexual orientation, disability, marital status or family status.

PINE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

Jill Carlier, District Manager
(320) 216-4241

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(320) 216-4243

Kris Larson, District Technician
(320) 216-4242

TBD, District Forester
(320) 216-4245

DISTRICT SUPERVISORS

Skip Thomson, Chair Tom Swaim, Vice Chair Doug Odegard, Secretary
Jerry Telker, Treasurer JJ Waldhalm, Public Relations

Assisted by USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (320) 384-7432
Julie Salmon, District Conservationist
Jason Rehn, Soil Conservation Technician

In Cooperation with the USDA Farm Service Agency (320) 679-2080
County Executive Director: Aaron Paul
Program Technicians: Sheila Gustafson, Yvonne Johnson, Katie Messer
Farm Loan Manager: Julie Kolodji, Farm Loan Officer; Betty Sorenson, Farm Loan Officer Trainee Katie Zachman, Program Technician Sandy Beck

Cross Lake Project

A gully stabilization project was completed on the north end of Cross Lake this fall.

Before:

After:

Why Should You be Concerned About the Health of Your Soil?

Healthy soils are more productive and have the ability to hold more water. In fact, by improving the amount of organic material in just the top 6 inches of soil, you can increase the soil's holding capacity by up to 27,000 gallons of water per acre. Soils with higher productivity need less fertilizer and other inputs which in turn improves your bottom line. Having soils that can retain more water, decreases surface runoff and field erosion while also preventing sediment and nutrients from polluting nearby water-bodies. Improving soil health is largely based around having a healthy food web of micro and macro predators, root feeders, shredders, fungi, bacteria, protozoa, and roots. Each of these play their own role in keeping the soil healthy. Some organisms feed off other bacteria, some feed off plant roots, but they all work together to improve soil structure. Good soil structure allows the plant roots to go deeper into the soil profile, making it easier to gather the water and nutrients needed for good productivity.

Some of the key practices in building healthier soils are to; keep soils covered throughout the entirety of the growing season by leaving crop residue or planting cover crops, minimize tillage or other disturbances, use cover crops to add organic matter, and grow a variety of crop species. Studies have shown by having a more diverse crop rotation you can minimizes pests and build soil health faster. Another encouraged practice is developing a unique soil health management plan for your land. A management plan is like a map to help guide you in improving soil health. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) can recommend specific practices that are the most cost-effective for your individual situation. By following the recommendations of a soil health management plan most farmers can increase the level of organic material in their soil in as little as three years. Another resource aiding in improving soil health is a no-till drill available through the Pine Soil and Water Conservation District. The no-till drill specializes in planting cover crops while leaving high levels of crop residue in place which essentially eliminates soil erosion. As of 2017, over 1,450 acres have been seeded throughout Pine County using the district's no-till drill.

The facts simply show that healthy soils will save water by increasing infiltration, reduce pest and disease problems, reduce fertilizer costs, decrease field erosion all while sustaining your farm's income. For more information, contact the Hinckley Field Office at 320-384-7432, ext 3 or stop by our office at 260 Morris Avenue N in Hinckley. You can also find more information on soil health at the Minnesota NRCS website: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/mn/home/

USDA

Pine County Soil & Water Conservation District

Join Pine County Master Gardeners at their 16th Annual Pine County Horticulture Day March 24th

Whether you are new to gardening or have been gardening all your life, there will be something for everyone at the 16th Annual Pine County Master Gardener Horticulture Day on Saturday, March 24th. The day begins with registration, coffee and exhibits at 8 a.m. and runs until 2 p.m. at the Pine City High School.

"Minnesota Forests are Changing with the Climate" will be the keynote presentation by Lee Frelich, Researcher and Director of the University of Minnesota Center for Forest Ecology and Institute of the Environment

There will be two rounds of breakout sessions on the following topics.

"Growing Healthy Vegetables" by Michelle Grabowski, University of Minnesota Extension Plant Pathologist

"Beyond Basics: How to Get the Most from Your Perennial Garden" by Kate Netwal, U of M Extension Master Gardener, Hennepin County

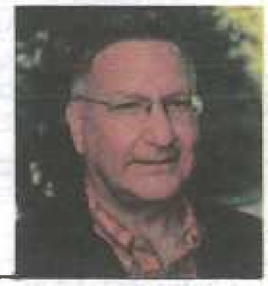
"Pruning Trees and Shrubs" by Donna Tatting, U of M Extension Master Gardener, Chisago County

"Growing Blueberries in East Central Minnesota" by Diane Patras, U of M Extension Master Gardener, Chisago County Master Gardener

"Jam Making" Ben Wiener, U of M Extension Master Gardener, Pine County

The registration fee includes the educational sessions, morning refreshments, lunch, handouts, door prizes and time to visit with exhibitors featuring garden items, plants and bulbs. Bring your gardening questions for the "Ask a Master Gardener" table and visit with experienced Pine County Master Gardeners.

Register by March 20th for $21 to save money and to be entered in a Grand Prize Drawing. After March 20, the fee is $25. Or request a form by calling 1-800-657-3813 Ext. #4 or call 1-320-591-1651. Print a Horticulture Day Registration form from the Pine County Extension office home page at www.extension.umn.edu/county/pine and click onto "Pine County Horticulture Day". Forms are also available from the Extension office at the Pine County Courthouse at 635 Northridge Dr. in Pine City, and at the Flower Box in Pine City; Beaver Meadows Garden Center south of Hinckley; Brown's Greens & Beans in Sandstone and Village Floral in Grantsburg, Wisconsin.



Grow Native Tress & Shrubs to Provide a Feast For Your Backyard Birds

Thanks to years of evolution, birds and native plants are made for each other. Delicious berries, fruit, seeds and nuts feed birds and in return, birds spread the plants seeds, supporting whole ecosystems. Native trees and shrubs are also important hosts for protein-rich native insects like butterfly and moth caterpillars, which nesting birds need to feed their chicks. Birds have shaped their entire life cycles, including migration and feeding habits, around plant communities. This relationship is so intertwined that you can attract specific birds to your yard by growing the right plants.

Native trees and plants beat even the best bird feeder. Grow these trees and shrubs in your yard for a year-round feast for the birds listed below and many other birds not listed.

Plant elderberry and juneberry to encourage cardinals, rose-breasted grosbeaks and scarlet tanagers. Rose-breasted grosbeak, depend heavily on berries during fall migration, 95% of their diet is fruit during this time. In the spring elderberry flowers attract insects, which attract a great variety of birds and the berries of both shrubs are eaten by many different bird species. Plant oaks to attract grouse and blue jays.

Throughout the year these birds consume a wide variety of plants and insects, but in the fall and winter months, they often depend on acorns. In addition, oaks play host to caterpillars of over 530 species of moths and butterflies. Caterpillars are a crucial food for nestling songbirds in the spring, so this tree will draw migrating warblers, tanagers, grosbeaks, orioles and many others.

Plant pines to tempt downy and hairy woodpeckers and northern flicker. Woodpeckers may visit your feeders in the winter, but during most of the year, they prefer insects and other invertebrates to seeds. Pine trees attract lots of tasty insects during the summer and in the winter, they provide seeds for woodpeckers and pine siskins.

Plant birch to invite chickadees. Chickadees eat lots of insects, caterpillars are an especially important food and birch hosts many different caterpillar species. Birch also serve up birch seeds. As a secondary cavity nester, chickadees nest and shelter in existing holes in trees and birch are an enticing substrate for birds that drill cavities.

Plant spruce and pine to entice purple finch, goldfinch, house finch and pine siskin. The seeds from spruce and pines are important food sources. The trees provide shelter during winter and needles are used for nest building in the summer.

For more information on native plants for your yard go to: Audubon's Native Plant Database. You can select the type of plant you are interested in, such as trees, annuals or grasses.

Happy Birding!

Pine County
Soil & Water
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Pine County Soil & Water Conservation District
130 Oriole Street E, Sandstone, MN 55072
Phone: (320) 216-4240

ORDER #

2018 TREE ORDER FORM

Name ______________________ Phone ______________________
Address ______________________ Email ______________________
City/St/Zip ______________________

		Size	Qty / Bundle	Cost / Bundle	# Bndls	Total Cost
Shrubs	Black Chokeberry	12-18"	25	$31		
	Cranberry, Amer Highbush	18-24"	25	$31		
	Elderberry	18-24"	25	$31		
	Juneberry (Serviceberry)	18-24"	25	$31		
	Lilac, Common (Purple)	18-24"	25	$31		
	Nanking Cherry	18-24"	25	$31		
	Redosier Dogwood	18-24"	25	$31		
	Rose, Rugosa	18-24"	25	$31		
Small Trees	American Plum	18-24"	25	$31		
	Chokecherry	18-24"	25	$31		
	Flame Willow	18-24"	25	$31		
	Flowering Crab (Red Splendor)	18-24"	25	$31		
	Nannyberry	18-24"	25	$31		
	Pin Cherry	18-24"	25	$31		
Large Trees	Black Walnut	18-24"	25	$32		
	Paper Birch	18-24"	25	$32		
	Red Maple	18-24"	25	$32		
	Silver Maple	18-24"	25	$32		
	Sugar Maple	18-24"	25	$32		
	Red Oak	18-24"	25	$32		
	Bur Oak	18-24"	25	$32		
	White Oak	12-18"	25	$32		
	White Cedar	8-18"	25	$32		
	White Spruce - imp	8-18"	25	$32		
	Norway Spruce	8-18"	25	$32		
	Tamarack	6-12"	25	$32		
	Balsam Fir	5-8"	25	$32		
	Red (Norway) Pine	6-12"	25	$32		
	White Pine	6-12"	25	$32		
	1 lb. Granular Shaker			$15		
	Powder Concentrate			$25		
	1 Qt. Spray Bottle			$20		

ORDER TOTAL ______________________

PAYMENT AMOUNT ENCLOSED ______________________

Trees are not compatible with overhead power lines. Plant AT LEAST 25 Feet beyond the lines to allow for crown development & future line reconstruction.

Please Note: PRICES DO VARY. Bundles are not priced all the same. Please watch the bundle price listed when filling out your order.

TERMS & CONDITIONS
Trees must be ordered in full bundles. Trees must be picked up at designated time and location. Deadline to cancel an order is March 1st. Any order cancelled after that date will forfeit half of the cost.

Trees are Perishable! Please collect your order promptly. Because of their perishable nature, the SWCD is not responsible for the condition of the trees/shrubs after pick-up. Trees/shrubs offered are conservation-grade, bare-root stock. The SWCD does not guarantee survival and/or replacement of trees. Size is subject to change without notice.

Deadline for ordering is April 21st

NO PARTIAL PAYMENTS
Orders must be paid in full at time of placing order.

Make checks payable to: Pine SWCD

Watering Guidelines for Establishing Trees:

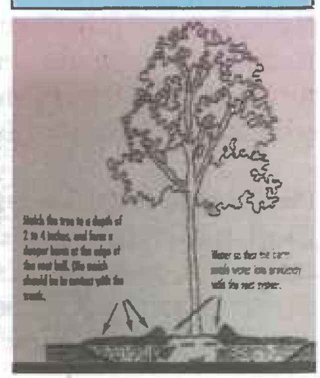
* At each watering, apply 1 - 1 1/2 gallons for each inch of stem diameter. Apply water to the root ball.

* Watering can stop once trees drop deciduous foliage in the fall.

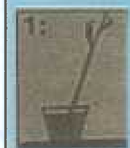
* Reduce frequency of water in cold, cloudy, wet weather. Following a rainfall, wait until all free moisture drains out of the soil.

* If water requirements of newly planted trees cannot be met, plant small trees (trees that have a 1-inch stem diameter) as they have less root loss and recover faster than trees with a larger stem diameter.

* Delete daily watering when planing in fall or early spring



Tree Planting Instructions:



1. Unpack trees. Keep roots moist. Do not plant with packing materials attached to roots. Do not allow roots to dry out.

2. Dig a hole (wider than seems necessary) so the roots can spread without crowding. Remove any grass within a 3-foot circular area.

3. Plant the tree at the same depth it stood in the nursery. Partially fill the hole, firming the soil around the lower roots

4. Shovel in remaining soil. It should be firmly packed with your heel. Give the tree plenty of water.

Tree Species		Soil Types				Light Requirements				Moisture Requirements	Mature Height	Growth Rate			Edible Fruit	Fall Color	Good for Shoreline
		Sandy	Silt	Loam	Clay	Full Sun	Sun-Pt Shade	Shade-Pt Sun	Full Shade			Very Fast	Moderate	Slow			
Black Chokeberry	*Aronia Melanocarpa*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		WD	6-12'				X	R	
Cranberry	*Viburnum trilobum*		X	X	X	X	X			Moist/WD	6-15'		X		X		X
Elderberry	*Sambucus canadensis*			X	X		X	X		Moist	6-12'		X		X		
Juneberry	*Amelanchier alnifolia*		X	X	X	X	X			Moist	4-6'	X					
Lilac	*Syringa vulgaris*				X	X				MDR	20'		X	X		Y	
Nanking Cherry	*Prunus Tomentosa*	X		X	X		X	X		Moist/WD	6-10'	X			X	Y	
Redosier Dogwood	*Cornus Sericea*	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	MW	7-10'	X	X			R	X
Rose, Rugosa	*Rosa rugosa*			X	X	X	X	X		Moist	8-12'		X				
American Plum	*Prunus americana*	X	X	X		X				WD	15-25'	X	X		X	YR	
Chokecherry	*Prunus virginiana*			X	X		X	X		DR - WD	30'	X			X	YR	
Flame Willow	*Salix flame*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		Moist-WD	20'	X				RO	
Flowering Crab	*Malus 'Red Splendor'*		X	X		X				WD	20-30'		X			YP	
Nannyberry	*Viburnum lentago*	X	X	X		X	X			Moist	8-25'	X			X	R	
Pin Cherry	*Prunus pensylvanica*	X	X	X		X				WV	25-40'	X			X	RO	
Black Walnut	*Juglans nigra*				X	X				Moist-WD	70-90'	X			X	Y	
Paper Birch	*Betula papyrifera*	X		X		X				Moist-WD	40-60'	X				Y	
Red Maple	*Acer rubrum*		X	X	X		X	X		WV-WD	50-70'	X				RO	X
Silver Maple	*Acer saccharinum*			X	X	X	X			Moist-WD	50-80'	X				Y	
Sugar Maple	*Acer saccharum*			X			X	X	X	Mod-WD	60-100'			X	X	YOR	
Red Oak	*Quercus rubra*	X	X	X	X		X	X		Moist-WD	75-100'	X				R	
Bur Oak	*Quercus, macrocarpa*		X	X	X	X	X			W.D. - D.R.	70-80'			X			
White Oak	*Quercus Alba*	X	X	X	X	X	X			Moist-WD	80-100'		X	X		R	
White Cedar	*Thuja occidentalis*		X	X	X		X	X		Moist-WD	40-70'			X			
White Spruce	*Picea glauca*	X		X	X		X	X	X	Moist-WD	50-80'	X	X	X			
Norway Spruce	*Picea abies*	X	X	X		X				Moist-WD	100'	X					
Tamarack	*Larix Laricina*			X	X		X	X	X	Moist-M.W.	40-80'	X	X	X		Y	
Balsam Fir	*Abies balsamea*	X	X	X		X	X	X		Moist-WD	40-60'			X			
Norway (Red) Pine	*Pinus resinosa*	X				X	X			Moist-WD	70-80'		X				X
White Pine	*Pinus strobus*	X		X	X	X	X	X		WV - WD	60-100'	X					X

Moisture: D.R. = Drought Resistant M.D.R. = Moist-to-Drought Resistant
W.V. = Wide Variety W.D. = Well Drained M.W. = Moderately Wet

Fall Color: R = Red O = Orange Y = Yellow P = Purple

Tree Order Pick-Up: Pick-Up is typically held one of the first weekends in May. Delivery is dependent upon availability from nursery. Postcards will be sent out in mid-April to everyone that places an order with dates, times and location. Pick-Up information will be posted on the district website at www.pineswcd.com

Pine SWCD has a 12' No-Till Drilll for rent.
$14/acre

The schedule fills up quickly.
Stop in or call now to reserve it!

320-216-4240

Seasonal Wetlands

by Robin Poppe, Wetland Specialist, 320-216-4243

Minnesota has 8 types of wetlands, ranging from wetlands that are only wet for a few weeks each year (seasonal wetlands) to wetlands that hold water year-round. Many landowners are interested in creating a "duck or fish pond" that deepens an existing wetland. Every type of wetland is important to wildlife, but not every wetland is meant to be or is capable of being a "duck or fish pond" due to location in the landscape, soils, geology and hydrology.

Seasonal wetlands (fresh wet meadow ponds) are tremendously important to shore birds and waterfowl during migration because they are the first to thaw and provide much needed protein. These wetlands may dry up annually and the exposed mudflats allow for germination of seed from aquatic plants, which provide a rich food source for waterfowl and invertebrates when the wetland re-floods. Seasonal forested wetlands (ephemeral ponds) provide critical breeding habitat for wildlife like wood ducks, spotted salamander, toads, wood and tree frogs because they are shallow and the first to thaw. Fairy shrimp, a freshwater invertebrate, thrive in seasonal wetlands and provide the much-needed protein for egg-laying wood duck hens. These wetlands are free of fish, which allows for the successful breeding of certain amphibians and invertebrates.

Seasonal wetlands may be as small as 6 to 12 feet across, and difficult to identify because at certain times of the year they do not hold water. They are usually isolated and are linked to surrounding upland. These wetlands tend to be highly productive, producing abundant quantities of food for developing amphibians, reptiles and migrating birds, and especially waterfowl. Even a small site, much less than an acre, can produce hundreds of frogs, toads and salamanders. They are a critical habitat for may wildlife species and provide crucial links to other wetlands and wildlife populations and are important for flood control and water quality.
Even if the wetland itself is not altered, without the surrounding upland habitat the wetland will not continue to be productive and species such as reptiles and amphibians will eventually be lost. Many creatures that depend on seasonal wetlands for some part of their life cycle need the surrounding upland habitat just as much. Frogs, toads and salamanders breed in the wetland but generally feed and spend most of the year in the upland. Turtles will feed in the wetland but require uplands for nesting.

Seasonal wetlands have become rare because they are easy to drain, fill or are excavated to create deep water.

Excavating a wetland deeper than it naturally occurs on the landscape may lower the local water table (much like ditching) and sump water into the deeper excavated area, making the shallow areas dryer and decreasing the wetland's size. Dredging may also allow undesirable fish to survive through winter. Fish are detrimental to wetlands because they feed upon aquatic invertebrates and disrupt the food web of these wetlands. Some aquatic invertebrates, such as snails and water fleas, feed upon algae. By keeping algae in check, beneficial aquatic plants can thrive and provide a food source for waterfowl and habitat for invertebrates. When fish cause the invertebrate population to decline, algae becomes more prevalent and water clarity diminishes. If water clarity diminishes to the point that sunlight cannot reach the bottom, then beneficial aquatic plants die off. This also applies to excavating the wetland to a depth where the water is no longer shallow. Shallow water allows light penetration for plant growth, which provides habitat for invertebrates. Aquatic plants cannot grow in deep or dark water where light does not penetrate. Wetlands in this condition are almost totally useless to wildlife.

Here are some ways you can protect these critically important wildlife and flood control wetlands:

- Don't excavate, fill or drain seasonal wetlands.
- Protect the surrounding upland.
- Avoid making trails through seasonal wetlands and the surrounding upland, avoid soil compaction and erosion.
- Leave fallen logs in the wetlands as they provide structure and shelter for reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates, control invasive species, like buckthorn

Contact the Pine Soil and Water Conservation District if you have a project that will fill, drain or excavate a wetland at 320-216-4243 or email robin.poppe@co.pine.mn.us

Our office is open Monday - Friday, 8:00am - 4 30pm
Stop in to see us!
130 Oriole Street East, Sandstone, MN 55072

FDLTCC Hosts 3rd Annual Beekeeping Workshop

Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, in partnership with the Northeast Minnesota Beekeepers Association, is hosting a day-long workshop called "Beekeeping and More!" on Saturday, February 17, 2018, for anyone interested in learning about beekeeping as a hobby or as a commercial enterprise. The symposium will open at 8:30 a.m. and classes run 9:30 to 3:30 p.m. starting in the college commons. The first Beekeeping and More workshop held in 2016 drew in more than 150 beekeepers, and we have kept growing, making it one of the largest beekeeping workshops in northern Minnesota.

Session topics include equipment, general troubleshooting, queen biology, risks to native pollinators, varroa mites, gentle beekeeping, and the challenges of overwintering honeybees in northern climates. Hands-on activities are also a part of the program, during which attendees can learn practical applications for products from the hive.

Experts from the University of Minnesota Bee Lab, the Northeastern Minnesota Beekeepers Association, and the Xerces Society will present the sessions and answer questions throughout the workshop. Informational displays, vendors, and door prize drawings will also be a part of the third annual event.

Lunch will be available for purchase from Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College's Environmental Science Club.
Registration is $10.00 for Northeastern Beekeepers Association members, and $15.00 for non-members. Pre-registration is encouraged and available online at www.fdltccbeekeeping.zapevent.com. Same-day registration will be available as space allows, payment by cash or check only.

For more information, contact Courtney Kowalczak at (218) 879-0862 or via email at courtneyk@fdltcc.edu.

Additional updates will be posted to the official Environmental Institute at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College Facebook page.

Woodland Stewardship Plans Available through Pine SWCD

Pine SWCD has a District Forester to write woodland stewardship plans for private landowners looking for advice on how to manage and utilize their forested property in Pine County. Private landowners play a huge role in maintaining the health, productivity, and diversity of Minnesota's forests. Even smaller parcels can be very valuable in terms of timber, wildlife, water quality, and the integrity of the landscape, so it is increasingly important that Minnesota's family forests are managed correctly. Woodland stewardship plans are a great tool for doing this.

A woodland stewardship plan is a management plan written by a natural resource professional approved by the Minnesota DNR, Division of Forestry. These plans are written based on the individual landowner's goals and objectives, and a variety of management recommendations are included in each woodland stewardship plan.

A SWCD District Forester can:

- Meet with you in person
- Survey your timber resources, plant communities, landscape or land use history, and geology
- Provide forestry data such as tree species, volume, size, abundance, density, and health
- Create detailed maps of your property, including labeled features such as individual cover types, approximate property lines, trails, deerstands, survey pins, or other unique features that may be present on the property
- Make recommendations within each cover type, including forestry and wildlife management strategies or prescriptions
- Assist with implementing goals once the plan is completed
- Assist with enrolling the plan in a tax relief program once the plan is completed

Having a plan registered with the DNR can help you qualify for a variety of cost share, tax incentive, and recognition programs, including an incentive payment to help pay for the cost of the plan itself. Cost share and grant money may be available for implementing certain projects. Having a plan will also help you keep track of management activities on your land and plan for future conditions.

Any private landowner with 20 acres to over 1,000 acres of land may qualify for a plan. To be eligible for a woodland stewardship plan described above, your property must contain at least 20 acres of land that are not developed or in agricultural production. Eligible acreage includes upland forests, lowland forests, wetlands, natural herbaceous openings, tree and shrub plantations, and small food plots for wildlife use. Small acreage management plans for properties less than 20 acres can also be written if desired, but are not eligible for tax relief benefits. There is a fee to have a plan written of $7 per eligible acre + $150 per plan. The cost of the plan is offset within the first year or two of enrollment in a tax relief program (SFIA or Managed 2c). Woodland stewardship plans are valid for 10 years. Updated plans are needed every 10 years for continued enrollment in a tax relief program. A complete, updated map and list of DNR approved woodland stewardship plan preparers, can be found on the My Minnesota Woods website at
http://www.myminnesotawoods.umn.edu/minnesota-stewardship-plan-preparers/.

If you are interested in having a plan written, would like to see an example of a completed woodland stewardship plan, have questions regarding eligibility or cost, or just want to meet with a forester to talk about your property, contact the Pine SWCD office at (320) 216-4245.

Our office is now open Monday - Friday, 8:00am - 4:30pm
Stop in to see us!

Protecting Water Quality Across Borders

by Kris Larson, District Technician, 320-216-4242

The protection of water resources throughout the state is a top concern for many Minnesotans. Governor Mark Dayton's state-wide "Buffer Law" and another state-wide program, "One Watershed, One Plan" aim to address these concerns. The old approach to water planning – based on counties and cities focusing primarily on water issues happening within their specific boundaries – is being replaced by a more holistic approach to water management. The previous approach has proven to be not very effective, primarily because the flow of water is not restricted by the same boundaries and rules as the organizations that manage it. The natural flow of water is divided into what are known as watersheds. Within a watershed, all the rainwater, streams, and rivers eventually drain to the same area (known as a discharge point). There are 81 major watersheds throughout the state of Minnesota.

Water quality issues within the Snake River Watershed are no different. The Snake River Watershed crosses the boundaries of Mille Lacs, Kanabec, Aitkin, and Pine County, along with small portions of Isanti and Chisago Counties. To assist with managing water quality issues within the watershed, the Snake River Watershed Management Board (SRWMB) was created. The SRWMB is a four county non-regulatory joint powers organization. The board is made up of elected county commissioners, representatives from county soil and water conservation districts, local lake association members, and other local organizations. The goals of the SRWMB are to improve recreational opportunities and wildlife habitat, protect properties from flood damage, maintain and improve the water quality of lakes, streams, and groundwater, and to protect resources from sedimentation and other pollution by controlling land erosion.

The group meets once a month to talk about the current issues facing the watershed. Meetings are open to the public and local citizens are encouraged to attend. Being able to meet on a regular basis with representatives from multiple counties allows for an open dialogue for sharing ideas across county lines. Organizations can share stories from their region and make recommendations based on past experiences. Several years ago, the SRWMB received a state grant to install projects in the watershed to protect and enhance water resources. These projects include lakeshore restorations, streambank improvements, cattle crossings, and a variety of other Best Management Practices (BMPs). 75% of project costs are covered through the state grant and the landowner is only responsible for the remaining 25%. There is still funding available for landowners who are interested in working with their Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to implement a project.

SWCD staff can conduct a site visit free of charge to assess options for possible projects. If you are interested in pursuing a project or would just like to receive more information, please contact the Pine SWCD at 320-216-4242 or by email at kris.larson@co.pine.mn.us.

Grow Your Own Vegetables Classes at East Central & Pine City

Are you eager for spring? Winter is a good time to start planning your vegetable garden whether you want to grow a small or large amount of vegetables. The University of Minnesota Extension Pine County Master Gardeners will present a Community Education class on "Growing Your Own Vegetables" at two locations.

The first class will be on Tuesday, February 20th at 6 p.m. at East Central High School Room 203. The second will be the next night, Wednesday, February 21st at 6 p.m. at Pine City Elementary School.

Master Gardeners Jon Hjelm, Lauren Meister and Kim Metz will cover your gardening options; variety selection; spacing; crop rotation; gardening in a small space; improving the soil and more. Whether planning your first garden or your fiftieth, a good plan and some different methods will increase your success and perhaps save you time and work.

For more information and to register for the February 20th class contact East Central Community Education at http://www.eastcentral.thatscommunityed.com

Or you can call 320-245-2216 ext. 6414

For the February 21st class information contact Pine City Community Education at http://pccommunityeducation.weebly.com/

Or you can call 320-629-4030.