



For Immediate Release

December 15, 2010

Contact: Jon Fure, 651-296-0884

\$10 million in Legacy Amendment grants awarded by Board of Water and Soil Resources for projects to protect and restore water quality

St. Paul – The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) has approved more than \$10 million in state dollars for projects that will protect and restore streams, rivers, lakes and groundwater. Funding for the grants came from the Minnesota Clean Water Fund (one of four funds from the Legacy Amendment). As part of the same competitive grant application process, the interagency team also reviewed and ranked applications for \$2.2 million in low-interest loans for agricultural best management practices (Ag BMP loans), and BWSR sent those recommendations to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

"All of these projects have been identified as high priorities in local water management plans, and will be accomplished via locally-led partnerships," said John Jaschke, BWSR Executive Director. "Most of these projects will use local contractors and materials, thus generating multiple benefits for water quality and also helping the economy."

BWSR received 159 grant applications from eligible local government units requesting more than \$28 million for projects that address impaired waters, such as water pollution caused by surface water runoff, or for projects that protect high-quality streams, rivers, lakes and groundwater resources from becoming impaired. Most of the projects will involve installing conservation practices on privately owned lands. The applications were reviewed and ranked by an interagency team that included BWSR, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

The 20-member board approved the grants at its Dec. 15 regular meeting. The complete list of funded project is available on the BWSR website, www.bwsr.state.mn.us.

Eligible grant applicants were cities, counties, soil and water conservation districts, watershed districts, metropolitan watershed management organizations, and joint powers organizations of those local government units.

The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources consists of 20 members, including representatives of local government units that deliver conservation programs, state agencies, and citizens. Board members are appointed by the governor to four-year terms. The board is the state's administrative agency for soil and water conservation districts, watershed districts, metropolitan watershed management organizations, and county water managers.

The BWSR mission: Improve and protect Minnesota's water and soil resources by working in partnership with local organizations and private landowners.

- end -