



NEWS RELEASE

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Bemidji — Brainerd — Duluth — Fergus Falls — Mankato — Marshall — New Ulm — Rochester
Central Office: 520 Lafayette Road North, St. Paul, MN 55155

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Contact: Jennifer Maleitzke, 651-215-9008 (office); 651-315-5082 (cell)

Legacy dollars putting conservation on the ground

Money now available to improve lakes, rivers and wetlands

St. Paul, Minn.—Have you been out fishing or hiking this summer and noticed that shorelines around your favorite lake have more plants? Or, as you are biking or driving around town, have you seen new rain gardens being installed?

Environmental improvement projects are underway all across Minnesota, thanks to the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment.

Since the Amendment was passed by Minnesota voters in Nov. 2008, nearly \$45 million has been invested in “on-the-ground” projects, where citizens and local governments are installing conservation practices to improve the quality in our lakes, rivers and wetlands.

In southeastern Minnesota, some projects include:

- \$30,000 for well sealing in Winona County—Permanently sealing unused wells blocks contaminants from entering groundwater. This well-sealing cost share program provides financial assistance to well owners in protecting Minnesota’s groundwater. With funds leveraged from partners, the total project cost was \$39,000.
- \$105,450 to address flood areas in Minneola Township—During the past 20 years, the township in Goodhue County has experienced uncontrolled flooding events. The project installed structures to reduce flooding and prevent soil erosions, treating 198 acres of the 2,500 acres in the Zumbro River sub watershed. With funds leveraged from partners, the total project cost was \$126,906.

The Executive Director of the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), John Jaschke, said that citizen involvement has been the key to success in these grant programs.

“We’ve had unbelievable turnout from local communities that want to be involved with putting projects on the ground. In the first two years of Amendment funding, we’ve awarded \$45 million and have been able to leverage \$44 million from partnerships,” Jaschke said. “These investments are making a dramatic difference on Minnesota’s landscape and improving our lakes and rivers all across the state.”

(more)

Beginning on today, more money will become available for similar projects for every community in Minnesota.

From Aug. 1-Sept. 14, BWSR will accept grant applications, where local units of government can compete for \$22.9 million for projects that will protect and restore Minnesota's streams, rivers, lakes and groundwater.

Eligible projects include those that control storm water runoff in agricultural or urban areas, or that will improve water quality by replacing problem septic systems, upgrading feedlots, or establishing native vegetation along shorelines in environmentally-sensitive areas.

Minnesota's cities, counties, soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs), watershed districts and watershed management organizations are eligible for the grants.

For more information, please visit the BWSR website at: www.bwsr.state.mn.us.

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