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Soil and Water Stewardship Week Is April 29-May 6

BWSR Recognizes Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Encourages All Minnesotans to Take Action to Protect Quality of Our Soil and Water for Generations to Come

St. Paul, Minn. – In the Land of 10,000 Lakes, Minnesotans have a great love for their lakes, rivers, streams and the great outdoors. For over 70 years, Minnesota’s Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) have been hard at work protecting our state’s critical soil and water resources by working with landowners on programs and practices that support conservation, healthy working lands, and clean water. The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) honors and celebrates that work as part of Soil and Water Stewardship Week, April 29 – May 6, 2018.

“As Minnesotans, we all have a role to play in protecting the quality of our soil and our water. Protecting these great resources requires individual action and partnerships from the local to federal level. SWCDs have a strong connection to, and understanding of, the unique resource opportunities and challenges in their areas.” BWSR Executive Director John Jaschke said. “They are able to connect with landowners and are invaluable in helping Minnesota meet its natural resource goals.”

In Minnesota, there are 89 soil and water conservation districts working in both urban and rural settings.

“Soil and Water Conservation Districts are locally led and the staff that lead each district are knowledgeable about resource issues within their communities,” said LeAnn Buck, Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Executive Director. “They focus on providing soil and water conservation services to private landowners, which is essential because seventy-eight percent of Minnesota’s lands are private.”

This is the 63rd annual Soil and Water Stewardship week, organized by the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) to promote resource conservation across the country. NACD relies on each conservation district to encourage stewardship through educational programs, field days and workshops. Each year, over 3,000 conservation districts participate in the event, making Stewardship Week one of the largest national conservation programs in the world.

This year the theme is “Watersheds: Our Water, Our Home” and will highlight the importance of caring for one of the most critical resources in the world, water. Governor Mark Dayton has made the protection of Minnesota’s water quality a top priority of his administration.

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BWSR is the state soil and water conservation agency, and it administers programs that prevent sediment and nutrients from entering our lakes, rivers, and streams; enhance fish and wildlife habitat; and protect wetlands. The 20-member board consists of representatives of local and state government agencies and citizens. BWSR's mission is to improve and protect Minnesota's water and soil resources by working in partnership with local organizations and private landowners.