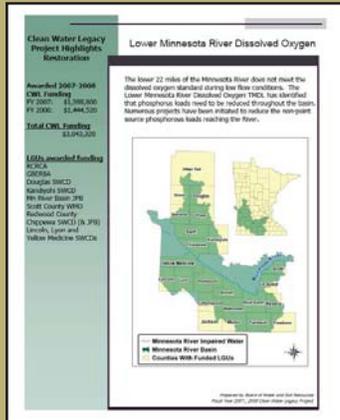


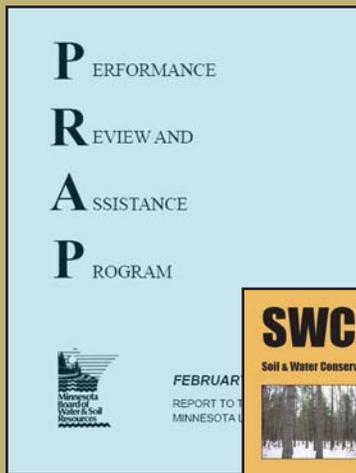


# 2007 Annual Report

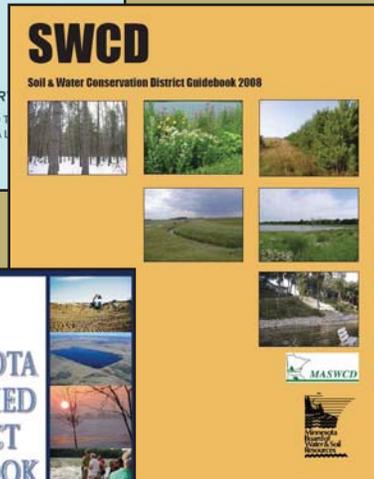
	<i>To-Do List:</i>
✓	Hire an executive director
✓	Allocate Clean Water Legacy funds and track status of all projects
✓	Provide greater oversight of local government units
✓	Make exempt rule changes to the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA)
✓	Begin permanent WCA rulemaking process
✓	Develop procedure for new Administrative Penalty Order authority for WCA violations
✓	Develop two new native vegetation Cost-Share programs
✓	Assist SWCDs in Southeast Minnesota with flood recovery
✓	Determine cost of upgrading all feedlots by 2010
✓	Develop plan to update all public drainage system records
✓	Develop Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) - Clean Energy Program
✓	Continue leveraging federal and local dollars for conservation



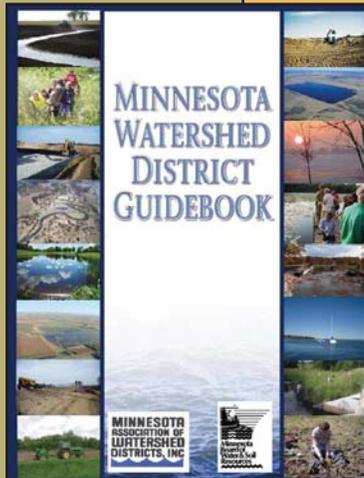
Clean Water Legacy project fact sheet



PRAP Report



SWCD Guidebook



WD Guidebook



Hire an executive director

BWSR Chairman Randy Kramer announced in January 2007 that John Jaschke was hired as BWSR Executive Director. His previous work experience includes positions as the Dakota County Water Resources Manager, BWSR Land & Water Section Administrator, and DNR Area Hydrologist.



Allocate Clean Water Legacy funds and track status of all projects

The Legislature designated BWSR as the agency to lead non-point pollution reduction efforts, and BWSR staff have responded by leading an inter-agency review team to solicit and rank projects, allocate those dollars and track status of projects. These efforts have ensured that Clean Water Legacy funds are spent in ways that improve and protect our state's water resources. Fact Sheets on each Clean Water Legacy project is on the BWSR website:

[www.bwsr.state.mn.us/CWL/factsheets.html](http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/CWL/factsheets.html)



Provide greater oversight of local government units

The Office of the Legislative Auditor urged the Legislature in 2007 to require BWSR to provide greater oversight of the Local Government Units that have a role in improving and protecting Minnesota's water resources. As a result, BWSR has created a new "Performance Review and Assistance Program." BWSR staff prepared a set of criteria for evaluating the performance of these organizations and developed several new initiatives to provide training and assistance for the local government employees who are on the front lines of delivering conservation programs statewide.

BWSR staff have also completed two comprehensive publications that provide information about the major activities of local government units. The Watershed District Guidebook, published in April 2007, and The Soil and Water Conservation District Guidebook, published in February 2008. Both publications are posted on the BWSR website.



## Make exempt rule changes to the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA)

Several amendments to the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) were signed into law by Gov. Tim Pawlenty on May 8, 2007, S.F. 2096 (Chapter 57). BWSR provided written materials and conducted training sessions for WCA local government units (LGU) to inform them of these changes and how to apply them to WCA enforcement activities. BWSR also received authority to adopt “exempt” rules to make Minnesota Rules Chapter 8420 conform to statute. These exempt rules were developed and adopted by BWSR through a public process, and published in the August 6, 2007 State Register. Bound copies of the Rule were printed and distributed to all WCA LGUs.



## Begin permanent WCA rulemaking process

The rule changes adopted through the exempt process will be in effect until new rules are adopted through the permanent rulemaking process for Minnesota Rules Chapter 8420. BWSR staff have solicited comments from a broad range of individuals and organizations, and the rulemaking process is underway. Drafts of proposed changes and more information about WCA is posted on the BWSR website.



## Develop procedure for new administrative penalty order authority for WCA violations

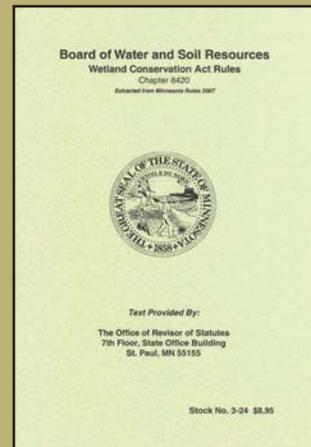
The Legislature in 2007 gave BWSR new authority to levy administrative penalties for WCA violations. BWSR staff have met with other agencies that have this authority, and a process is now in place to use this as a complement to existing WCA enforcement tools.



## Develop two new native vegetation Cost-Share programs

The Cooperative Weed Management Area Grant Program is one of two new initiatives that promote removing invasive species and replanting with local sources of native seed. In 2007 the Legislature provided BWSR with \$600,000 for the CWMA program. An interagency team has worked to develop the program, and many grant applications were received by the February 14, 2008 deadline. BWSR intends to have funding available for applicants on April 14, 2008.

The Legislature also allocated \$1.2 Million per year in State Cost-Share Program dollars for a new initiative to establish and maintain vegetation buffers of restored native prairie and restored prairie using seeds of a local ecotype region. SWCDs are eligible for this funding, and BWSR is promoting this new option for SWCDs and local landowners.



Bound copy of the exempt WCA Rule



WCA violation



Native vegetation buffer (Photo by Grant SWCD)



## Assist SWCDs in Southeast Minnesota with flood recovery

BWSR received \$4 million for conservation projects from the the Legislature, including \$3 million for the state Cost-Share program. These dollars are being used to restore and repair existing conservation projects on privately owned lands (including projects that control feedlot runoff, repair septic systems, or reduce soil erosion from cropland or riparian areas). Expenses related to debris removal have also been paid with this funding.

BWSR also has \$2.1 million (\$1 million from the 2007 session and \$1.1 million from previous appropriations) available to pay for conservation easements through the Reinvest In Minnesota (RIM) Reserve program. Landowners who enroll receive a payment to retire the land, and in turn establish native grasses, forbs and trees, or restore wetlands. BWSR received 56 applications totaling over \$3.6 million. BWSR is in the process of reviewing these applications for funding. SWCDs are playing an essential role in making sure that all of these dollars were available quickly, enabling people who have suffered devastating damages to their property to rebuild as soon as possible. They are also attentive to spending these dollars as wisely as possible on the most critical needs.

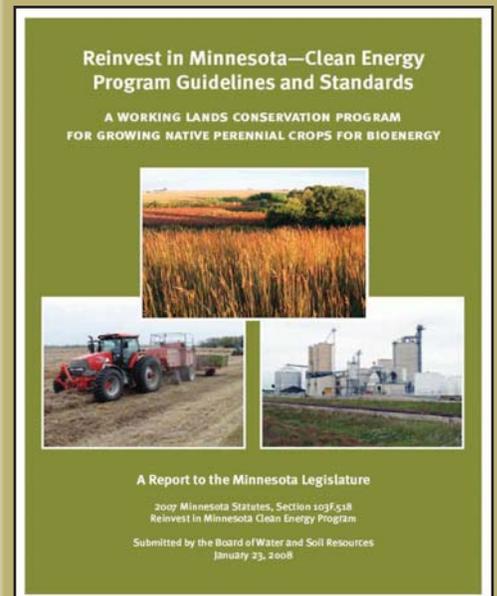


This shoreline stabilization project was completed in Minnesota City in 2007 as part of the flood recovery effort.



## Develop Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) - Clean Energy Program

This new conservation easement program is one component of an emerging prairie-grassland based cellulosic biofuels industry in Minnesota from which many could benefit. The RIM-Clean Energy Program Guidelines and Standards report has been completed by BWSR staff and partner organizations.



The RIM-CE report is available at [www.bwsr.state.mn.us](http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us)



## Determine cost of upgrading all feedlots by 2010

BWSR staff completed an estimate of the costs of upgrading all feedlots with less than 300 animal units by 2010. The report, titled 'Feedlot Financial Needs Report-2008' is available at [www.bwsr.state.mn.us](http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us)



## Develop plan to update all public drainage system records

BWSR received funding in 2007 to update all public drainage system records. The process of developing plans to modernize drainage system records is underway and is scheduled to be completed in June of 2008.



## Continue leveraging federal and local dollars for conservation

Minnesota's conservation delivery system of local, state and federal organizations provides many opportunities to leverage dollars. The partnership of RIM Reserve with the federal Wetlands Reserve Program is just one example, where every state dollar leverages \$1.4 through the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

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