

Hawk Creek Headlines

Hawk Creek Watershed Project

500 E DePue Ave, Ste 104, Olivia MN 56277 · (320) 523-3666
2018



Mission Statement

Improving the water quality/quantity issues in the watershed, while also promoting a healthy agricultural, industrial, and recreational based economy for the region.

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Cost-Share Money Available for Best Management Practices

Do you have gullies, washouts, runoff problems, or erosion problems on your property? Are you interested in finding out what you can do to increase conservation practices on your property? The Hawk Creek Watershed Project (HCWP) has funding available for the design and installation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to fix erosion and water quality issues on your property and to help reduce the amount of pollutants entering our streams and lakes. Cost-share funds are available up to 75% of total BMP project costs, depending on funding availability. Since 1999, HCWP has worked with over 900 landowners on over 1,300 projects aimed to reduce erosion and improve water quality. Let HCWP help find a solution to your erosion and water quality issues.

Some of the practices that may qualify for funding include, but are not limited to:

Ag Waste Upgrades

Alternative Intakes

Bank/Grade Stabilizations

Controlled Drainage

Cover Crops

Farmable Terraces

Feedlot and Water Diversions

Grassed Waterways

Lakeshore Restorations

Rain Gardens

Side/Drop Inlets

Streambank Erosion Control

Call HCWP at (320) 523-3666 for assistance with your erosion or runoff problem.

The following offices are also available for information on potential projects:

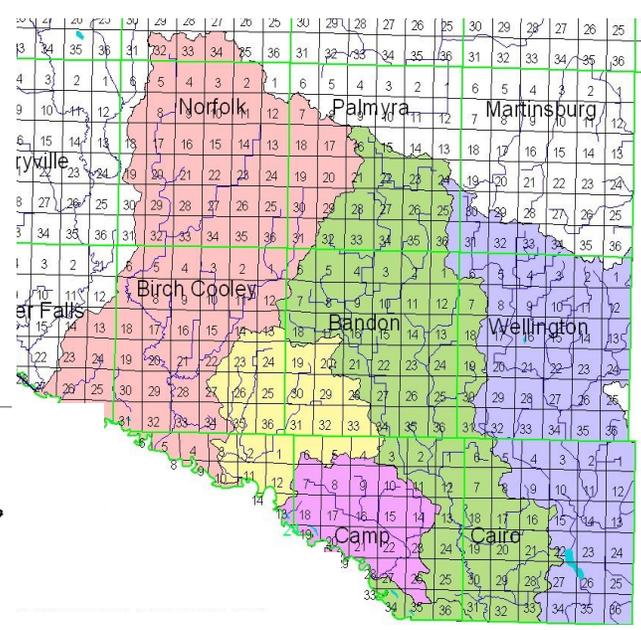
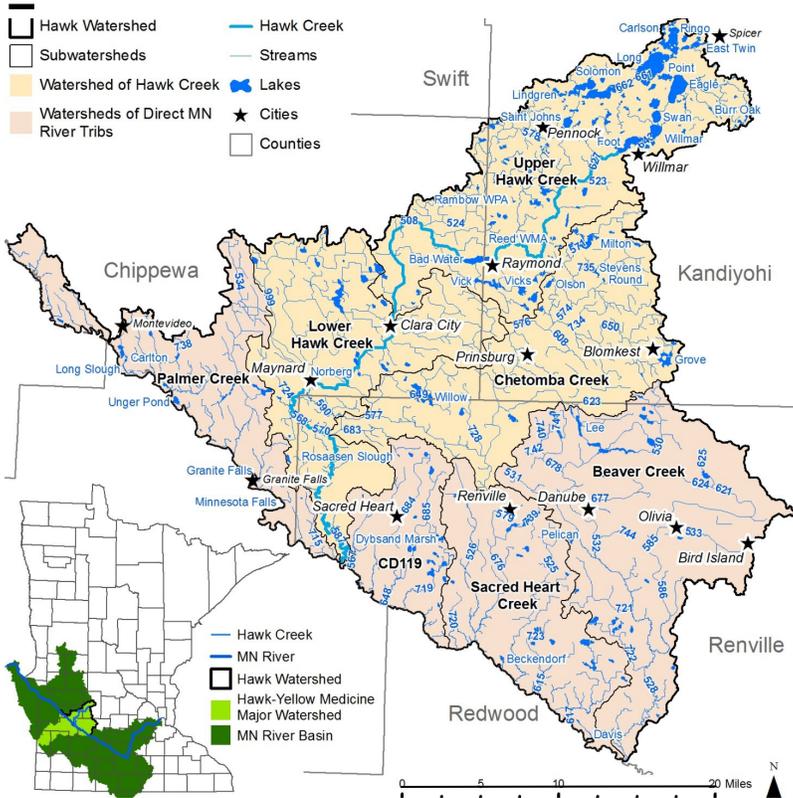
Chippewa County: SWCD/NRCS (320) 269-2139 x 3, Ag Inspector (320) 269-7447

Kandiyohi County: SWCD/NRCS (320) 235-3906, Drainage (320) 235-3266

Renville County: SWCD/NRCS (320) 523-1550 x 3, Ag Inspector (320) 523-3712

What Areas are Covered by HCWP Cost-Share Funds?

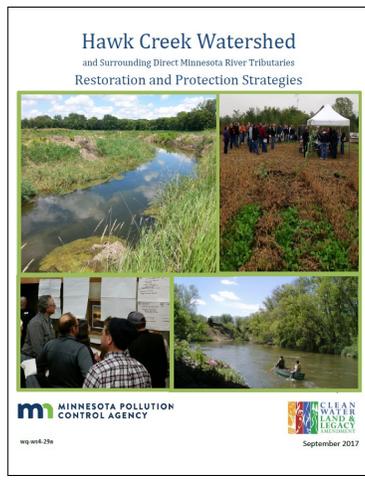
HCWP has BMP cost-share funds available for the entire Hawk Creek Watershed, which covers the eastern portion of Chippewa County, the western portion of Kandiyohi County, and the western portion of Renville County (see map below left). Towns located within the Hawk Creek Watershed boundaries include Maynard, Clara City, Raymond, Prinsburg, Blomkest, Pennock, Sacred Heart, Renville, Danube, Olivia, Bird Island, and parts of Montevideo, Granite Falls, and Willmar. In addition, HCWP BMP cost-share funds are available for the Renville County portion of the Middle Minnesota Watershed, which encompasses Morton, Franklin, and Fairfax (see map below right). If you live or own property in these watershed areas, contact HCWP for more information and possible cost-share assistance!



Renville County portion of Middle MN Watershed

Hawk Creek Watershed

WRAPS and TMDL Reports Approved



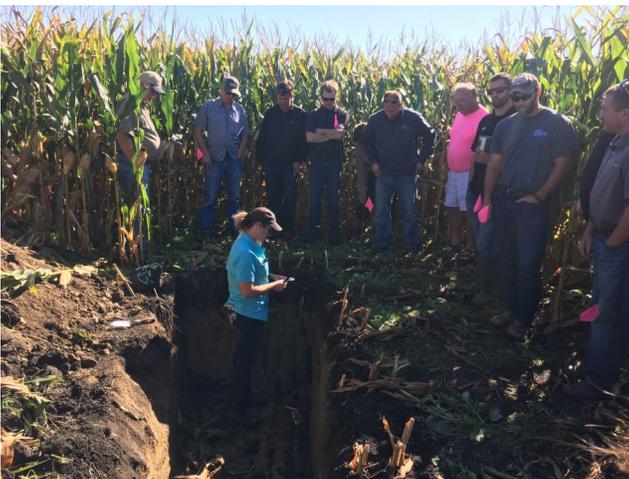
The Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) report for the Hawk Creek Watershed was approved by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) in September 2017 and the Total Maximum Daily Load report for the Hawk Creek Watershed was approved by the Environmental Protection Agency in November 2017. The WRAPS report includes input from many federal, state, and local agencies, industries, agricultural groups, landowners, watershed residents, lake associations, and many other groups and people. Thank you to everyone who participated in the WRAPS meetings, provided input, and shared their knowledge and experiences during the WRAPS report development process.

Both reports can be found online on the HCWP website under the Reports tab (hawkcreekwatershed.org/reports) or on the MPCA website under Minnesota River-Yellow Medicine/Hawk Creek (pca.state.mn.us/water/watersheds/minnesota-river-yellow-medicine-river-hawk-creek).

Local Farmers Share Their Knowledge on Cover Crops and Reduced Tillage

Cover Crop Field Day

A cover crop field day was held on September 20, 2017 by the HCWP, Renville County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), and Renville County Water Management. About 60 people visited Dave Wordes' soybean fields and small grain fields south of Renville and Brad Nere and Kyle Van-Overbeke's corn fields and small grain fields south of Danube to see how they interseed cover crops and use strip till and no till. Wordes seeded cover crops with a winter component in the mix into his standing corn stalks. With the winter component in the cover crop seed mix, it greened up in the spring. Wordes then no tilled soybeans into the green cover crops. Nere and VanOverbeke strip tilled their soybean ground in the fall in preparation for corn in the spring. They interseeded cover crops into their corn at the V7 growth stage at side dressing time so they only had to do one pass. Equipment was also on display, including a strip till machine and modified side dress equipment in which interseeder



Holly Hatlewick, Renville County SWCD manager, stands in a soil pit to show the cottage cheese-like consistency and high number of earthworms in the soil - the signs of healthy soil in a field using cover crops and reduced tillage.



An infiltration ring test resulted in an inch of water absorbed in 63 seconds by soil in a field using cover crops and strip till. The test on soil in a field using conventional tillage and no cover crops with compacted soils was stopped after standing water was still in place after 17½ minutes.



Corn interseeded with cover crops at the V7 growth stage during the same pass as the side dressing.

interseeder equipment was added to a nitrogen applicator so fertilizer application and cover crop seeding can be done in one pass, reducing soil compaction and saving time and fuel with less passes over the field. A soil pit dug in Nere/VanOverbeke's corn field with cover crops and strip till revealed the indicators of healthy soil, with its cottage cheese-like consistency and teeming with earthworms.

Infiltration ring tests were done in a field using cover crops and strip till and a field using conventional tillage and having compacted soils to compare how fast each soil would infiltrate one inch of water. The field with cover crops and strip till had an infiltration rate of one inch of water in 63 seconds. The compacted soils had standing water after 17½ minutes and the test was stopped.

Another cover crop and no till/strip till field day is planned for mid-September to showcase how local producers are making cover crops and reduced tillage work to improve their soil health. More information will be sent out soon. If you don't get email and/or mail notices about HCWP events and would like to be notified when we have more details on the field day, contact HCWP at (320) 523-3666 or jordan@hawkcreekwatershed.org.

Soil Health

Continued on Page 4



Left: Interseeder equipment was added to a nitrogen applicator so fertilizer application and cover crop seeding can be done in one pass, reducing soil compaction and saving time and fuel with less passes over the field.

Right: A strip till machine.



Cover Crops and Reduced Tillage Meeting

Over 100 people attended a cover crops and reduced tillage meeting put on by the HCWP, Renville County SWCD, and Renville County Water Management on February 21, 2018 in Renville, MN. Local producers from Renville and Sibley Counties who are using cover crops, no till, and strip till in their corn, soybean, sugar beet, small grain, and livestock



rotations gave presentations and were part of a panel discussion on how they make it work, including developing a diverse cover crop seed mix, controlling weeds, terminating cover crops, adjusting fertilizer application rates, converting and adapting equipment for seed application, and incorporating no till and strip till. The panelists also discussed how using cover crops and reduced tillage has made their soils much healthier. Other speakers at the meeting included Jodi DeJong-Hughes from the University of Minnesota Extension discussing steps to starting strip till and reduced tillage, Dorian Gatchell with Minnesota Agricultural Services talking about transitioning from conventional tillage to strip till, and Jennifer Hahn with Pheasants Forever discussing profitable precision conservation. Local seed vendors and equipment dealers were also on hand to provide information and answer questions.

Local farmers share their experiences with cover crops, no till, strip till, and increased soil health with a crowd of over 100 at the cover crops and reduced tillage meeting on February 21. From left to right: Jason Anderson, operations manager with Ryberg Farms in Buffalo Lake, Dave Wordes from Renville, Dean Dambrotten from Sacred Heart, Brad Nere and Kyle VanOverbeke from Danube, and Dean Schroeder from Renville.

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2018 Cover Crop Cost-Share Available

The HCWP, Renville County SWCD, and Renville County Water Management are offering a cost-share program for cover crops planted between April 1 and September 15, 2018*.

- Cost-share up to 75% of costs to plant cover crops (e.g. seed, labor, equipment use, seed incorporation), with maximum payment of \$2,000.00 per farmer per year
- Maximum of three years of cost-share payments through this program
- Cost-share application must be signed and approved before seeding
- Seed mix must be comprised of at least three species pre-approved by Renville Co SWCD and HCWP*
- No fall tillage or excessive grazing (as determined by Renville Co SWCD and HCWP)
- Seedbed prep is not an eligible cost-share expense
- Adjustments in management of cover crop (e.g. clipping of excessive growth, partial grazing/harvesting with livestock, or other management techniques) require pre-approval by Renville Co SWCD and HCWP
- Seed tags, all invoices, and passed field inspection are required before payment is made
- Ineligible for this if you receive cover crop incentive and/or cost-share payment through any other program (e.g. EQIP, CSP)
- Cost-share available to producers in Renville County and the Hawk Creek Watershed (covering portions of Chippewa, Kandiyohi, and Renville Counties - see maps on page 2)
- If all above terms and conditions are not met/followed, payment will be disqualified

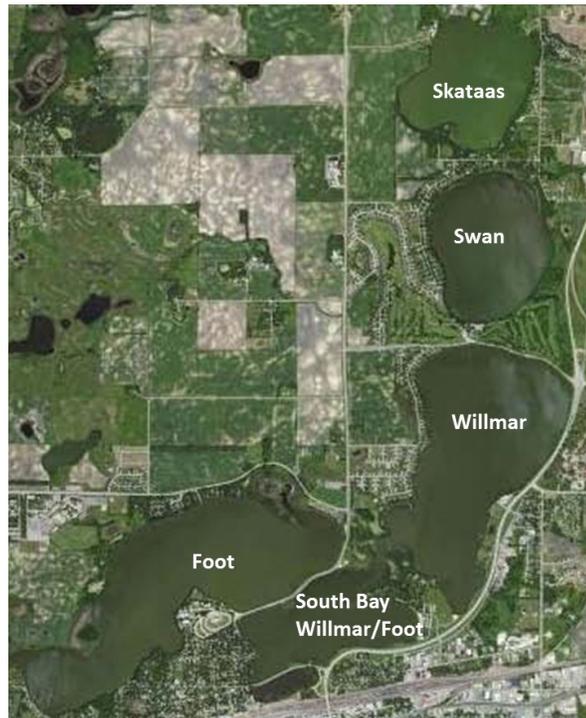
* dates may be extended and seed mix requirements may be adjusted by Renville Co SWCD and HCWP based on weather conditions

Momentum Continues for Water Quality Efforts of Willmar's Chain of Lakes

Efforts are continuing to improve the water quality of the Willmar chain of lakes, including Foot, Willmar, Swan, and Skataas. MPCA has been leading a collaborative effort with the HCWP, City of Willmar, Willmar Area Lakes Association, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Kandiyohi County, and Kandiyohi County SWCD to revive water quality efforts.

The lakes have been mistreated for a long time and were often used as dumping grounds, with the city landfill once being located near Foot Lake (what is now Rau Park), horse manure from barns dumped on the ice on Foot Lake and "disappearing" in the spring, raw waste from sewers and outhouses routed into the lakes, and chemicals and pollutants leaching from rail yard, city, and field runoff. Many of the "point" sources of pollution entering the lakes (mainly municipal and industrial wastewater) have been eliminated or reduced because of rules and laws regulating them. "Non-point" sources of pollution entering the lakes (mainly stormwater, city, and field runoff) continue to negatively impact the lakes and are the focus of efforts to improve the water quality of the lakes. There are currently 27 storm sewer outlets to Foot Lake and at least 30 to Willmar Lake. These outlets dump nutrients, chemicals, and waste from Willmar directly into these lakes.

In 2008 and 2009, HCWP collected water quality samples and data on Willmar, Swan, and Foot lakes. Willmar and Swan lakes failed to meet acceptable water quality standards for shallow prairie lakes and Foot Lake barely met the standards. Swan Lake was added to MPCA's impaired waters list in 2014 and the main bay of Willmar Lake was added to the list in 2018, both for excessive nutrients. For more information about MPCA's impaired waters list, visit pca.state.mn.us/water/minnesotas-impaired-waters-list.



About 50 people gathered at the Willmar Community Center for an informational meeting on June 19, 2018 to find out what they can do to help improve the water quality of Willmar's chain of lakes. This is the second such meeting in as many years, and the momentum of community members getting involved is growing. The Foot and Willmar Lakes Association is being revived as many people show interest in becoming active in the association. Willmar residents can do several things to reduce pollutants from entering nearby lakes, such as installing rain gardens, rain barrels, and lakeshore buffers on your property, using less fertilizer, pesticide, and herbicide on your lawn, and cleaning up grass clippings, animal waste, garbage, and chemical spills so they don't go down the storm drain.

What can I do to improve water quality when I live in town? Lakeshore Buffers, Rain Gardens, and Rain Barrels!

Lakeshore buffers provide stability to the lakeshore, reduce shoreline erosion by absorbing wave action and ice heaves, reduce lake sedimentation, and filter out pollutants and runoff that contribute to algal blooms and degrade water quality. HCWP can help pay up to 75% of the costs of protecting your shoreline with a lakeshore buffer.

Rain gardens collect rainwater from hard surfaces, such as rooftops, driveways, and patios, and reduce stormwater runoff, pollutants, and sediment that end up in our waterbodies. Rain gardens also help to reduce the risk of flooding streets and prevent erosion. Rain gardens can be planted with many beautiful, low-maintenance native plants to create much-needed habitat for pollinator species, such as butterflies and bees. By choosing the right location and plants, your rain garden can be incorporated into your current landscaping style. HCWP can help pay up to 75% of the costs of a rain garden.



Rain barrels are an easy, affordable way to reduce stormwater runoff. Collecting rainwater to use in your garden and yard will also reduce your water bill. Rain barrels are for sale through the Renville Co Environmental Services office (320) 523-3768 or the Kandiyohi Co SWCD (320) 235-3906. You must be a resident of the county you are purchasing a rain barrel from.



Renville County
Hawk Creek Watershed Project
500 E DePue Ave, Ste 104
Olivia, MN 56277

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**Want to get notices about upcoming
HCWP meetings and events?**

Join our mailing list by calling (320) 523-3666 or
emailing jordan@hawkcreekwatershed.org.



hawkcreekwatershed.org