



Hawk Creek Headlines

Volume 1, Issue 4

Summer 2001

Hawk Creek Watershed Project

Looking For Solutions

What is a Watershed?

A watershed is the area of land where rainfall and snowmelt drain into a particular stream, river, wetland or lake.

Project Update

With the arrival of summer the watershed is alive with activities.

Many best management practices are being implemented throughout the watershed. Buffer strips and windbreaks are being planted and septic systems are being upgraded. Dean has been busy working with area landowners on potential projects.

Watershed picnics were held this past June in each county. Current projects, funding, and monitoring were discussed. Pam has been busy moni-

toring the area creeks. The wet spring has kept her and volunteer monitors busy.

Loren has been getting to know the watershed. He has been attending county and township meetings. He is also working with Dean on projects in the watershed.

Upcoming Events

On July 25, in Clara City, the Hawk Creek Watershed Project will be conducting a Storm Drain Awareness Project, with assistance from Chippewa County Land and Resource Management, area

residents, and groups. Information will be distributed and storm drains will be marked with "No Dumping-Drains to Creek" decals. If you would like to help, or for more information, please contact Pam at 320-523-3673.

Kandiyohi County Fair
August 8-11
Chippewa County Fair
August 13-15
Renville County Fair
August 14-16

Inside this issue:

Signs	2
Implementation Funding	2
Meet the Staff	2
CRP	3
City Dwellers: How to reduce pollution from home	3
Focus On: Erosion Control	3
Do I Live in the Watershed?	4

CREP—Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program



CREP is a voluntary land retirement program created from the merger of RIM—Reinvest In Minnesota and CRP—Conservation Reserve Program. Landowners in the Minnesota River Ba-

sin have the opportunity to put marginal cropland into a perpetual easement until September 30, 2002, when the program ends.

The landowner receives an annual payment for the first 15 years of the contract. They also receive a RIM bonus payment during the first year.

Land that qualifies must have a crop history in 2 out of the last 5 years,

and be in an environmentally sensitive area—floodplain, wetland, etc.

For more information, contact your local SWCD office.

Renville SWCD
320-523-1559

Chippewa SWCD
320-269-2139 ext. 3

Kandiyohi SWCD
320-235-3906 ext. 3

Signs

With the help of the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Kandiyohi, Renville, and Chippewa Highway Departments, and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, signs are getting placed along creeks and at public accesses of lakes in the Hawk Creek Watershed.



With many miles of our creeks channelized, its hard to tell what is a drainage ditch and what is a creek. By the end of the summer, signs will be placed at 17 different creek crossings along state and county roads in the watershed. Signs will also be placed at 6 lakes in the northern part of the watershed, and at 3 parks.

Implementation Funding

The Hawk Creek Watershed Project has been able to assist 33 different landowners in the watershed through a grant the project received in 1999.

Funds are available for a variety of projects. 13 landowners have been approved to received funding for Best Management Practices. Terraces, filter strips, waterways, and ag waste storage facilities are some of the practices that the project has helped to fund. A unique part of the grant, is that it allows the project to com-

bine our funds with other programs, such as EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program).

Another unique part of the grant is that the Hawk Creek Watershed Project was able to set aside funds to help upgrade 30 septic systems. Each county in the watershed received funds to cost share 10 septic systems (50% cost share, up to \$2000). Only Chippewa County has funding remaining. To qualify, you must be a resident of the watershed, and have a septic system

outletting into surface water.

Because of the high number of noncompliant septic systems in the watershed, the project is also working with Renville, Chippewa, and Kandiyohi counties to establish a low interest loan program for septic system upgrades. The program should be completed later this summer.

Meet The Staff

Loren Engelby joined the staff this past March as project coordinator. The position has been vacant since October 2000.

As coordinator, Loren is responsible for overseeing and assisting project technicians with landowner contacts and educational activities. He also is responsible for project reports and securing additional funding. Loren will spent a portion of his time working with local agencies and landowners , as he heads up several

committees.

Loren worked at the Kandiyohi County SWCD for the past 8 years. He has been involved with the Hawk Creek Watershed Project since it began in 1997.

Loren is located in the Hawk Creek Watershed Project Office in the Renville County Courthouse in Olivia. He can be reached at (320) 523-3672.



Loren Engelby

CRP—Conservation Reserve Program

The Conservation Reserve Program is a federal program designed to encourage landowners to voluntarily take marginal land out of production and establish a vegetative cover to help reduce erosion and improve water quality and wildlife habitat.

A variety of projects can be completed with CRP. Riparian buffer strips, wetland restoration, and field windbreaks are just a few of the possibilities.

Landowners enter into a 10-15 year

contract with the USDA. Land is taken out of production and seeded with grasses. In return, the landowner receives yearly payments based on soil rental rates, cost share assistance for establishing vegetation, and for some practices, incentive payments. The landowner controls all access to the site, and is responsible for weed control.

If you would like to place some of your cropland into CRP, contact your local SWCD or NRCS for further in-

formation.

Renville SWCD/NRCS

320-523-1559

Chippewa SWCD/NRCS

320-269-2139 ext 3

Kandiyohi SWCD/NRCS

320-235-3906 ext 3

City Dwellers: How To Reduce Pollution From Home

Much of the Hawk Creek Watershed is rural, but cities equally contribute to the pollution found in our waters.

Everyone pollutes. If your car leaks, if your grass clippings end up on the street or sidewalk, or if you use detergents with phosphorus, you are contributing to the pollution problem.

There are many simple ways to help reduce the amount of pollution that you contribute to the watershed.

Here are just a few ways you can help:

Avoid lawn fertilizers with phosphorus

Prevent fertilizer and grass clippings from reaching sidewalks and streets

Clean up after your pet

Wash you car on the lawn or at a car wash

Use phosphate free detergents

Recycle automotive fluids

If your car leaks oil, antifreeze, or gas—get it fixed

Properly dispose of paint and thinners

Compost grass clippings

Direct down spouts onto lawns, instead of sidewalks or driveways



Focus on: Erosion Control

You can see it in the air on a windy day or in the water after a heavy rain: soil. In a watershed with few trees and hundreds of miles of tile, ditches, and creeks, erosion is bound to be a problem. This is the case for the Hawk Creek Watershed.

Many programs are available with technical and/or financial assistance to implement best management practices that will help to reduce the

amount of erosion. CREP and CRP are two such programs which focus on erosion control. Landowners are invited to take advantage of these programs.

Some of the practices that can be funded include:

Buffer Strips

Tillage/Residue Management

Field Windbreaks

Stream Bank Stabilization

Terraces

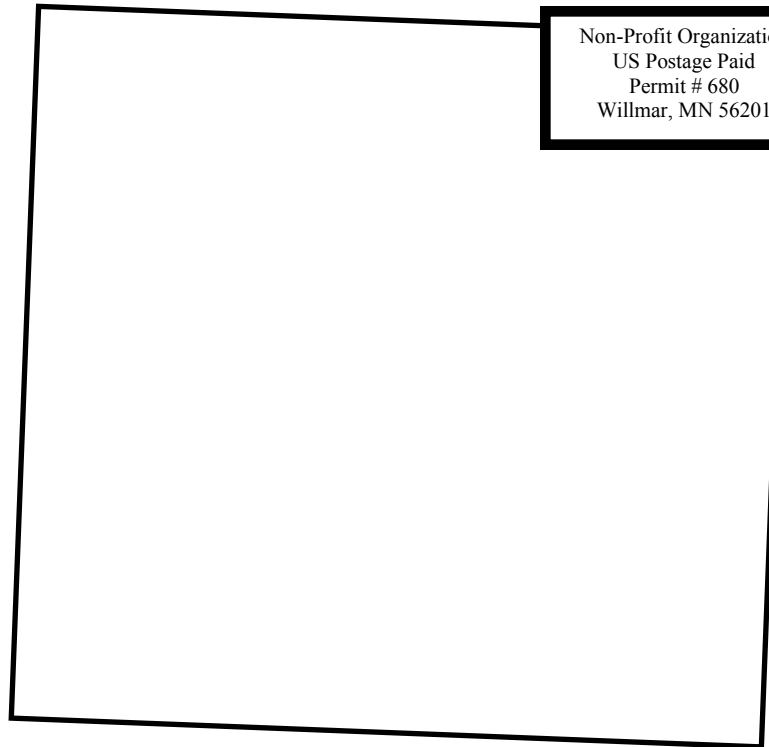
Waterways/Structures

For more information contact the Hawk Creek Watershed Project, or your local SWCD or NRCS office.

Hawk Creek Watershed Project

Hawk Creek Watershed Project
Renville County Courthouse
Lower Level
500 E DePue Ave
Olivia, MN 56277

Non-Profit Organization
US Postage Paid
Permit # 680
Willmar, MN 56201



Sponsored by:
Hawk Creek Watershed Project
Cooperating Agencies and
Prairie Country RC&D Council
1005 High Ave NE
Willmar, MN 56201

Do I Live in the Hawk Creek Watershed?

Many people don't think that they live in the Hawk Creek Watershed. After all, they don't live on Hawk Creek, or even close to it.

The Hawk Creek Watershed is unique in that it doesn't have just one lake or river draining the entire watershed. Instead, the Hawk Creek Watershed has 2 major creeks - Beaver and Hawk, and approximately 20 different streams that drain right into the Minnesota River. The watershed also has about a dozen lakes in the northern reaches.

Creeks
Hawk
Chetomba
Beaver Creek
Sacred Heart
Smith
Middle
Palmer
Brafee's
Timms

There are about a dozen other small creeks that are unnamed and drain directly into the Minnesota River.

Lakes
Swan
Eagle
E & W Solomon
Foot
Henderson
S Long
Point
Ringo
Willmar
Skataas
King
St. Johns



If you are not sure which watershed you live in, give us a call 320-523-3666. We can help you determine if you live in the Hawk Creek Watershed.