

Annual Report

Clay SWCD

2013

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Supervisors for the Clay Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) presents their Annual Report for the year ending December 31, 2013.

When reading this 2013 report, keep in mind that the primary aim in the administration of this program is to conserve soil and water, provide pollution abatement, improve water quality, improve wildlife habitat, promote recreation, and improve the quality of our environment for ALL the people in Clay County.

We appreciate the technical assistance, leadership and office space supplied our Soil and Water Conservation District by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). We have four full-time employees; a District Manager, a District Technician/County Feedlot Officer, a District Secretary and a Water Resources Management Technician in our office. We also have a Pheasants Forever Biologist housed in our office. Soil conservation personnel also help coordinate valuable assistance given our District by the Extension Service, Farm Service Agency (FSA), State of Minnesota, the County Board of Commissioners and the County Engineer. Under the Memorandum of Understanding, the District Supervisors share office space with the NRCS in Moorhead. Both the SWCD and NRCS pay a portion of the rent. NRCS continues to play a role in getting conservation applied on the land.

Since organizing on June 21, 1945, the Clay SWCD continues their efforts in implementing the various local, state and federal programs to achieve their goal of promoting conservation. The District Supervisors would welcome suggestions and would like to be informed of your conservation concerns so they can better carryout their duties.

Clay Soil & Water Conservation District

Annual Operations 2013

The Clay Soil & Water Conservation District (Clay SWCD) Supervisors accept their responsibility of protecting the natural resources of Clay County.

The Clay SWCD Supervisors continue to supervise District activities by providing the best employees possible and by sound financial direction.

Open meetings are held at 4:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month, at the District office.

Landowners are invited to contact the District office, in regard to time, if they wish to meet with the Board to voice concerns.

Clay SWCD Mission Statement

“To Promote Natural Resource Stewardship through Technical, Educational and Financial Assistance”

CLAY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

January 1, 2013 - - December 31, 2013

DISTRICT SUPERVISORS

District I	Steve Dalen	Kragnes, Felton, Georgetown Areas
District II	Carol Schoff	Hawley, Ulen, Hitterdal Areas
District III	Kenneth Schellack	Glyndon, Barnesville Areas
	Starting 12/1/13	Randy Schellack (Kenneth passed away in October)
District IV	Paul Krabbenhoft	Moorhead, Comstock, Sabin Areas
District V	Joel Hildebrandt	Rollag, Barnesville, Hawley Areas

District Staff

Kevin Kassenborg
District Manager

Craig Halverson
District Technician/CFO

Karen Carlsrud
District Secretary

Lynn Foss
Water Resources Management Technician

NRCS Staff

Sharon Lean
District Conservationist

Nancy Alexander
Soil Conservation Technician

Mark Dose
Civil/Agricultural Engineer

Housed in Clay County
Anthony Nelson, PF Biologist

Acronyms Used Throughout the Annual Report

SWCD – Soil & Water Conservation District

NRCS – Natural Resources Conservation Service

FSA – Farm Service Agency

BMP – Best Management Practice

BWSR – Board of Water & Soil Resources

MASWCD – Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts

JPB – Joint Powers Board

CCATO – Clay County Association of Township Officers

WMSTR – Western Minnesota Steam Threshers Reunion

NACDE – Northwest Association of Conservation District Employees

SCD – Soil Conservation District – North Dakota

BRRWD – Buffalo-Red River Watershed District

CFO – County Feedlot Officer

MACDE – Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees

PWLC – Prairie Wetlands Learning Center

RRBC – Red River Basin Commission

CAI – County Ag Inspector

PF – Pheasants Forever

LiDAR – Light Detection And Radar

RIM – Reinvest-In-Minnesota

CWF – Clean Water Fund

ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2013

District staff attended various meetings throughout the year associated with Water Plan projects, Wetland Challenge Grants, Ag BMP Low Interest Loan program, Envirothon, CAI quarterly meetings, BWSR and MASWCD related training sessions and SWCD board meetings.

JANUARY

Staff prepared the annual Tree Newsletter which was mailed the middle of January. The Red River Basin Commission Conference was held in Grand Forks, ND, and no one from the Clay SWCD attended. Staff was busy with eLINK reporting, working on the 2013 Annual Plan/Budget and 2012 Financial Reports. At the January board meeting we welcomed Joel Hildebrandt as a new supervisor replacing Duane Janssen.

FEBRUARY

Staff was busy with completing necessary year-end reports. Training continued for the CAI duties and we began proctoring pesticide tests to commercial & non-commercial applicators. No one from the Clay SWCD attended the MASWCD Legislative Day at the Capitol on Feb. 25-26. The weekend of February 9 we received 10" of snow and did have a storm day on Monday.

MARCH

Staff made a presentation at the CCATO spring meeting held March 25. The Financial Report, Annual Plan and Annual Report were completed and forwarded on to BWSR and listed on our web page by March 15. We experienced some cold weather during the month and also snow – the weekend of March 16 we received another 8" of snow – we were closed on Monday.

APRIL

April started off on the cool side. There was an Area 1 meeting at Crookston on April 3. Supervisor Schoff, Krabbenhoft, Kevin and Karen attended. The middle of the month brought about another 10" of snow. The trees started arriving April 25 and that was the start of tree season. The Red River did rise – but it was not as bad as predicted because of the cool weather – thaw during the day and freezing temperatures at night. The river reached a crest on/or about June 30 at 33.2'.

MAY

The rest of the trees arrived on May 3, so packaging was completed and tree pickup was held May 14-17. Tree planting had started and we finished planting on May 29. The local Envirothon was held May 1 at the Prairie Wetlands Learning Center at Fergus Falls. Karen assisted with the State Envirothon on May 20 at St. John's University. We sold 12,211 trees, did 15 planting jobs and applied 17,992 feet of matting.

JUNE

The SWCD had a booth at the Breakfast on the Farm event held at WMSTR on June 1. It was a cool and rainy day with a fair amount of people attending despite the weather and another good breakfast served. There was a CRP sign-up that ended June 14. The Area I-II-III & VIII Administrative Session was June 19-20 and held at the Shooting Star Casino with Area 1 South SWCD's acting as the host. Karen attended this session. The Area I meeting was June 26 and held at McCollum's Hunting Preserve at Bejou with Kevin, Karen and Supervisors Schoff and Schellack attending. The JPB met in the afternoon. Staff kept busy making field visits, monitoring WRP contracts, and doing feedlot inspections along with taking weed calls/inspections.

July

The Clay County Fair was July 11-14 and staff worked various shifts at the booth. Work continued on various project activities. Kevin, Craig and Lynn attended the CAI Conference at Red Wing July 15-17. It was the start of a dry summer.

August

The usual office and field work was ongoing.

September

A booth was shared with Cass SCD (ND) on Sept 10-12 for Big Iron held at the West Fargo Fairgrounds. The fall session of the River Keepers Water Festival was Sept. 17-20 and Karen assisted at the event three days. There were 1,624 4th grade students that attended from Clay/Cass County area schools. On-going field work/pesticide testing continues. The office continues our no-till drill rental program with the drills being used less than in peak years. Total 1,846 acres were planted this past year.

October

The Area I/South Junior Envirothon was scheduled for October 2 at the PWLC. However, because of the 3-week government shutdown, this event was canceled as the PWLC was closed. Craig attended the annual CFO Conference at St. Cloud from Oct. 14-16. Karen attended the MASWCD Awards Committee meeting in St. Paul October 17. Kevin, Karen and Lynn attended the BWSR/MACDE Academy at Cragun’s Resort from Oct. 28-30. The SWCD was saddened by the passing of Supervisor Ken Schellack on October 22. Ken had been a Supervisor for 40 years.

November

The Area 1 meeting was held November 19 at Ada with the Clay SWCD serving as host.

December

The MASWCD Convention was Dec. 1-3 at the Double Tree Hotel, Bloomington. Supervisors Schoff and Krabbenhoft attended along with staff person Karen Carlsrud. The Outstanding Cooperators for 2013 were Wes and Etta Mae Christensen from Barnesville. They also attended the convention on Tuesday and enjoyed themselves. Randy Schellack took the Oath of Office at the December board meeting and will be the replacement for Ken Schellack, who passed away in October. Randy will fill out the current term.

WCA update: Projects involving wetland or potential wetland impacts continue on the rise. For the year, the following activities relating to the WCA were addressed by the District: Landowner contacts – 210; Acres impacted via approved replacement plans – 1.6:1.6; No-loss determinations – 24; Cease and Desist Orders and Restoration Order issued – 0; Replacement plans approved – 1; Exemption issued –34; and Potential violations investigated – 3.

All programs and services are available without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap.