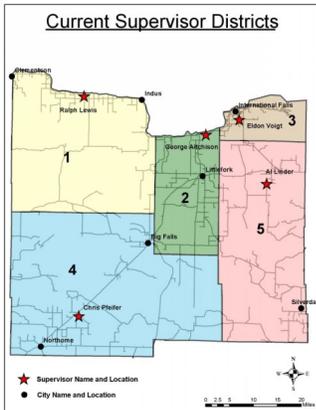


Koochiching Conservation

2014 SWCD Board Elections

The Koochiching SWCD will have three seats up for election this year:



- District 1
- District 4
- District 5

SWCD Supervisors play an important role in determining how soil and water resources are managed within our county. They assist in establishing soil and water conservation policy and serve as a focal point for addressing natural resource issues and identifying concerns.

Supervisor activities include monthly board meetings, training sessions, strategic planning, and various committee meetings.

If you live in one of these districts and are interested in becoming part of the process that will help ensure the sustainability of our natural resources for current and future generations, consider running for supervisor of the SWCD. For more details, contact the SWCD office at 218-283-1174.

Spring 2014

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Tree Program 2014

It's Tree Time!

Look inside for the 2014 tree order form for the upcoming season. We've brought back some favorites from last year including the Wildlife Packet (a mix of Cherry, Cranberry Bush, Arrowood Viburnum, Crabapple, Dogwood, and Juneberry). For the best selection, be sure to get your orders in early as quantities are limited. A 10% discount will be given on orders totaling \$250 or more.

We also carry a broad selection of Plantskydd® deer repellent products to protect your investment.

A huge **THANK YOU** for your continued support!

Koochiching SWCD Board Meetings Courthouse Board Room

Regular meeting times:

May to October: 7:00 p.m.
November to April: 6:00 p.m.

Have a question for our board members? Here's a list that will guide you to the right person!

COMMITTEES:

Budget Committee- Ralph Lewis & Eldon Voigt
Personnel Committee- Eldon Voigt & Ralph Lewis
Education/Public Relations Committee- Al Linder

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES:

North Central MN Joint Powers Board- Al Linder
Laurentain RC&D Council- Al Linder
Big Fork River Board- George Aitchison
Littlefork/Rat Root River Boards- George Aitchison
MN SWCD Forestry Association- Eldon Voigt
Int'l Watershed Advisory Committee- Eldon Voigt & Ralph Lewis

Koochiching Teams Excel at the 2013 North Central Envirothon

Each year, Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) around the nation take part in an event called the “**Envirothon**”, an outdoor learning event where high school students (grades 9-12) attend five sessions on environmental issues such as: Aquatics, wildlife, forestry, soils, and current events. In 2013, the event was again opened up to students grades 6-8 in the Junior Envirothon.



Pictured left to right: Carrie Carrigan, Tanyssa Olafson, Aaron Chaffin, Justine Frenzel, Jim Schneider (Coach), Caleb Schneider, Tristan Williams



Pictured left to right: Parker Stevens, Bella Ettestad, Carolann Stone, Anna Earley

Led by science teacher Jim Schneider, the Northome School took third place in the senior division of the North Central Envirothon held at Beltrami County Fairgrounds May (pictured right). Proud of their third place finish, the Northome team went on to compete at the State Envirothon held in Collegeville, MN. In the junior division, two teams from St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School of International Falls were led by Barb Youso and Anthony Stone. One of these teams placed 1st in the junior division.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to our local 2013 sponsors for their generous contributions to this event: Coca-Cola Bottling Co., Peter Graham Auxiliary, VFW #2948, the Rainy Lake Sportfishing Club, Northome Grocery, and Bremer Bank of International Falls. Without local support of area businesses, this event would not be possible.

The 2014 North Central Envirothon will be held in Bemidji State Park on Wednesday, May 7th.

Soil Health Awareness NRCS

Healthy, fully functioning soil provides an environment that sustains and nourishes plants, soil microbes and beneficial insects. Managing for soil health is one of the easiest and most effective ways for farmers to increase crop productivity and profitability while improving the environment. Positive results are often realized immediately and last well into the future.

Soil is made up of air, water, decayed plant residue, organic matter from living and dead organisms, and mineral matter, such as sand, silt, and clay. Increasing soil organic matter typically improves soil health since organic matter affects several critical soil functions, including nutrient cycling and water-holding capacity. Healthy soils are porous and allow air and water to move freely through them.



Here's how to improve soil health:

- Disturb the soil as little as possible,
- Grow many different species of plants through rotations and a diverse mixture of cover crops,
- Plant cover crops around harvest to keep living roots growing in the soil for as much of the year as possible, and
- Keep the soil surface covered with residue year round.

For more information about soil health go online:

www.nrcs.usda.gov, <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/soils/health/>, or visit your local NRCS office.

NRCS is an equal opportunity employer.

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/about/civilrights/> and scroll to the bottom for links to more information.

Progress on the Rat Root River

With funding provided through the **Conservation Partners Legacy (CPL)**, the **Rainy Lake Sportfishing Club**, and **Koochiching County**, two sites along the Rat Root River between Rat Root Lake and Black Bay of Rainy Lake were restored during the fall of 2013 using a combination of bio-engineering and rock rip rap to stabilize the bank erosion and sedimentation. Earlier in the summer, Conservation Corp of Minnesota contracted to remove log jams between the areas of Ericsburg and Highway 217. In March 2014, a walleye spawning riffle was constructed east of the Galvin Line bridge that crosses the Rat Root River. The Koochiching SWCD serves as the fiscal agent on this project and provides administrative and technical support.



Erosion construction complete on both Fish Camp and Picnic Camp Sites complete.
(See Picnic Site above)

Water Monitoring Update

Through a grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), Koochiching SWCD, in partnership with the Lake of the Woods (LOW) SWCD, will continue water monitoring efforts using specialized collection equipment over the next two years at ten separate locations — three on the Little Fork, two on the Big Fork River, one on the Rat Root River, one on the Rainy River, two on the Rapid River, and one on the Black River to collect and record various water quality measurements. Four of these ten sites will be collected year-round. The data collected through this project will be used to evaluate the amount of nutrients & sediment traveling downstream during those periods of rising and falling water levels and assist the MPCA in their watershed assessment of the Little Fork and Big Fork River watersheds. Results will be published once the review and analysis process is completed.

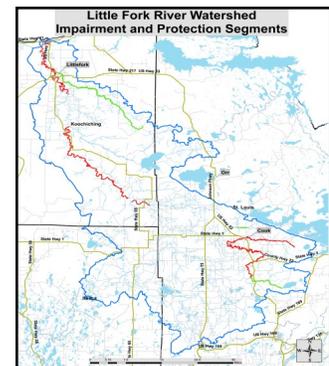
Get Involved in Your Local Watersheds

Do you own land or live on or near the Little Fork or Big Fork River? If you're reading this newsletter, chances are that you do. Koochiching, Itasca, and North St. Louis SWCDs have partnered with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to work with local landowners who live within the Little Fork and Big Fork River Watersheds. We're reaching out to the public to let you know what's happening in YOUR watershed and to seek your knowledge about efforts to keep it healthy.

Two civic engagement events were hosted by the Koochiching SWCD last fall, one in the city of Cook and one in Littlefork. Attendance and feedback were very positive! During these events, the public was provided with a summary of the MPCA's Monitoring and Assessment Report for the Little Fork River Watershed and attendees were asked to provide feedback on the information given.

Future public events will take place in various locations within both the Little Fork and Big Fork Watersheds and will continue to provide information on the Little Fork River impairment status as well as the Big Fork River Monitoring and Assessment report.

To receive more information and/or get on the events mailing list, contact Jolen Simon, Koochiching SWCD Program Coordinator at 218-283-1180 or by email at jolen.simon@koochichingswcd.org



Little Fork River Watershed boundaries showing impaired segments (red, and

Koochiching SWCD



Courthouse, 715 4th St.
International Falls MN

Serving Koochiching County since 1954

www.koochichingswcd.org



Reaching Milestones!

Our staff and Supervisors are DEDICATED to helping you.
So dedicated, in fact, that many make it their life's work!



Pam Tomevi,
District Administrator
20 years



Al Linder,
Board Supervisor
20 years



Ralph Lewis,
Board Supervisor
45 years



Please join us in celebrating our hard-working team on a career of service (and many years to come!) to the Soil & Water Conservation District!

District Supervisors

Ralph Lewis-Chair
George Aitchison-Vice-Chair
Eldon Voigt-Treasurer
Al Linder-Secretary

District Staff

Pam Tomevi
District Administrator
pam.tomevi@koochichingswcd.org
218-283-1174

Eric Olson
District Technician
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Jolén Simon
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The mission of the Koochiching SWCD is to conserve and protect the soil and water resources by educating and assisting land users in Koochiching County in being good stewards of the land and its natural resources.