

# SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS (SWCDS)

Legislative Water Commission

March 16, 2015

LeAnn Buck, Executive Director

Kurt Beckstrom, Vice President

# Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs)

- ❑ SWCDs are a political subdivision of the State of Minnesota
- ❑ Established under MN Statute 103 C
- ❑ Private Lands Conservation



# SWCDs



# Conservation Districts Proposed

- Idea for local special-purpose districts to bridge the gap between federal government & private landowners



# Origin of SWCDs

“The local conservation program would be not just an experiment in conserving natural resources: it would be an experiment in the application of government to natural resources problems in democracy”

*From For the Love of the Land*

by R. Neil Sampson.

# SWCD Authorities

- May carry out soil & water conservation measures on any lands in the district with the consent of the landowner



# SWCD Authorities

Powers and duties (MN State Statute 103C)

- Plan & Execute Erosion Control Projects
- Conduct Demonstration Projects



# SWCD Authorities

- Implement/Construct practices
- Share in the Cost of Projects with Landowner
- Conduct Demonstration Projects
- Funding to be from County, State, Federal
- May Charge for Services
- Present Budget to the County



# SWCD Authorities

Powers and duties (MN State Statute 103C)

- Water Quality & Quantity Monitoring



# SWCD Authorities

Powers and duties (MN State Statute 103C)

- May develop comprehensive plans \* These plans are required to receive state grant funds



# SWCDs Have Resource Professionals



# Governed by Elected Supervisors



# National Level

- 3,000 conservation districts
- 17,000 men & women who serve on District governing boards nationwide
- Districts work with 2.3 million cooperators nationwide encompassing more than 778 million acres of private land

# SWCD Private Lands Conservation

Working at the local level with landowners



# SWCD Recognize Landowners



# SWCDs & Private Lands Conservation





# SWCDs & Private Lands Conservation



# SWCDs & Private Lands Conservation



# SWCDs & Private Lands Conservation



# SWCDs Partner



# SWCDs & Programs

- ▣ State Cost Share
- ▣ RIM Reserve
- ▣ Wetland Conservation Act
- ▣ Feed Lot Programs
- ▣ Clean Water Funds
- ▣ Comprehensive Water Management
- ▣ One Watershed One Plan
- ▣ DNR Groundwater Monitoring

# SWCD Authorities

In a nutshell...

- Private Lands Conservation
- Voluntary Incentive Programs
- Conservation Education
- Local Governance
- Accountable





THANK  
YOU