

SWCD STREAM



Wabasha County Soil & Water Conservation District

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
WABASHA MN
PERMIT NO. 5

September-October 2026 News

- The Well Inventory is still ongoing- submit your well to the inventory to stay informed, visit our website to fill it out!
- Free well tests are available through the MN Dept of Health. Fill out an online form by either scanning the QR code below or call us!
- Keep an eye out for news on a new regional soil health program coming soon!
- Did you know we are on facebook? Follow us <https://www.facebook.com/WabashaSWCD/> to get news & updates more often!
- MN Dept. of Ag Partners Offer Free Workshops to Support Farmers in Times of Stress- Scan the QR code below for more info on workshops near you!



Free Well
Test Kits



Mental Health
Workshops

For more information on treatment and identification, scan the QR code or visit the MN Department of Health's website.



WANTED

CROWN VETCH

Crown Vetch was once intentionally planted along roads and embankments; it is a creeping plant that was originally cultivated for the purpose of ground cover and to prevent erosion. Since its early use the plant has spread without control, it spreads quickly and can form large masses preventing other species from growing. Crown Vetch is listed as a restricted noxious weed- It cannot be imported, sold, or transported in the state of Minnesota. It spreads both vegetatively through spreading rhizomes and by seed and is exceedingly difficult to remove once established. Crown Vetch is also found in other areas such as high-quality habitat for wildlife, which prevents beneficial native species from growing. There are various ways to effectively treat Crown Vetch, mowing & prescribed burning can be used with proper follow up treatments, as well as herbicide during its active growing periods from May-October. Active ingredients in herbicide for effective treatment are: 2,4-D, aminopyralid, clopyralid, dicamba, glyphosate, metsulfuron, picloram, sulfometuron, and triclopyr.

Cost-share for Crown Vetch and other noxious weed species may be available through Wabasha SWCD. For technical assistance on noxious weed species contact your local SWCD technician Katelyn Abts at 651-560-2045 or Katelyn.Abts@mn.nacdn.net

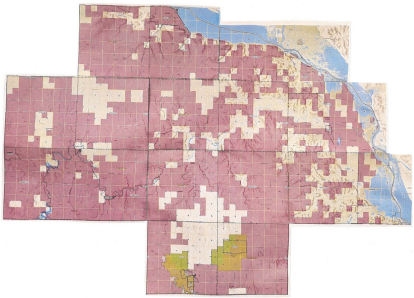
**WABASHA SWCD'S
MOST WANTED
NOXIOUS WEED**



Wabasha County Soil & Water Conservation District
611 Broadway Ave #10B
Wabasha, MN 55981
(651) 560-2053
WabashaSWCD.com

Fall Fertilizer Restrictions

Minnesota’s fall nitrogen fertilizer restrictions in vulnerable groundwater areas takes effect Sept. 1st. This regulation falls under the Groundwater Protection Rule. **The purpose of the rule is to minimize potential nitrogen fertilizer as sources of nitrate that may reach our state’s groundwater, thus protecting our drinking water.** Unique karst topography also plays a role. “Karst is a type of landscape where the dissolving of the bedrock has created sinkholes, sinking streams, caves, springs, and other characteristic features. Karst is associated with soluble rock such as limestone, marble, and gypsum. In general, a typical karst landscape forms when much of the water falling on the surface interacts with and enters the through cracks, fractures, and holes that have been dissolved into the bedrock. After traveling underground, sometimes for long distances, this water is then discharged from springs, some of which are cave entrances. Karst is ideal for storing water as an aquifer and provides vast amounts of clean drinking water to people, plants, and animals. Because of the porous (Swiss cheese-like) nature of karst, water flows quickly through it and receives little filtration. Therefore, contaminants that enter a karst aquifer are rapidly transported, creating water quality problems. **About 20% of the United States is underlain by karst landscapes and 40% of groundwater used for drinking comes from karst aquifers.** It is imperative for our health and safety to protect karst landscapes. (Source:<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/caves/karst-landscapes.html>). The Wabasha map provided here highlights those areas where fall fertilizer restrictions exist, which is about 90% of the county. The pink areas on the map were determined using areas with coarse textured soils, shallow to bedrock, and karst geology. The areas are designated by quarter section, when 50% or more of the area is considered vulnerable. If you wish to look up your land; you can view a closer map here: <https://tinyurl.com/4r7rt4vn>. This rule restricts the application of nitrogen fertilizer in the fall and on frozen soils in those areas identified on the map as vulnerable and those protection areas around a municipal public well (DWSMA) with high nitrates. This rule does allow for some exceptions for specific crops, for very low nitrogen application rates and for academic research. Where fall applications are allowed, the MN Dept. of Ag. recommends waiting until the average soil temperature reaches 50 degrees or cooler before applying anhydrous ammonia, urea or manure. A second part of this rule involves municipal drinking water supply areas that have higher levels of nitrate-nitrogen. For more details on these rules look to the source here: <https://www.mda.state.mn.us/nfr>. Contact Deanna to assist with your nutrient management needs or to schedule your free spreader calibration this fall. We also have manure sampling containers available.



Dark Pink = Areas with Fall Restrictions

Deanna Pomije ☎ 651-560-2060 ✉ deanna.pomije@mn.nacdnet.net

For the Butterflies and the Bees

Pollinators like bees and butterflies provide critical benefits by enabling the reproduction of over 75% of flowering plants, supporting 1/3 of the human diet, and contributing billions of dollars to the global economy. As a landowner, you have the opportunity to bring back native prairies to the state and thus, pollinators. First step is site preparation. This may involve herbicide treatment to remove existing vegetation and/or mowing. Tilling is sometimes necessary if the soil is compacted. The seed mix should consist of both warm and cool seasons grasses with flowers that have varied blooming times throughout the season. Native grasses and forbs can be planted in mid-May to late June though success is reliant on spring rains. Planting in late fall to early winter is called frost seeding, usually when soil temperature reaches 50 degrees and is not likely to go above for the rest of the winter. Going through natural stratification in the winter has shown better results in the breaking of dormancy of native wildflowers resulting in higher diversity and establishment in the first year. Maintenance within the first five years of planting is very important. Weeds grow much faster than native plants and need to be controlled so native plants can get established. Mowing in the first year is vital. When weeds flower, mowing removes the flower and prevents more weed seeds. Native plants would be developing root structures rather than growing up so they avoid most damage caused by mowing. Within three to five years, the planting is fully established but weeds should still be managed. Conducting a prescribed burn does well in killing non-native plants and invigorating native species, helping them to grow and outcompete weeds. Wabasha SWCD can offer cost-share to install native forbs and grasses in Wabasha county. Cost-share is also available for prescribed burns.



Katelyn Abts ☎ 651-560-2045 ✉ katelyn.abts@mn.nacdnet.net

Featured SWCD Project

If you’ve found yourself kicking through northern Gilford Township sometime in the last 3 months, you may have noticed some recent disturbance on the hill just above Brand Angus. What you’re seeing is the newest improvement to Jeff Brand’s beef operation; a Water and Sediment Control basin, paired with long berm called a Diversion. The Brand name is not a new one to Wabasha County, and neither is Jeff. His whole life he has been in the cattle industry and has owned this farm for around 20 years. One reoccurring issue has been water accumulating from the west and running through the cattle yard each year. After looking at the site and brainstorming some options, Wabasha SWCD was able to help design and install a 140 ft. diversion and 370’ long x 3’ deep sediment basin. Sized for a 25-year rain event, this diversion and basin will catch any excess melt or rainwater coming off the field and direct it to a 4” slotted drop pipe. Water running into the drop pipe will then flow approximately 300 feet underground outletting below the barnyard. Projects like these not only benefit farming operations but help slow down runoff and trap sediment; reducing pollutants that in this case, would eventually find their way to the Zumbro River. “The real test will come this spring,” Jeff tells me, when the great MN melt sends water coursing down from the fields above. Only time will tell, but I have a feeling that this spring, melt water on the Brand farm will be a little bit cleaner, and the cattle yard a little bit drier. If you are experiencing runoff issues on your farm, or have erosion issues on your property, please reach out to Keaton.



Photo of Sediment Basin and Drop-Pipe at Jeff Brand's

Keaton Tollakson ☎ 651-560-2058 ✉ keaton.tollakson@mn.nacdnet.net

Is your Septic System Failing ?

Wabasha SWCD has worked with Wabasha County Planning and Zoning to obtain a grant for the repair and replacement of failing residential homesteaded single-family home or duplex septic systems which meet specific standards for this limited-term program. The grant could cover 50% to 75% of the costs for residential septic repair/replacement project costs may be reimbursed by the County. 50% reimbursement will not to exceed \$10,000 for households qualifying as “low income”. 75% reimbursement of the costs will not exceed \$15,000, for households qualifying as “very low income “. Households must also demonstrate that their system is an imminent threat to public health (ITPH) or failing to protect groundwater, therefore a notice of non-compliance must have been issued. These reimbursement amounts are contingent upon funds available. Homeowner is responsible for remaining cost of the project. This program is not for septic systems associated with new homes (new construction is ineligible). For questions on eligibility contact Terri or Darrin.

Terri Peters ☎ 651-560-2044 ✉ terri.peters@mn.nacdnet.net

Darrin Thompson ☎ 651-565-3062 ✉ dthompson@co.wabasha.mn.us