

Administration

Local citizens and professional staff administer soil and Water Conservation Districts. Districts are governed by a board of five supervisors who are elected at large from five different districts within the county. The Supervisors attend monthly meetings to establish conservation priorities, policies and procedures to fit the needs of the county.

Environmental Education

*Hold conservation education programs for county schools. *Arrange field tours and workshops. *Provide scholarships for conservation camps. *Provide educational tools and materials for conservation programs.

Wetland Conservation Act

*Administer the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA), which aims for no-net-loss of wetlands. *The law regulates draining and filling of wetlands and, if wetland loss is unavoidable, requires replacement. *Before any work begins in a wetland area, please contact our office.

Current Supervisors for the Wadena SWCD are:

Chairman:	Nancy Benson
Vice Chairman:	Melvin Kinnunen
Secretary:	Tom Schulz
Treasurer:	Brett Dailey
Public Relations:	Ken Berg

Professional staff works with Supervisors to carry out the daily activities of the District Programs.

Staff:

District Manager:

Darren Newville

Administrative Secretary:

Chantal Tougas

Assistant Manager/Water Resources/Forestry Technician:

Anne Oldakowski

Irrigation Technician:

Wade Salo

Feedlot/WCA Technician/County Ag Inspector:

Tyler Marthaler

The Wadena County SWCD has a volunteer program available. Volunteers can help the District in activities such as surveying, resource inventories, conservation education, and public information.

The Wadena Soil and Water Conservation District prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status.



Wadena Soil & Water Conservation District

4 Alfred St. NE
Wadena, MN 56482
218-631-3195 ext. 4

58 Years of Conservation!

Providing grassroots solutions
for protecting soil and water
for future generations.

Conservation Districts

Soil & Water Conservation Districts, often referred to as SWCDs, are subdivisions of the state government whose purpose is to manage and direct conservation programs. Districts identify and plan local conservation projects, coordinate conservation activities between various public and private agencies, and approve soil and water conservation plans. Districts work closely with the United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) which provides technical expertise to the SWCD. There are 90 SWCDs in Minnesota today, most of which follow county boundaries.

Soil & Water Conservation Districts began in this country in the late 1930's in response to the "dust bowl" soil erosion problems. The purpose of the local SWCD was to conserve soil by preventing soil erosion. It was felt that the people who owned and operated farms understood their local needs and problems better than anyone else; therefore, local people were put in charge of planning and directing conservation work.



Wadena County SWCD... Then and Now

Wadena County's Soil & Water Conservation District was established in May of 1958. The Wadena SWCD was organized by local farmers, with help from the Agriculture Extension Service. Early projects consisted of mapping soils on local farms and writing conservation plans. Today, the District assists landowners and land users with a variety of soil and water resource problems. It is involved in many activities that promote stewardship and help protect our natural resources.

Current Programs

The Wadena County SWCD works to implement a long-range plan for conservation in the county. Support and funding for District operations comes from county and state governments, a unique partnership that has existed across the country for the past sixty years, as well as grant funding. Technical assistance for planning and implementing conservation measures is available upon request. Many different cost share programs are available to assist landowners in implementing a variety of conservation practices.

Agriculture

*Provide technical assistance to landowners regarding conservation practices and sustainable farming such as field windbreaks, erosion control practices, diversions, terraces and rotational grazing. *Conservation tillage equipment rental. *Cost share funds are available for conservation practices. *Assist with irrigation and feedlot permitting. *Weed inspecting.

Forestry and Wildlife

*Plan tree plantings for wildlife and shelterbelts. *Annual tree sales. *Assist county, state, private or industrial forest landowners with technical information. *Assist non-industrial, private landowners with forest management in cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources Forestry Division. *Prepare Forest Stewardship Plans for landowners.

Geographic Information

*Custom mapping. *Printing of aerial photographs for landowners.

Water Quality

*Implement the County's Comprehensive Local Water Plan by working with various groups and agencies. *Collect baseline water quality data. *Help sponsor water testing clinics. *Assist groups with lake or stream monitoring. *Cost-share is available for sealing unused wells. *ISTS loans are available to replace failing septic systems.