



CONSERVATION TODAY

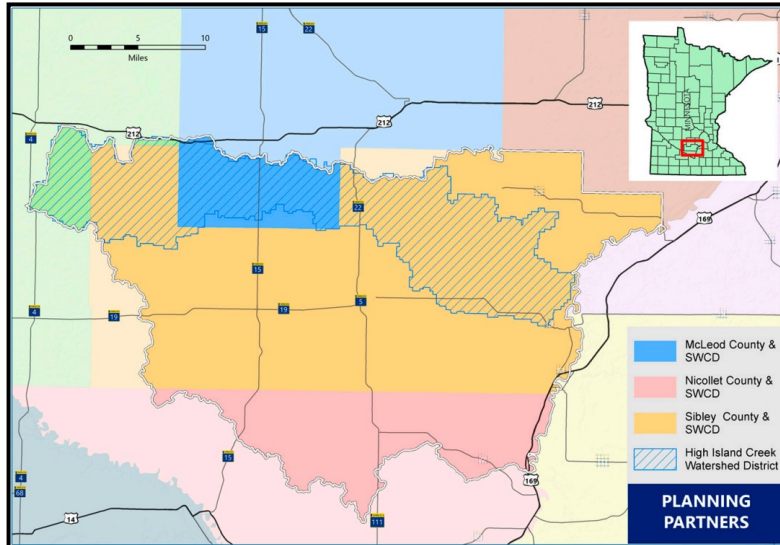
Sibley Soil and Water Conservation District & USDA

Summer 2023



New Cost Share Opportunity

Watershed-Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) is a new program funded through the Clean Water Land and Legacy Amendment that allows local governments to collaborate on water quality improvement projects based on highest priority needs within an approved Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (CWMP). Local governments then use the plans they developed under the One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) program to make sure actions are prioritized, targeted and measurable. Across the state, the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) have utilized WBIF to accelerate water management outcomes and improved consistency and efficiency of implementation efforts. This is important because it allows for both local water management authorities and the state to reach their clean water goals of implementing projects that protect, enhance and restore surface water quality in lakes, rivers and streams; protect groundwater from degradation; and protect drinking water sources. It also supports and promotes sustainable agricultural practices by maintaining and improving soil fertility, which in return allows landowners/land-occupiers to prosper.



Locally, the process began in 2019, when Sibley County, in partnership with Sibley

Cover Crops Being Utilized in a Standard Rotation



Soil and Water Conservation District, received a 1W1P planning grant from BWSR. Along with planning partners McLeod and Nicollet County, McLeod and Nicollet SWCD, and the High Island Creek Watershed District, developed their CWMP, receiving final approval this past March.

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Sibley SWCD

Joel Wurscher,
District Manager

Jeremy Buckentin,
District Technician

Jack Bushman,
Water Resources
Coordinator

Tara O'Brien,
Conservation Technician

SWCD Board

- Kathleen Thies - District 1
- Paul Wiemann - District 2
- Loren Evenson - District 3
- Wayne Grams - District 4
- Robert Nielsen - District 5

Board Meetings

Second Tuesday of
Each Month
4 p.m., SWCD Office



USDA - NRCS

Jacob Stich,
Team Lead

Reyna Chavez
District Conservationist

Nicole Baumann
Agronomist

Office Hours

Monday - Friday
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.



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In April, Sibley SWCD applied for and received it's first WBIF grant (\$596,617) to implement the CWMP. This grant will be available until December of 2025 or until all of the funds have been spent.

What does WBIF mean for landowners? It means there is funding available in high priority areas to help with the installation of best management practices! There are many practices that WBIF covers including structural practices and incentives for non-structural practices. Structural practices will be cost shared at an unprecedented 90%. This category includes, but is not limited to practices like water and sediment control basins, grade stabilizations structures, terraces and grassed waterways. Incentives for non-structural practices vary depending on the chosen practice. Examples of non-structural practices include cover crops, conservation cover, conservation crop rotation, and no-till/strip till. A unique funding opportunity using WBIF is drainage water management. This will offer folks cost share towards a drainage water management plan, the structure (s) used in implementing the plan, and 3 years worth of payments for management of the drainage water management system. Due to the elevated cost share rates with WBIF, approval for a project will be determined using scoring thresholds to make sure funding is used within the priority areas.

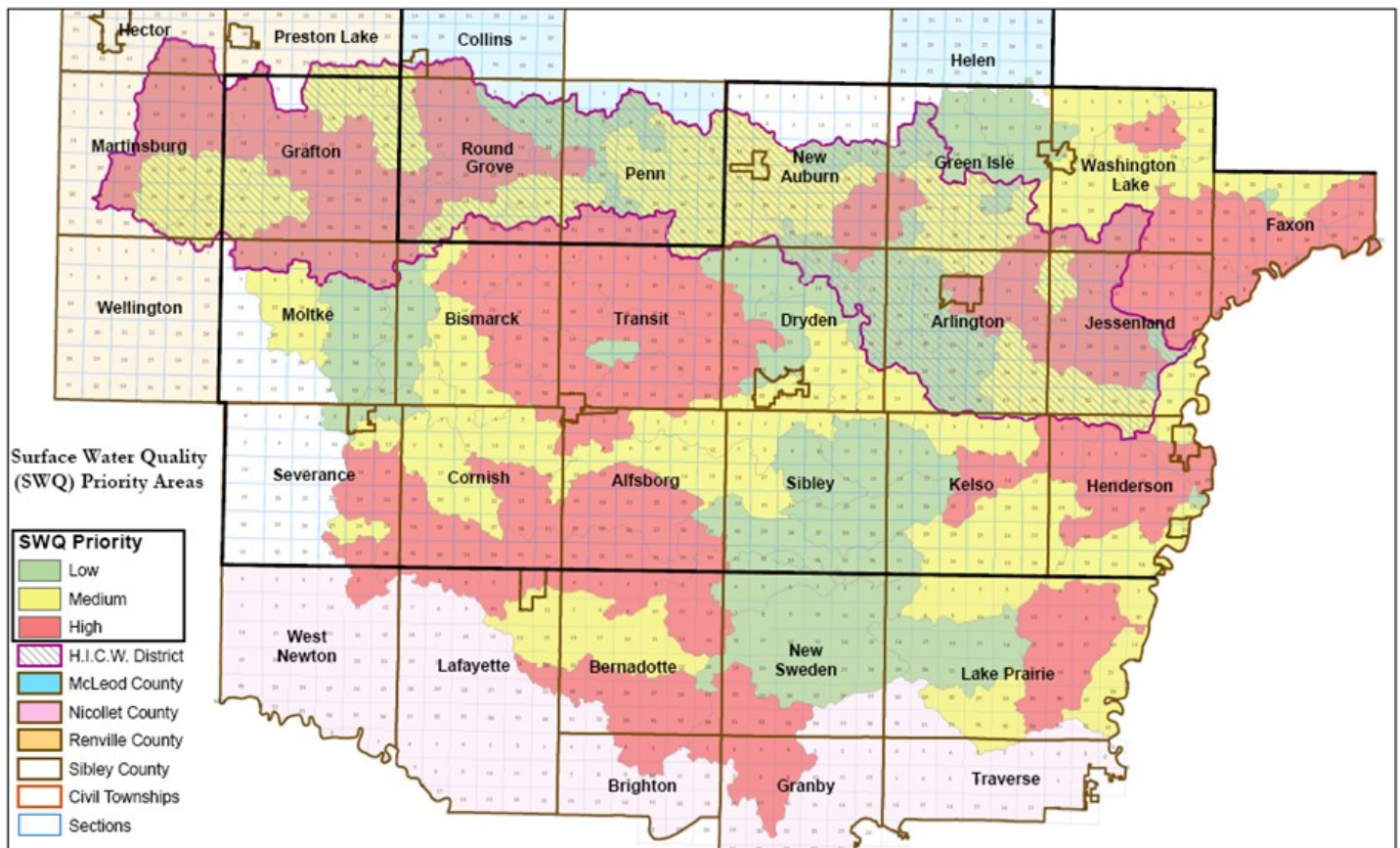
To learn more about Watershed-Based Implementation Funding and how we can help you make a difference, contact:

McLeod SWCD: 520 Chandler Avenue North, Glencoe or 320-864-1224

Nicollet SWCD: 501 7th Street, Nicollet or 507-232-2550

Sibley SWCD: 112 5th Street, Gaylord or 507-702-7077

Below shows the priority areas for implementing practices to address surface water quality.





Meet the New Sibley Conservation Office Staff

Sibley SWCD Conservation Technician

Tara O'Brien joined the Sibley SWCD on June 5th as the new Conservation Technician. She is a recent graduate from Minnesota State University, Mankato with a degree in Recreation, Parks, and Leisure Services with a double emphasis in Resource Management and Leisure Planning and Management. She enjoys spending time with her family, traveling, camping, and fishing. Tara hopes to share her passion for conservation through education and outreach programs on soil health, water quality, and aquatic invasive species.



NRCS—District Conservationist

Reyna Chavez joined the NRCS office . She is originally from south Texas, where she graduated with a bachelors in Environmental Science in 2018. After a few semesters working on a Masters in Biology, she accepted a soil conservationist position for Iowa NRCS in spring of 2020. She packed up her dog (Sammy) and cat (Luna) then had a 22 hour road trip to Iowa. Not only did she find a career with the NRCS, she met her now husband and is growing quite fond of the Midwest. She survived half a Minnesotan winter! Reyna says that Minnesota is truly a beautiful state, and that she is very excited to live here and get to work everyone.

NRCS—Agronomist

Nicole Baumann is the new Agronomist for Sibley NRCS. She grew up in Winsted, MN and just recently graduated college from South Dakota State University. She majored in Agronomy with a minor in Ag Business. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family, camping in northern Minnesota, and being outdoors doing various activities. Nicole has experience working with various farming operations and even spent a summer working as a grazing specialist. Nicole looks forward to working with producers in the community and providing technical assistance.





Wetland Conservation Act Fees

Fee schedule effective as of January 1st, 2023



Wetland Delineation Review:

- Less than 1 Acre: \$100
- 1 – 4.99 Acres: \$200
- 5 – 9.99 Acres: \$300
- 10 or More Acres: \$400

Wetland Replacement Plan Review:

- Less than 1 Acre: \$200
- 1 – 4.99 Acres: \$300
- 5 – 9.99 Acres: \$500
- 10 or More Acres: \$700

Wetland Banking Review:

- Draft/Prospectus Review: \$400
- Annual Monitoring Plan: \$100
- Less than 1 Acre: \$200
- 1 – 4.99 Acres: \$400
- 5 – 9.99 Acres: \$800
- 10 or More Acres: \$1000

After the Fact Review:

Double the Fee

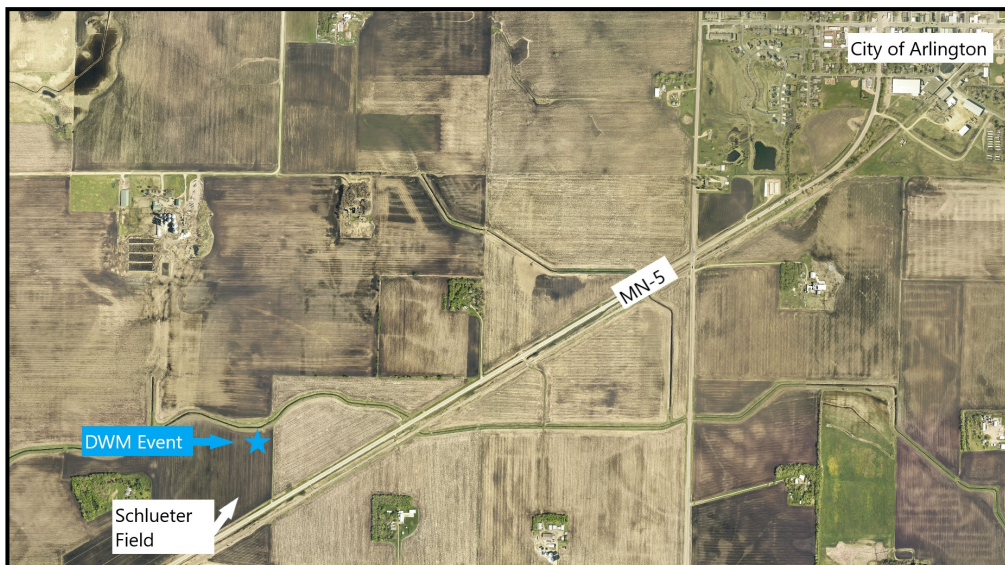
Drainage Water Management In-Field Event

When: August 16th, 2023 from 10:00 a.m - 11:00 a.m.

Where: Verne Schlueter Field - MN Highway 5 - 2.2 Miles SW of Arlington, MN.

Who: Lower MN River West Partnership & Ecosystem Services Exchange (ESE)

Stop by the Verne Schlueter field for a 1 hour presentation on Drainage Water Management (DWM). See Verne's newly installed DWM outlet control box and learn about it's planning and design concepts from the project designer, Ecosystem Services Exchange! Discover the available cost share opportunities for your land and engage with a Question and Answer segment near the end of the program. There will be limited parking for this event along the MN Highway 5 shoulder and road ditch, please car pool if possible!





AIS Prevention Plan Input Needed

In 2014, a tax bill was passed that gives Minnesota counties funds for aquatic invasive species prevention. This bill (Minnesota Statute 477A.19) provides \$10 Million per year to counties. Funds are allocated based on each county's share of watercraft trailer launches (50%) and watercraft trailer parking spaces (50%). Individual counties are tasked with making decisions on how the funds are to be used. As part of this decision-making process, Sibley Soil and Water Conservation District will be updating its Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Plan. Good planning requires public input. We are asking you to fill out the survey below and help guide the Sibley SWCD AIS program.

This survey can also be completed at www.sibleyswcd.org/survey



Please fill out the following contact information to be entered into a drawing for a \$100 Scheels Gift Card!

Name:

Mailing Address:

Email:

Phone Number:

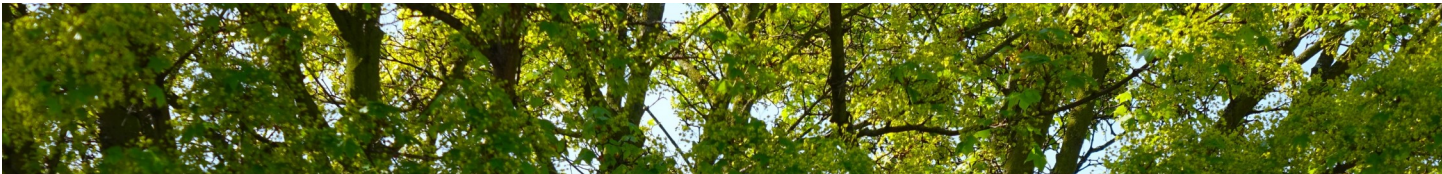
Questions:

1. How often do you utilize the following aquatic resources in Sibley County?

	Never	Somewhat	Often
Minnesota River			
High Island Creek			
Rush River			
High Island Lake			
Severance Lake			
Washington Lake			
Silver Lake			
Indian Lake			
Clear Lake			
Sand Lake			
Titlow Lake			
Other (Please Indicate)			

Cut/Detach Here and Turn In





2. How concerned are you about the current and future effects of these invasive species on Sibley County's waterbodies?

	No Concern	Slightly Concerned	Very Concerned
Zebra Mussels			
Eurasian Watermilfoil			
Curly Leaf Pondweed			
Rusty Crayfish			
Purple Loosestrife			
Phragmites			
Common Carp			
Starry Stonewort			

3. What are the best ways to communicate with the public about aquatic invasive species? (Circle Top 3)

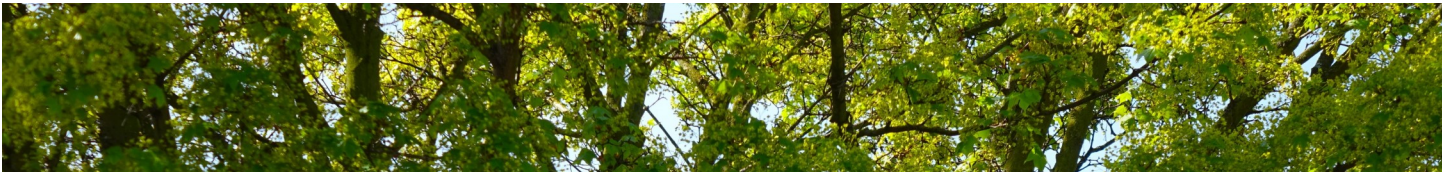
- A. SWCD Website
- B. Social Media
- C. Radio
- D. Email
- E. Newsletters
- F. Public Events
- G. Newspapers
- H. Advertising in public spaces
- I. Informative signage at boat landings

4. In what ways do you utilize water resources in Sibley County?

	Never	Somewhat	Often
Fishing			
Motor Boating			
Canoe/Kayak/Paddleboard			
Waterfowl Hunting			
Trapping			
Nature Viewing			
Swimming			
Other			

Cut/Detach Here and Turn In





Nominations Open for the 2023 FSA County Committee Elections

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) [Farm Service Agency](https://www.fsa.usda.gov) (FSA) is now accepting nominations for county committee members and encourages all farmers, ranchers, and FSA program participants to take part in the Sibley County Committee election nomination process. Elections will occur in certain Local Administrative Areas (LAA) for members. LAAs are elective areas for FSA committees in a single county or multi-county jurisdiction. For Sibley County, elections will take place in LAA #1, which consists of Grafton, Moltke, Bismarck, Transit, Severance, and Cornish Townships. Customers can identify which LAA they or their farming or ranching operation is in by using our new GIS locator tool available at fsa.usda.gov/elections.



County committee members make important decisions about how Federal farm programs are administered locally. All nomination forms for the 2023 election must be postmarked or received in the local FSA office by Aug. 1, 2023.

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in a USDA program and reside in the LAA that is up for election this year, may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. A cooperating producer is someone who has provided information about their farming or ranching operation to FSA, even if they have not applied or received program benefits.

Individuals may nominate themselves or others and qualifying organizations may also nominate candidates. USDA encourages minority producers, women, and beginning farmers or ranchers to nominate, vote and hold office.

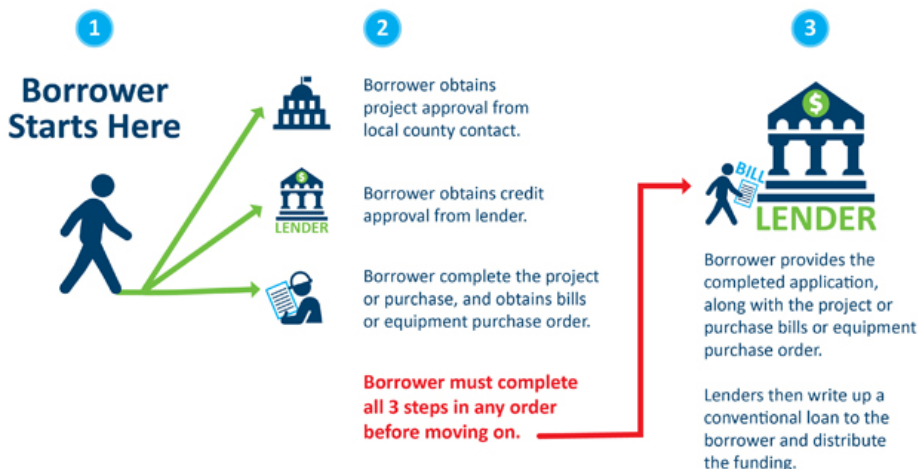
Nationwide, more than 7,700 dedicated members of the agricultural community serve on FSA county committees. The committees are made up of 3 to 11 members who serve three-year terms. Committee members are vital to how FSA carries out disaster programs, as well as conservation, commodity and price support programs, county office employment and other agricultural issues.

For more information on FSA county committee elections, including fact sheets, nomination forms and FAQs, visit fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Ag BMP Loan Program

The Ag BMP Loan Program is a water quality program that provides low-interest loans to farmers, rural landowners, and agriculture supply businesses. The purpose is to encourage agricultural Best Management Practices that prevent or reduce runoff from feedlots, farm fields and other pollution problems identified by the county in local water plans. Private and cluster septic system installations, upgrades or repairs within Minnesota are also eligible for Ag BMP funding. With today's average interest rates hovering around 7-8%, this program at 3% may be a real benefit to landowners. Maximum loan term is 10 years.

If you are interested in utilizing the Ag BMP loan program, please call Geoff Beranek at (507)237-4091 or stop in to the Sibley County Planning & Zoning office.



Sibley SWCD
112 5th St
PO Box 161
Gaylord MN 55334

PRESORTED STANDARD
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**Come see us at
the Sibley County
Fair Aug. 3rd—6th!**



Conservation Today is published by the Sibley Soil and Water Conservation District and USDA—NRCS
112 5th St, Gaylord MN 55334. For more information regarding this newsletter, contact (507) 702-7077.

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