



Support local conservation through SWCD Aid

The Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) provides a collaborative, centralized voice for Minnesota’s 88 soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs). SWCDs are local units of government comprised of elected, nonpartisan supervisors who are passionate about conserving Minnesota’s remarkable natural resources. **We are asking legislators to support a standing, statutory appropriation for SWCDs through the Department of Revenue – SWCD Aid – at \$22 million per year: HF 735 (Reyer)/SF 526 (Klein).**

SWCDs help conserve natural resources across Minnesota

SWCDs provide value to our state’s conservation through technical assistance, funding and educational services for private landowners. They are a primary source of conservation information, support, and program management for landowners and other local units of government. SWCDs are the technical experts and “boots on the ground” who understand their specific communities’ needs and help landowners navigate conservation programs from start to finish. As water quality and soil health issues are prioritized in Minnesota, SWCDs’ roles have expanded and now include helping landowners navigate regulations that are increasing in complexity.

Now is the time to fund SWCD capacity

For several years, policymakers have expressed a need to permanently fund soil and water conservation capacity. With the state’s healthy budget and improved economic outlook for the future biennium, this is the opportune time for establishing a permanent funding mechanism in the general fund for SWCDs – SWCD Aid.

Adequate, permanent funding for SWCDs will allow Minnesota to continue its pace of progress toward clean water and healthy soil goals.

As a partner in advancing the state’s climate goals at the local level, SWCDs need predictability and sufficiency. This funding would boost SWCD capacity, enhance SWCDs’ ability to hire and retain qualified, credentialed employees, and increase our pace of progress toward clean water and healthy soil goals. SWCD capacity is critical in helping deliver and leverage federal conservation program dollars. These funds go directly to landowners in Minnesota who are leading by example and proving that conservation practices are a worthwhile investment. **We urge legislators to support SWCD Aid at the amount of \$22 million per year.**

