



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.**

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.

Seeking a permanent funding solution

For several years, policymakers have expressed a need to permanently fund soil and water conservation capacity. Current funding arrangements have allowed this important work to continue while we worked toward a general fund solution.

If Minnesota wants to increase its pace of progress toward clean water and healthy soil goals, it needs to find an adequate, permanent funding solution for SWCDs.

The state’s current \$7.7 billion surplus for the current biennium and improved economic outlook for future years presents the opportune time for lawmakers to establish SWCD funding as a standing, statutory, general fund appropriation of \$22 million per year through the Department of Revenue – SWCD Aid.

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. It would increase our ability to leverage federal conservation program dollars and allow SWCDs the ability to plan for the future. We urge legislators to support SWCD Aid at the amount of \$22 million per year.

