

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

**FILE NUMBER:** H.F. 577

**DATE:** February 14, 2007

**Version:** As introduced

**Authors:** Hansen and others

**Subject:** Ditch Buffer Bill

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### Overview

This bill is a product of a drainage/ditch buffer work group convened under the Board of Water and Soil Resources that met over the course of a two-year period and made recommendations that are reflected here.

#### Section

- 1**        **Ditch buffer strips.** Clarifies the point of beginning to measure the width of ditch buffer strips when required by statute, and that they be planted in perennial vegetation.
- 2 - 3**    **Perennial vegetation.** Clarifies that perennial vegetation, instead of grass, will be the permanent buffer strips throughout statute.
- 4**        **Compliance requirement.** Allows a drainage authority to issue an order to bring a non-conforming property owner into compliance with the ditch buffer strips requirement.
- 5**        **Compliance expenses.** Allows the county auditor to bring a lien against a non-conforming property, and the expenses include costs to restore a perennial vegetative cover or structural conservation practice that may be damaged by the drainage.
- 6**        **Technical. S** imilar to sections 2 and 3.
- 7**        **Drainage system repair.** Allows the restoration of perennial vegetative cover or structural conservation practice when impacted by a drainage system repair, with costs paid by the drainage system.
- 8**        **Inspection.** Mandates that open drainage systems must be inspected at least every five years, and annually when there is a ditch buffer strip violation.
- 9 - 11**   **Technical.** Similar to sections 2 and 3.
- 12**       **Appropriations.** Appropriates:

- \$2 million general fund in FY 2008 to BWSR for local water management challenge grants in order to accelerate statewide public drainage records preservation and modernization.
- \$150,000 general fund in FY 2008 to BWSR, to work with the Drainage Work Group, for drainage record preservation guidelines.
- \$300,000 general fund in FY 2008 for BWSR to update the Minnesota Public Drainage Manual.
- A blank amount to BWSR to facilitate the work of the Drainage Work Group.
- A blank amount to BWSR to staff a drainage assistance team to work on multipurpose projects.