



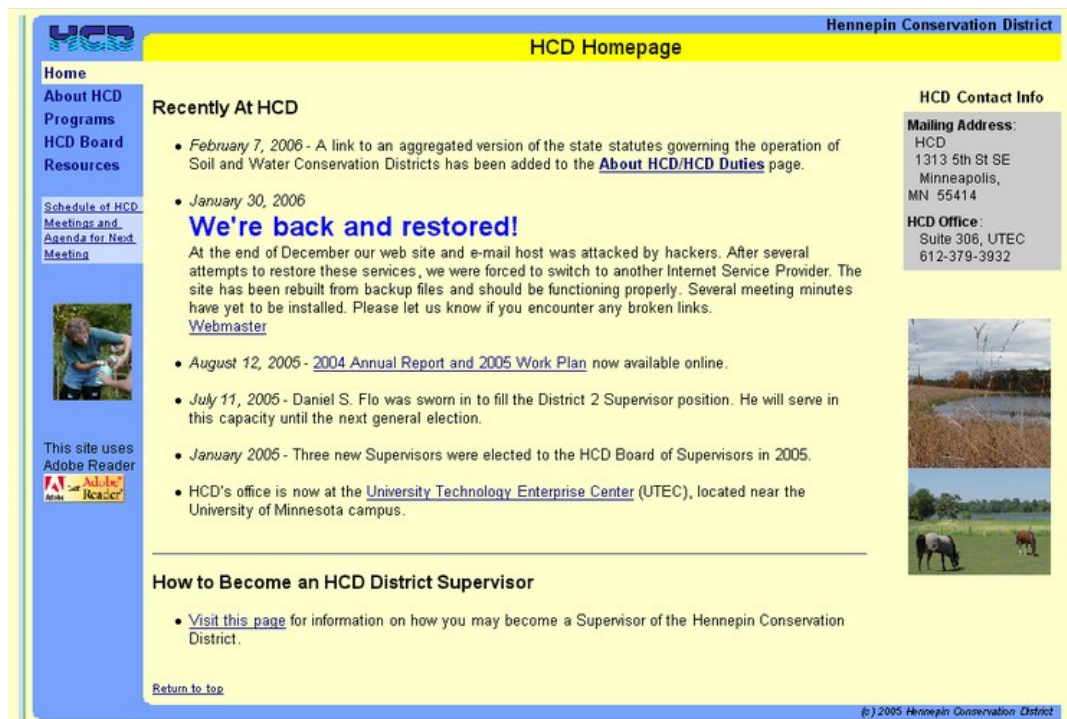
Hennepin Conservation District

# **2007 Annual Report**

and

# **2008 Work Plan**

March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008




The screenshot shows the HCD Homepage with a yellow header and a blue sidebar. The main content area is white. The sidebar contains navigation links and a small photo of a person. The main content area features a 'Recently At HCD' section with a list of news items, a 'We're back and restored!' announcement, and a 'How to Become an HCD District Supervisor' section. On the right, there is an 'HCD Contact Info' box with mailing and office addresses, and two small landscape photos.


**Hennepin Conservation District**

**HCD Homepage**

**Home**  
About HCD  
Programs  
HCD Board  
Resources

[Schedule of HCD Meetings and Agenda for Next Meeting](#)



This site uses Adobe Reader  


**Recently At HCD**

- February 7, 2006 - A link to an aggregated version of the state statutes governing the operation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts has been added to the [About HCD/HCD Duties](#) page.
- January 30, 2006

**We're back and restored!**

At the end of December our web site and e-mail host was attacked by hackers. After several attempts to restore these services, we were forced to switch to another Internet Service Provider. The site has been rebuilt from backup files and should be functioning properly. Several meeting minutes have yet to be installed. Please let us know if you encounter any broken links.  
[Webmaster](#)

- August 12, 2005 - [2004 Annual Report and 2005 Work Plan](#) now available online.
- July 11, 2005 - Daniel S. Flo was sworn in to fill the District 2 Supervisor position. He will serve in this capacity until the next general election.
- January 2005 - Three new Supervisors were elected to the HCD Board of Supervisors in 2005.
- HCD's office is now at the [University Technology Enterprise Center \(UTEC\)](#), located near the University of Minnesota campus.

**HCD Contact Info**

**Mailing Address:**  
HCD  
1313 5th St SE  
Minneapolis,  
MN 55414

**HCD Office:**  
Suite 306, UTEC  
612-379-3932

**How to Become an HCD District Supervisor**

- [Visit this page](#) for information on how you may become a Supervisor of the Hennepin Conservation District.

[Return to top](#)

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## HCD Online

Additional information about HCD including news, the schedule of upcoming meeting, past meeting minutes, and more, is available at the HCD web site. We invite you to join us at:

<http://hcd.hennepin.mn.us>



## **Table of Contents**

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2008 Board of Supervisors and HCD Staff .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2007 Program Report .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2008 Work Plan and Program Summary .....</b>	<b>9</b>

## Introduction

The Hennepin Conservation District was founded on November 7, 1949 as a special purpose unit of government under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103C. HCD is one of 91 soil and water conservation districts throughout Minnesota and is part of a national network of conservation districts. SWCDs have no taxing or regulatory authority. Hence, these districts must develop and implement their conservation programs through voluntary cooperation with individuals, citizen associations, and other governmental units.

The governing body of the Hennepin Conservation District is an elected board of supervisors. There are five supervisors on the HCD Board. Supervisors are elected county-wide for a term of four years. For continuity, terms are staggered so that two or three positions are elected every two years. Although the election for supervisors is county-wide, each must come from one of five nominating districts. Election contests are among candidates within the same nominating district. All eligible voters in the county can vote their preference in each contest.

Improper land use practices have caused serious wind and water erosion of the land within Hennepin County, increased runoff of polluting materials, increased energy costs, and increased flood damage within Hennepin County. The role of HCD has evolved over time in addressing these issues. It is the policy of HCD to encourage land owners to conserve soil and water resources through implementation of practices to correct these conditions and preserve the soil and water resources of Hennepin County and the State of Minnesota.

To accomplish its mission, HCD seeks to develop collaborative relationships with private landowners, nonprofit, and for profit entities concerned with conservation, and other local, State and Federal level agencies to achieve mutual goals. HCD supplements the efforts of others through technical assistance, cost-share projects, data gathering and compliance monitoring. HCD serves important roles in the facilitation of State Cost-share Program funds, Wetland Conservation Act administration, and coordination of project partners towards common objectives. The goal of HCD is to leverage the maximum amount of financial and technical resources towards implementing projects which benefit the resources of Hennepin County.

In 2007, staff of the Hennepin County Environmental Services Department (HCES) provided administrative and technical services to the Board, pursuant to the cooperative agreement between HCD and Hennepin County.



# 2007 Board of Supervisors

## District One

Kim Boyce, *Chair*

Term Expires January, 2009

## District Two

Phil Willkie,

Term Expires January 2011

## District Three

Dan Jones, *Secretary*

Term Expires January 2009

## District Four

Stephen Jenkins, *Treasurer*

Term Expires January 2011

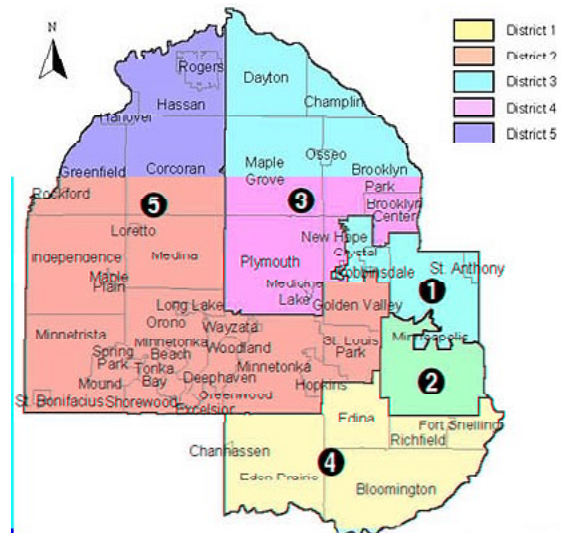
## District Five

Mike Wyatt, *Vice-Chair*

Term Expires January, 2009

## HCES Staff Assigned to HCD

Stacey Lijewski, *Conservationist*



HCD boundaries do not conform to the boundaries of any specific municipality, township, watershed district, or other legal division but may incorporate any of these in whole or part.

## **2007 Program Report**

In 2007 the goal of HCD was to fulfill the statutory obligations of the agency, strategically direct expenditures of financial resources, and strategically plan for the future of the organization. 2007 was also year of transition as it was the first full year the District operated under the new cooperative agreement with Hennepin County. Under the cooperative agreement, Hennepin County provides staff to implement the District's statutory responsibilities and programs. The HCD Board worked with county staff to achieve the following accomplishments in 2007.

### **Land and Water Conservation**

County staff provides technical assistance and related services to promote land and water conservation in Hennepin County. County staff answers questions from land owners and local governments regarding appropriate conservation practices. HCD and Hennepin County collaborate, collectively organize, and supplement the efforts of others to leverage the maximum amount of effort devoted towards conservation efforts.

### **Wetland Conservation Act Administration**

HCD has a statutory role in the administration of the Wetland Conservation Act within Hennepin County. Conservation of wetlands throughout the County is a high priority of the agency. HCD assists other State and local units of government in monitoring legal and illegal impacts to wetlands. Seventeen "Cease and Desist" orders were issued in 2007. Nine other violations were reported to HCD and meetings with the landowners were held, but no formal cease and desist order was issued; therefore no formal restoration order was issued by HCD for these nine violations. Seven of these violations have been resolved. The other two violations will be addressed by the landowners in the spring of 2008. Of the seventeen Cease and Desist Orders issued in 2007, 23 meetings were held with landowners to outline corrective actions. Nine of the orders were rescinded. Thirteen Restoration Orders have been written and issued in 2007. Addressing these cases and the backlog from previous years continues to be a high priority. The HCD staff also participated in 29 Technical Evaluation Panels (TEPs). As a result these TEPs, changes were made to improve the conservation effectiveness of the original plans. In addition, county staff on behalf of HCD attended 27 other meetings with staff from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), local units of government and landowners.

## **State Cost-Share Program**

HCD approved three cost-share applications in 2007. The Board approved a cost-share agreement not to exceed \$27,000 for a waste storage facility in Corcoran. This agreement utilizes 2006 (\$17,657) and 2007 (\$9,229) cost-share funds. The Board also approved a cost-share agreement not to exceed \$4,115 for a waste storage facility in Independence. The Board approved the cost-share application for a rain garden project in Minneapolis. Approval of the cost-share agreement not to exceed \$5,000 is dependent upon the applicant obtaining all necessary permits for the project.

## **Non-Point Source Engineering Assistance Program (NPEAP)**

NPEAP is administered through the Scott County SWCD. In 2007, the HCD requested \$3570 in NPEAP funds for engineering design for a project in Independence. The request was approved.

## **RIM Easement Inspection**

Pursuant to the cooperative agreement, Hennepin County staff conducts annual inspections of Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) easements. Staff inspected 22 of the 33 Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) easements in Hennepin County. The purpose of the inspections is to verify landowner compliance with the restrictions imposed by the conservation easements. All inspection reports were filed with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) pursuant to state requirements.

## **Environmental Education**

Recognizing that environmental education represents a wise investment in youth and conservation knowledge, HCD supported two high school Envirothon teams and provided staff support for 2007. Envirothon is a high school environmental education program that is nationwide with regional and state competitions for places in the national completion. College scholarships are awarded to the top teams at the national competition. The Envirothon mission is to develop knowledgeable, skilled and dedicated citizens who are willing and prepared to work towards achieving and maintaining a natural balance between the quality of life and the quality of the environment.

In 2007, county staff representing HCD participated in the planning and implementation of the Children's Water Festival (CWF). The Children's Water Festival is a water resource based environmental education event for 5<sup>th</sup> graders in the seven county metro area. Members of the planning committee for this all day event represent all seven metro counties and several metro



watershed management organizations . The metro CWF served 1300 5<sup>th</sup> graders in 2007. The planning committee is currently researching ideas of how to best expand, as the number of schools applying is increasing. In 2007, 50 schools were present and 147 schools were turned down due to physical and financial constraints associated with the event.

The county staff representing HCD were been involved with a number of other environmental education events, including City environmental fairs or events and presentations to schools.

## **DNR Obwell network**

HCD has an agreement with the DNR to measured static water levels in eleven wells that are a part of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources observation well network. All wells are monitored once a month, eight months a year, by county staff pursuant to the cooperative agreement.

## **Impaired Waters**

Impaired Waters are becoming an increasingly important issue across Hennepin County and throughout the state. HCD seeks to actively supplement the efforts of others including Watershed Management Organizations to assist in the implementation of land use practices which will improve water quality and address issues related to Impaired Waters. Currently, HCD serves as the fiscal agent for two Clean Water Legacy grants to improve water quality, totally \$608,000. \$410,000 is for the Pioneer Sarah Creek Watershed and the remaining \$198,000 is for the Elm Creek TMDL. These grants help fund efforts by the Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission (Lake Independence) and the City of Plymouth (Medicine Lake) to reduce nutrient loading and erosion.

## **Conservation Associations and Collaborations**

To leverage and best maximize limited HCD resources, partnering with other state and regional conservation associations continued in 2007. HCD is a member of the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). Membership in the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) enabled staff and elected supervisors access to high quality staff development, training and information networks; resources that enhanced the capacity of HCD in 2007. Partnering with other metropolitan SWCDs through the Association of Metropolitan Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AMSWCD) provides access to engineering services and regional staff who work directly with residents of Hennepin County to assist with conservation planning and the installation of conservation practices. One example of this is the

work of Gregg Thompson, a regional landscape restoration technician. Mr. Thompson is based at the Anoka County SWCD, and delivers programs throughout the metro region. His primary focus is to work with landowner groups, lake associations, local units of government on the design and installation of lake shore and stream bank restoration projects, rain gardens, and native buffer strips (noted above). In a recent report Mr. Thompson cites the following activities in Hennepin County; 28 education events with a total of 823 participants, 14 total project designs, 10 total project installations, 15 total project checkouts (project monitoring) and one underserved-client installation project.

## **Administration**

HCD received \$33,071 in general services support from BWSR in 2007. These funds are allocated towards general operations and administrative expenses. Pursuant to the cooperative agreement between HCD and Hennepin County, District revenues are transferred to the county. The HCD Boards maintains control of these funds and authorizes payments of administrative expenses such as per diem, travel, dues and insurance as well as program funds such as state cost-share grants. In addition, the District reimburses the county for services provided by county staff related to RIM and Obwell monitoring and WCA.

## **2008 Work Plan**

Throughout 2007 and into the year 2008, HCD remains committed to the following mission:

*“To facilitate the conservation of water, soil and related natural resources through education, technical assistance and implementation of sound land use practices, in the most cost-effective manner, for the benefit of current and future generations.”*

2008 will be a year of transition as the District works to implement the new cooperative agreement with Hennepin County.

The 2008 HCD Work Plan builds on efforts of 2007 and sets the stage for 2008 and beyond. HCD recognizes that addressing the conservation issues in a rapidly “urbanizing environment” in the most populated county in the state is a unique and important challenge.

## Priorities for 2008

### Soil and Water Conservation

The quality of soil and water resources within Hennepin County is intimately linked to land use. Currently there is an increased emphasis at the Federal and State levels on non-point pollution control and agricultural nutrient management. In the future, HCD as an organization will maintain a focus on non-point source pollution management. HCD will continue to provide conservation program services in the areas where HCD has a unique statutory role and responsibility. Efforts will be made to partner with other conservation and environmental agencies in order to leverage HCD resources - maximizing the conservation benefits to landowners and residents of Hennepin County.

HCD will seek to increase its effectiveness in fulfilling its mission through supplementing the efforts of others and collaborating on joint environmental projects with public and private entities which conserve, enhance and improve the resources of Hennepin County.

HCD utilizes a number of tools to implement conservation across the county including:

- Technical Assistance and Land Use Planning
- Upland and Wetland Conservation
- Aquatic Buffers, Shoreline and Stream bank Stabilization
- Better Site Design on New Development
- Erosion and Sediment Control
- Implementation of Storm water Best Management Practices including rain gardens
- Education

### Cooperative Agreement with Hennepin County

Priorities in 2008 include the continued implementation of the cooperative agreement between the HCD and Hennepin County. The HCD Board believes this agreement results in improved service to residents and local governments in Hennepin County. The Board looks forward to continuing discussions with the County Board and staff regarding future cooperative efforts. The HCD Board is actively pursuing opportunities to identify environmental issues and ways to support county initiatives to address those issues.

## Impaired Waters

Impaired Waters as defined by the Clean Water Act continue to be an important natural resource management issue in Hennepin County. HCD has a critical role to play in addressing non-point source pollution and reduction of nutrient loads to area waters. HCD will continue to assist the efforts of others to address impaired waters and improve the quality of area resources. In 2008, the District will continue to serve as the fiscal agent for two Clean Water Legacy grants, (totaling \$608,000). These grants help fund efforts to address reductions in nutrient loading to two impaired waters, Lake Independence and Medicine Lake. The current list of impaired waters in Minnesota is available from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (<http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/tmdl/tmdl-303dlist.html>).

Staff time and state Cost-Share Program funds will be dedicated towards addressing rural and semi-rural runoff issues that affect impaired waters. Priority will be given to those projects occurring in areas with an approved surface water management plans and total maximum daily load (TMDL) plans addressing impaired waters. The HCD Board intends to introduce a resolution for consideration at the 2008 MASWCD Convention that promotes the involvement of local governments in the review and approval of Clean Water Legacy applications. The Board believes that local involvement will increase the benefits associated with the Clean Water Legacy program in Hennepin County and throughout the state.

## Programs

In 2008, HCD will concentrate its attention and resources to the statutory and contractual obligations it retains and also seek to leverage programs and funds administered by others to further its mission. Programmatic statutory activities are summarized as below:

WCA

State Cost Share

Non-Point Source Engineering Assistance

RIM easement inspection

DNR Obwell network

## Wetlands Conservation Act (WCA)

The HCD has a statutory role in jurisdictional wetland regulation under the WCA. Participation in technical evaluation panels (TEP) to delineate wetlands, evaluate impacts, and restore through remedial efforts is now done by county staff on behalf of the District. An average of twelve to seventeen cease and desist orders are received by HCD annually. Priority will be given to

enforcement activities in 2008. An additional \$10,000 is available from the BWSR to support WCA enforcement activities in Hennepin County. The District has applied for this grant and plans to use these funds to improve protection of valuable wetlands.

## **State Cost-Share Program**

HCD received \$23,072 in cost-share funds from BWSR for eligible conservation projects in 2008. Special projects that address both high priority erosion problems and high priority water quality problems will be given greatest consideration for cost share funds. Over a three year time period it is the goal of the board to balance the needs of both rural and urban areas that have high priority erosion problems.

## **Non-Point Source Engineering Assistance Program (NPEAP)**

NPEAP is administered through the Scott County SWCD. Although no funds are directly transferred to HCD through this program, NPEAP funds support projects in Hennepin County that help reduce erosion and improve water quality. The Board is looking to expand the use of NPEAP funds in Hennepin County in 2008.

## **RIM Easement Inspection**

County staff will continue to conduct RIM inspections pursuant to the cooperative agreement. The BWSR provided the District a \$2,423 grant to support this activity in 2008.

## **DNR Obwell network**

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has contracted with HCD to measure water levels in eleven (11) observation wells over the course of the year. HCD receives \$15 per reading to perform this work. The staff time commitment for this contract is approximately eight, eight-hour days per year.

## **Environmental Education**

HCD will continue to support environmental education programs in 2008 including the Envirothon and Children's Water Festival.