

Crow Wing County Water Plan News

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To Protect, Preserve, & Improve Water Resources in Crow Wing County



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Implementation Toolbox

By Mitch Brinks

One of the most significant improvements to the Crow Wing County Water Plan that was adopted in 2013 was the first-of-its-kind watershed protection approach. Because very few of the County's water resources are impaired and need to be restored, the focus of the Plan was on which resources could benefit from water *protection* strategies, rather than *restoration* strategies.

For Crow Wing County and other counties with an abundance of natural resources and relatively low land values, a well-designed *protection* approach is much more efficient and cost-effective than a *restoration* approach. The question is what does watershed protection look like?

With guidance from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Minnesota Forest Resources Council, and the Board

of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR), Crow Wing County developed a list of tools for watershed protection along with the appropriate government or non-governmental entity that can assist them. The County believes that landowners want to "do the right thing" to protect and manage their resources. The toolbox shows the range of local, state, and federal

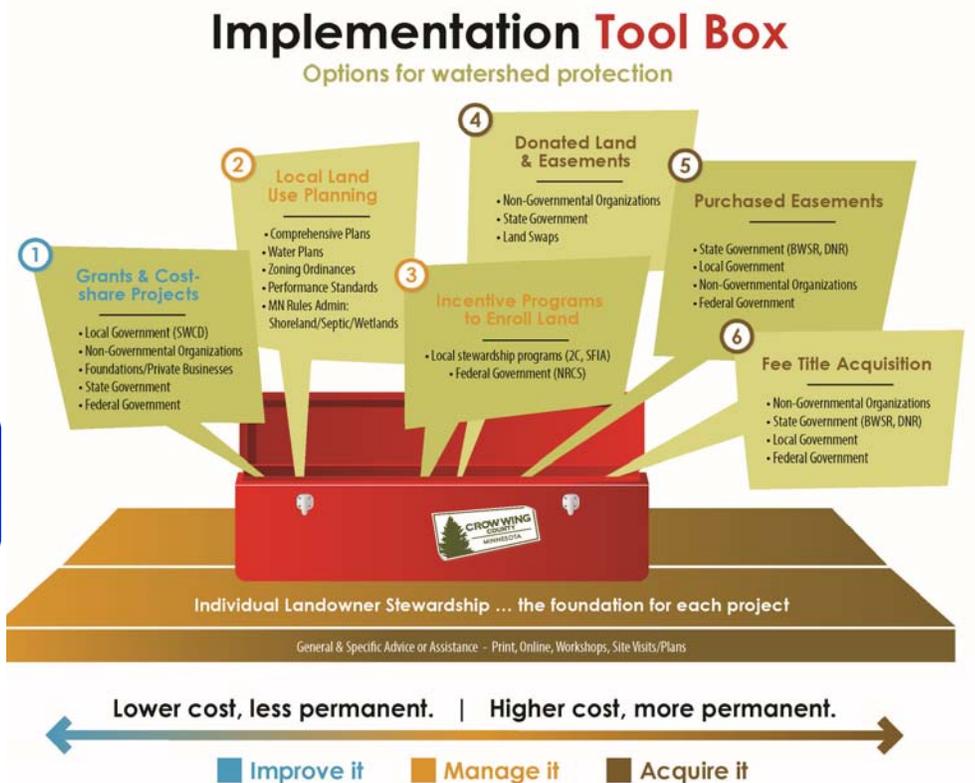
resources available to assist them, whether that is a simple site visit, a plan to better manage their forest, funding to restore a shoreline, or guidance in setting aside areas for conservation purposes. Ultimately, the type of protection option, or "tool" is up to the individual landowner.

The toolbox is arranged with lower cost, less permanent options on the left and the higher cost, *Continued...*

What does watershed protection look like?



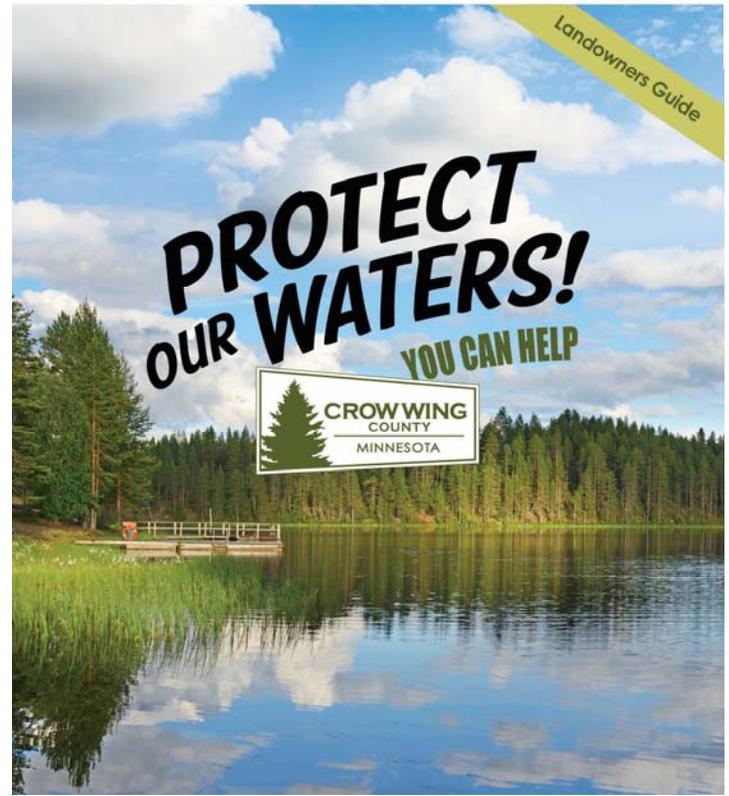
The 2013—2023 Crow Wing Water Plan is available to view online at:
www.crowwing.us/index.aspx?nid=241



Toolbox (Continued)

more permanent options on the right. Lower cost, less permanent projects include cost-share grants for installing a rain garden or native shore-line buffer. These are typically 10 year contracts with the Crow Wing Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD). Enrolling land in various tax or easement programs are more permanent (and expensive, to the funding entity), with outright purchases of land by the DNR and others being the most permanent and expensive option.

This toolbox graphic is being coupled with a new infographic and list of helpful contacts that provides phone numbers and websites for many of the entities in the toolbox. Whether working on a land use permit, wetland issue, or potential grant project, these new graphic tools (as well as the new Landowner's Guidebook and other forms of media content) will give County & SWCD staff a way to effectively communicate the message of landowner stewardship and watershed protection when meeting with landowners and other stakeholder groups. The goal of these tools is to accelerate implementation of conservation and water protection efforts across not only Crow Wing County, but the region (see article below).



Crow Wing County Watershed Protection Approach: Regional Expansion

The watershed protection approach in the Crow Wing County Water Plan (using a minor watershed scale) will soon be expanded to include the remaining 7 Mississippi Headwaters Counties as well as Lake of the Woods, Koochiching, and Wadena Counties. With new research by DNR and others on habitat and phosphorus loading, those components will potentially be added to the model as well as other potential improvements. As in Crow Wing, an identification of outstanding water resources will be a prominent part of these updated plans. Also, these plans will be more map intensive and will give local decision makers the prioritization information necessary to make better decisions. A Clean Water Fund grant funded position, administered by the North Central Joint Powers Board (the entity representing the Soil & water Conservation Districts in much of the region), will be providing the GIS mapping support to this project. The water plan updates will be consistent with each County's 5-year update schedule as determined by the Board of Water & Soil Resources.



Our protection approach: Determining risk...



Crow Wing County Landfill Site Winter Hours

The Crow Wing County Landfill Site has begun winter hours. It is now open 8 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday. The landfill will be closed on Saturdays and Sundays from November 2015 through March 2016, and will re-open for summer hours starting in April 2016. The County Landfill accepts household garbage, fiberglass boats, mattresses, furniture, mobile homes, and the following items at the location on State Highway 210 between Brainerd and Crosby/Ironton:

- Free recycling of lead-acid car/marine batteries
- Free recycling of used oil filters, motor oil and anti-freeze is available at the Landfill and several drop-off locations within the County. Visit our webpage for drop-off locations: www.crowwing.us and search "oil."
- Free compost of lawn and garden material (please separate brush and branches)
- Demolition materials may be disposed in the demolition landfill for a fee
- Large appliances, electronics, tires with or without rims, scrap metals, glass, and plastic can be disposed in the landfill for a nominal fee for recycling.

Customers utilizing the landfill must stop at the Landfill Office and speak with the attendant to discuss the items to be disposed, pay any fees and receive directions to the proper drop-off locations. All loads coming to the County Landfill must be covered, and uncovered loads are subject to additional fees. During the winter months (November through April), Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) will only be taken for emergency situations, such as residents who are moving or an estate that must dispose of hazardous materials, and cannot wait until the HHW program opens in May of 2016. To schedule an appointment, contact the Land Services Department located at the Crow Wing County Landfill at (218) 824-1290.

Crow Wing County App Available for download...Free!

Download from iTunes and Google Play stores.

The new app features popular content from the current County website such County news, the in-custody list, and county board meeting information as well as new interactive maps (water, land, trail, transportation), property document search, and links to pay taxes and apply for permits online.



Take it to the Box Medication Disposal Site in Pequot Lakes

A new free medication disposal box is now available for the public located at the Pequot Lakes City Hall. The Pequot Lakes disposal box is the fifth free medication disposal site available in Crow Wing County. Crow Wing County is serious about preventing the abuse or misuse of old or unneeded medications. To assure that these medications can be disposed of in a healthy and environmentally safe manner, free disposal sites have been offered since 2012. The drop off boxes at each site will accept unneeded over-the-counter medications, prescription and narcotic medications from community members. The new drop-off site in Pequot Lakes will be open Monday – Friday and is located at: Pequot Lakes City Hall, 4638 County Road 11, Pequot Lakes, MN 56472. Hours: 8am- 4pm. Contact: Police Chief Eric Klang, 218-568-8111

Medications should be left in their original container, with the names and other identifying information removed. Medication may be disposed at any of the five disposal locations listed here. Drop off Sites cannot accept the following items: syringes, needles or sharp's and chemotherapy or radiological medicine. Medication disposal sites are open Monday-Friday. Other locations include: Crow Wing County Sheriff's Office, City of Breezy Point Police Department, City of Crosby Police Department, Nisswa City Hall.

An interactive map of all County recycling, used oil, and medication disposal drop sites can be found on the new app or online:



<http://cwccm.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Viewer/index.html?appid=1f4e92efb03f48839e464d3b39461076>

Local Grant Opportunities for Landowners

New: Community Partners Grant

The Mini-Grant Program is a way for citizens and local organizations to access Clean Water, Land & Legacy Funds to reduce polluted runoff in Crow Wing County. Citizens and local organizations work together to design and implement their own local initiatives with oversight from the Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). Funds for this project are provided from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) through the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment.

Eligible Applicants:

- River, lake, or homeowner associations, Faith organizations, Businesses, Student groups, Citizen groups, Nonprofits
Cities are not eligible, but can be a partner with an eligible applicant.
- Activity List...Must meet 2013-2023 Crow Wing County Water Plan:
Buffers, Infiltration Basins, Rain Gardens, Trail Erosion Control Management, Tree & Shrub Planting, Shoreline Vegetation, Swales

Important Dates:

January 1, 2016 = Call for Proposals/Applications Opens
March 31, 2016 = Deadline for Proposals/Applications

Forestry Grants

An opportunity is available for landowners in Crow Wing County with forested parcels greater than 20 acres in size to receive cost-share funds to write forest stewardship plans and implement forestry practices in order to protect lakes with populations of tullibee, which is a type of whitefish also known as Cisco. Good forest management can protect these lakes and the quality of these important fisheries for generations to come. Target lakesheds include: Bertha, Big Trout, Borden, Cedar, Clear, Crooked, Island/Loon, Kenney, Kimball, Long/Tame Fish, Lower Hay, Ossawinnamakee, Pelican, Pig, Portage, Round, Roosevelt, Star, and Whitefish. Cost-share funding is available to cover up to 50% of the cost of forest management practices for each landowner who has a current forest stewardship plan for his or her property. Examples of eligible practices include tree planting, selected harvest, and wildlife openings. For landowners without forest stewardship plans, funds are available to receive a plan at a flat rate of \$200. Interested landowners should contact Darren Mayers, District Technician with the Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District at 218-828-6197. A number of property tax-incentive programs are also available for property owners in Crow Wing County. See www.crowwing.us/index.aspx?NID=258 for more information.

Conservation Easement Grant: Wild Rice Lakes

The Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District has funds available for private landowners who own land adjacent to shallow wild rice lakes. Funding is available to enroll private land into voluntary land preservation agreements called conservation easements. Conservation easements protect land from future development while keeping land in private ownership and on the local tax rolls. Landowners can be paid up to 60% of the estimated market value of the tract for enrolling into the program. Wild rice provides great habitat for ducks and birds and also is the Minnesota State Grain. The following Crow Wing County lakes are currently eligible: Arrowhead, Dahler, Dog, Garden, Goggle, Hole-in-the-Day, Little Pine, Lizzie, Lower Dean, Lows, Mud (18-137), Mud (18-326), Nelson, Rice (Blomberg's), Rice (Clark Lake), Rice (Deerwood), Rice (Hesitation WMA), Rice (Pratt's), Rice Bed, Terry, Twin Island, Unnamed (Lost Rice), and Unnamed (Nokasippi R.). More wild rice lakes are being considered for this program. To apply or for more information, please contact Crow Wing SWCD via e-mail: melissa.barrick@crowwingswcd.org or by phone: 218-828-6197.

Low-Income Septic System Upgrades

Crow Wing County and the Region Five Development Commission also have remaining funds to assist with replacement or repair of septic systems for low and very low income landowners in order to improve and protect groundwater quality in Crow Wing County. For more information or to have an application mailed to you, please contact Sandy Voigt at Region 5: 218-894-6017 or svoigt@regionfive.org. Funding for this grant is from the Clean Water Land & Legacy Amendment.

As the LGU responsible for the development and implementation of the Local Comprehensive Water Management Plan, the Crow Wing County Land Services Department is committed to protecting, preserving & improving water resources in Crow Wing County by being proactive, efficient, customer focused, organized, and innovative while being good stewards of the County's resources.