



Hennepin County Conservation Services

11/14

Conservation services provided by Hennepin County

Due to the recent discontinuance of the Hennepin Conservation District (HCD) and transfer of all duties and authorities of HCD to Hennepin County, Hennepin County has taken on the lead role of fulfilling the delivery of soil and water conservation services in the county. More specifically, Hennepin County provides the following services to protect and enhance our natural resources.

Provide technical and financial assistance

Award county cost-share grants and implement state cost-share fund projects to implement best management practices that protect natural resources. Practices (BMPs) implemented include establishing native vegetation, reducing erosion and sedimentation, treating urban stormwater, enhancing wildlife habitat, and protecting and improving water quality.

Provide well-sealing funding to landowners to seal abandoned wells.

Integrate the work of Hennepin County and partners to achieve the goals of the Clean Water Land and Legacy Amendment through the administration and partnership on Clean Water Fund projects to implement best management practices that reduce phosphorous and sediment loading to impaired waters.

Provide technical assistance to landowners and local governments through the review of site plans and projects and assistance regarding water quality, wetlands, erosion and sediment control, and drainage and flood plains.

Promote collaboration and coordination among county natural resource management entities through facilitating convened a group of representatives for watersheds, cities, county departments and state and regional natural resources agencies. *The Hennepin Natural Resources Partnership* promotes collaborative land and water management efforts on issues transecting political and hydrologic boundaries, encourages shared resources and information sharing, increases opportunities to leverage resources, and provides a venue to address countywide policy issues

Protect and preserve natural resources

Implement habitat enhancement projects on permanently protected lands in partnership with other entities such as the Minnesota Conservation Corps and Tree Trust.

Prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic and terrestrial invasive species through the participation on regional and statewide invasive species task forces, educating the public on the actions needed, and utilizing state funding, as available, to enhance efforts to prevent the spread of invasive species.



A project to control erosion on the banks of Upper Nine Mile Creek in Hopkins was funded through a county-administered Clean Water Fund grant.



Hennepin County installed signage at a public access on Lake Minnetonka that prompts boaters to take the necessary actions to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.



The county and the Minnesota Tree Trust installed check dams on a conservation easement in Minnetrista to control stormwater runoff directed towards a rare bog downstream.

Protect and preserve natural resources

Demonstrate best management practices: Implement demonstration projects that feature rain gardens, low-maintenance landscaping and native vegetation for shoreline protection.

Enforce the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) through the participation on Technical Evaluation Panels and writing of restoration orders relating to WCA violations.

Establish and manage county-owned conservation easements including Reinvest in Minnesota conservation easements to permanently protect critical natural areas.

Control and prevent the spread of noxious weeds administering and enforcing the state's noxious weed laws and rules and provide education, training and outreach for professional land managers. In addition, the county inspects county right-of-ways for noxious weeds and works with cities to respond to complaints.

Update and maintain natural resources data

Maintain and update the county's natural resources inventory and associated natural resources interactive map to identify and protect critical habitats and natural resource corridors and help municipalities develop open space plans based on the Natural Resources Inventory data.

Conduct wetland assessments and inventories and identify BMPs to address lake and stream impairments through the completion of functional and value assessments of wetlands, update of the Hennepin County Wetland Inventory and completion of subwatershed analysis assessments.

Provide environmental education and volunteer opportunities

Operate volunteer monitoring and outreach programs such as the Stream Health Evaluation Program, Wetland Health Evaluation Program and Riverwatch. The county also provides Master Naturalist training and organizes volunteer opportunities.

Participate in planning and implementation of environmental education programs such as the Children's Water Festival, providing Offer Non-Point Education for Municipal Officials presentations or Envirothon and Junior Envirothon competition events.

Conservation services provided by Hennepin County

For more information on the conservation services and programs the County provides or participates in please visit the following County weblink:

<http://www.hennepin.us/residents/environment/conservation-services-organizations>

For more information on financial assistance and cost-share grants please visit:

<http://www.hennepin.us/residents/environment/natural-resources-funding>

Or contact Randy Anhorn, Supervisor Land and Water Unit, Hennepin County Department of Environmental Service at 612-348-2027 or randy.anhorn@hennepin.us.



Hennepin County and the Minnesota Land Trust established a conservation easement on Camp Kingswood in 2012, permanently protecting the 127-acre property in Minnetrista that borders one of the cleanest lakes in the county and includes old growth forests and a floating tamarack bog.



Students from Hopkins High School collect water quality data through the county's River Watch program.



Hennepin County has a statutory role in the enforcement of Minnesota's Wetland Conservation Act