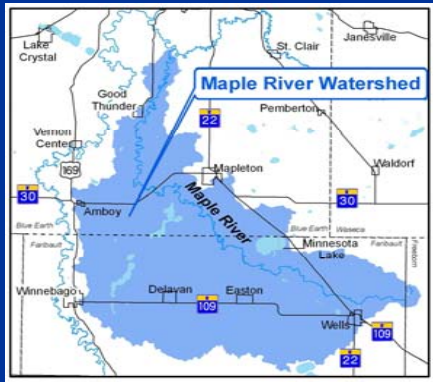


Purpose of the Maple River Clean Water Partnership?

The overall purpose of the Maple River Project, is to improve water quality by supporting Best Management Practices (BMP's) associated with this project and increase public awareness of the issue of high pollutant loads in the Maple River Watershed.

Practices implemented in this watershed will be evaluated and, if successful, used in other areas to address sediment and bacteria problems.



The Maple River Watershed has roughly 220,000 acres in Blue Earth and Faribault counties.

This project is funded by the State
of Minnesota Clean
Water Partnership Grant
from the
Minnesota Pollution
Control Agency
for the
Maple River Watershed
Improvement Project

Project Sponsors:
Blue Earth County SWCD

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Blue Earth County Soil &
Water Conservation District



Project Representative:
Blue Earth County SWCD

507-345-4744 ext 125



*"If there is magic on this planet, it is
contained in water"*

Loren Eisley

PROTECTING OUR WATER RESOURCES

In 2000, a diagnostic study of the Le-Sueur River Watershed was completed. The study gathered information on land use, watershed characteristics and monitored the water quality of its tributary streams.

Results from monitoring revealed that the Maple River's portion of the Le Sueur Watershed had pollutant levels exceeding Minnesota's water quality standards. The river is, at times, unsafe for swimming and other water related activities due to high levels of fecal coliform, phosphorous, nitrogen, and other pollutants.

Sediment levels in the streams frequently exceeds state standards putting fish and other aquatic organisms at risk. Sediments in the stream indicate a corresponding loss of soil productivity and nutrients from the watershed's farmland.

In the current phase of the project, we're implementing practices that reduce sediments, nutrients and bacteria in the water.

Blue Earth County Soil and Water Conservation District Mission:

To assist and educate the people of Blue Earth County SWCD in efficiently and effectively using the natural resources in order to increase the responsible use of cropland, pasture land, woodland, wildlife habitat, wetlands, urban land, and recreational land, and to improve the soil resource base, water quality, wildlife habitat, and quality of life within the district.

Cost-Share Practices

A State Clean Water Partnership Grant has been awarded to implement BMP's that will reduce sediment levels in the stream. These practices will also reduce the amount of bacteria and nutrients found in the water.

Best Management Practice Incentives:

Harvestable buffer strips: Producers are able to receive an incentive payment for enrolling land into an easement and are able to harvest the grass for hay or for seed production.

Promoting Residue Management: Is the practice of establishing crops in a previous crops' residue, which are purposely left on the surface. Benefits from this program include improved water conservation and reduced soil erosion.

Promoting Existing Federal Programs: Promotion of an existing programs such as CRP, WRP, EQIP & WHIP create an awareness and water quality concerns in the watershed.

Tile Intake Alternatives: There are two options for landowners; install rock inlets or buffer the area around the existing intake. Cost-share is available.

Water and Sediment Control Basins: Are an effective way of controlling erosion by trapping sediment. Cost-share is available. The program will be partnering with other cost-share programs such as EQIP.

Ask us about other BMP programs

Grassed Waterway, an agricultural Best Management Practice (BMP) to decrease erosion and sediment from entering bodies of water.



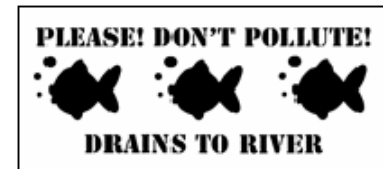
Educational Programs

Educational Grants:

Teachers can apply for a yearly grant for up to \$1,000 that will help them promote environmental education. Items that can be purchased include the following; Environmental books, field equipment (waders, etc), microscopes, water testing kits, teacher training aids, guest speakers, school assemblies and other teaching aids.

Storm Drain Stenciling

Local groups will be asked to volunteer by stenciling storm drains in the cities of the watershed. This will promote public awareness, by informing people that pollution also enters the Maple River via, storm water .



Low-Interest Loans

In the Blue Earth County portion of the watershed a low-interest loan is available for replacing failing septic systems. Upon acceptance of the loan, the loan will be repaid as a special assessment on property taxes. The length of the loan can vary between 5 & 10 years with the amount not to exceed \$10,000. The annual percentage rate for this loan is 3.5% accrued from the date the county pays the contractor. The applicant must own the property on which the practice is installed.

Applications are available at the Blue Earth County Environmental Services Department.