

ACTIVITIES REPORT



2023

Day County Conservation District

The Day County Conservation District serves the residents and visitors of Day County by promoting and educating wise management of natural resources for the benefit of all society. We offer conservation services needed to properly address natural resource management.

Activities Report

DAY COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

1. BOARD OF SUPERVISORS (PAGE 2)
2. STAFF AND CREW (PAGE 3)
3. DISTRICT SERVICES (PAGE 4)
 - A. Tree Belt Plantings and Handplants
 - B. Drill and Seeding
 - C. Other Services
4. RECYCLING PROGRAM (PAGE 6)
5. YOUTH AND HIGHSCHOOL OUTREACH PROGRAMS (PAGE 7)
 - A. Arbor day activities
 - B. Land and range judging contest
 - C. EcoEd Day
 - D. Scholarships
6. PUBLIC OUTREACH PROGRAMS (PAGE 10)
 - A. Newsletter, Website and Social Media
 - B. Tree Walk
 - C. Soil Health Event
 - D. Legislative Banquet
7. PRAIRIE COTEAU PROJECT (PAGE 13)
 - A. Producer Cost-Share Work
 - B. Outreach and Education
8. PARTNERSHIPS (PAGE 13)

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

The District is comprised of a five-member board each elected to serve a four-year term.

**Mark Brandlee,
Chariman**

-Joined board in April of 2007.
-Farms with son in the Pierpont area.



**Frank James, Vice
Chair**

-Joined board in January 2013
-Retired Postal Carrier and farmer.
-Lives in the rural Lily area.



Joel Butler

-Joined board in December of 2007.
-Farming for 35+ years in the Waubay area.



Todd Kaufman

-Joined board January in 2017.
-Fisheries Biologist with the GF&P.
-Lives in Webster.



Brent Zimmerman

-Joined board in January 2021.
-Operates family farm for 50+years.
-South Bristol area.

STAFF AND CREW

District Manager, Josh Wagner

Crew Members:

- Paul Peterson
- Paul McCarlson
- Loren Hoberg
- Maria Anderson
- Ethan Kjenstad
- Max Kuecker
- Shane Lee
- Hannah Ziemer



District Manager, Josh Wagner, waiting on spring snow to melt to start season. Picture taken on May 16.



Celebrating the end of the season with some pizza!
Crew members Max, Maria, and Hannah.

Prairie Coteau Project Coordinator, Dennis Skadsen and Cory Zirbel

Prairie Coteau Crew:

- Maria Anderson

Dennis Skadsen, longtime NEGL project coordinator, retired this year after 30 years of service to the District. Honoring Dennis are: Cory Zirbel-new project coordinator, Josh Wagner-District Manager, Dennis Skadsen, board members Todd Kaufman, Frank James and Mark Brandlee.



DISTRICT SERVICES

Tree belt Plantings and Handplants

- 26. acres of trees planted.
- 11.18 miles of fabric laid.
- 1791 Tree Tubes installed.
- 15,000 total trees/shrubs sold.
- 550 specialty landscape/fruit trees sold.
- 345 small fruit sold (Raspberry, Strawberry, Rhubarb, Asparagus).



Drill and Seeding

Our 15' Great Plains Drill, along with our 10' Truax Drill covered over 2000 acres this season. We utilized all three planting season windows, Spring (May), Summer (Aug 1-Sept 1) and Dormant (After Nov 1), to get everything planted. New to 2023 was autosteer/GPS for Great Plains Drill.

- 2000+ acres seeded
- 31 Producers Served
- 1 non program, 1 USFWS, 1 EQIP, all other CRP producers
- Cover Crop Seed sales (17,000 lbs)



Other Services

The District also offers gopher machine rental, gopher bait sales, Plantskydd sales and custom tilling.



Gopher Getter available for rent



Custom Tilling



Plantskydd animal repellent sales

DAY COUNTY RECYCLING PROGRAM

The Day County Conservation District partnered with the Day County Recycling Team to acquire funds to purchase a recycling trailer in 2020. The trailer is located at the district tree shed and available to all to drop off appropriate plastic recyclables. We haul loads to a recycling center in Brookings.

2023 Totals

- 4 trips to the recycling center
- 2760 lbs of Plastics



♻️ PLASTIC RECYCLING ♻️

NO!



- NO plastic bags
- Do not recycle
 - ice cream buckets
 - styrofoam cups
 - butter or yogurt containers



- Do not recycle
 - hazardous chemical
 - antifreeze
 - oil
 - fertilizer containers
 - herbicide



YES!



- Bottles with a NECK SMALLER than the BASE
 - milk jugs
 - plastic pop bottles
 - dish soap
 - shampoo bottles



- Clean plastic only (no food or fluid residue)
- Remove caps and lids; throw them in the trash!



PLEASE UNDERSTAND WHAT CAN AND CANNOT BE RECYCLED FIRST!
JOSH WAGNER | DAY COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT | (605) 345-4667 

YOUTH AND HIGHSCHOOL OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Arbor Day Activities

The District, along with the area regional forester, were able to visit all three schools in Day County. 66 seedling spruce trees were distributed to the 4th graders. Arbor Day poster contest and essay contest was also sponsored by the Day County Conservation District.





Land and Range Judging Contest

The 2023 NESD Land and Range contest was held in Day County on September 27. Fourteen different schools came to compete in either the range judging or the soil judging competition. The Webster/Waubay team captured first place in the range contest.

Eco Ed Day

Day County District Manager, Josh Wagner, and Prairie Coteau Project Coordinators, Dennis Skadsen and Cory Zirbel, presented conservation topics to students at Eco Ed Day held on the grounds of Fort Sisseton State Park.



Scholarships

Each year the District sponsors a Youth Scholarship Program. Senior students submit an essay application telling of their conservation experience and why conservation is important to them. This year we awarded 7 scholarships of \$200 each. This year's recipients were Addison Kuecker, Brent Snaza, Christopher Gaikowski, Drew Reetz, Erin Case, Gavin Sannes and Matthew Mork. (Awarding of scholarships was rolled back to January. Featured are last season's recipients.)



Addison Kuecker



Brent Snaza



Christopher Gaikowski



Drew Reetz

Erin Case



Gavin Sannes



Matthew Mork



PUBLIC OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Newsletter, Website and Social Media

The District publishes a newsletter, *The District Dispatch*. It highlights issues of importance to Day County and includes articles from partner agencies such as the NRCS, FSA, Pheasants Forever, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Soil Health Coalition. The newsletter reaches over 1000 people via mail or email and is published on the website and Facebook.

The district website sdconservation.org/daycd is maintained with the board minutes, current price lists, tree order forms and new pictures.

The social media site, Facebook, has proven to be a very effective way to reach the public. We try to post several times a month with District activities, important information, tree sales/promotions and other posts of light nature.



Day County Conservation District
 @DayCountyConservationDistrict · Government Organization



80 Years of Conservation
 District marks anniversary
 The year was 1942 when federal laws of the Soil Conservation Service (predecessor to today's NRCS) joined the County Extension Agents, A. O'Connell, in establishing several demonstration farms in Day County. It concerned citizens attended special meetings on the advantages of a conservation system. The same system promoted the State Soil Conservation Committee for the creation of the District. The Day County local Soil Conservation Committee, with the definite steps that resulted in the organization of the district. On January 14th, 1942 the State Soil Conservation Committee created the Day County Soil Conservation District. Obviously only 14 people also were involved. These last names listed and 925 were in favor of the formation. The entire county became a part of the effort in 1943. Original supervisors were A. Conner, Marcell Peterson, Jack Beetz, John DeShazo, and Edwin Lee. (Over to 80 years and others to 80 more!)

Pheasants Forever Revives Chapter
 Day County Banquet Hosted

Calendar of Events
 Feb 16, District Board Meeting
 Feb 21, President's Day (Closed)
 Apr 17, Easter
 Apr 22, Earth Day
 Apr 25, Jubilee Day
 Apr 30, Tree Shed Opens! (retiree)
 May 14, Wausley HS Graduation
 May 15, Wausley HS Graduation
 June 3-8, Water Quality Workshop

Tree Order Listing
 Check out the list!



Fall Foliage Walk Planned
 The Conservation District will be having a fall foliage walk on the 10th of October. The walk will start at 9:00 AM and end at 12:00 PM. The walk will be held at the Day County Fairgrounds. The walk will be a free event and is open to all. For more information, contact the Conservation District at 605-838-4667.

Day County Recycling
 Remember, not all plastic is acceptable. The best thing to do is to call to make sure items are accepted.

Calendar of Events
 Aug 31, Sep 21, Soil Health School
 Sep 5, Labor Day (Closed)
 Sep 12, Board Meeting
 Sep 16, Roberts County Fall Day
 Sep 28, Land and Range Contest
 Oct 3, Fall Foliage Tree Walk
 Oct 10, National Farm Day (Closed)
 Oct 14, Legislative Banquet
 Board Meetings: 2nd Monday @ 10AM

South Dakota lakes and streams group seeks more help on zebra mussels shown to stunt walleys growth.
 A group of conservationists in South Dakota is calling for more help to combat zebra mussels in the state's waterways. The group, the South Dakota Lakes and Streams Association, says the mussels are stunting the growth of walleys, a popular sport fish. The group has held meetings in several areas of the state to discuss the problem. They are now working on a plan to combat the mussels. The plan includes more research on the mussels, more education for the public, and more funding for the group. The group is also working on a plan to combat the mussels in the state's waterways. The plan includes more research on the mussels, more education for the public, and more funding for the group. The group is also working on a plan to combat the mussels in the state's waterways. The plan includes more research on the mussels, more education for the public, and more funding for the group.

2022 Spring Accomplishment

- 35 acres of trees planted
- 99,571 lb. of fabric held
- \$204,000 in conservation trees
- 18,000 trees seedlings sold
- 500 acres drilled



Big Sioux River CREP Announced
 25,000 acres to be enrolled
 The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the State of South Dakota have announced a new Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) for the Big Sioux River Watershed. The program will enroll 25,000 acres of agricultural land in the watershed. The program will provide farmers with financial incentives to enroll their land in the program. The program will also provide farmers with technical assistance to improve their land. The program will be implemented over a five-year period. The program will be a major step in improving the water quality of the Big Sioux River. The program will also provide farmers with financial incentives to enroll their land in the program. The program will also provide farmers with technical assistance to improve their land. The program will be implemented over a five-year period. The program will be a major step in improving the water quality of the Big Sioux River.

Calendar of Events
 Dec 5, World Soil Day
 Dec 8, Combined Coffee-Arrival Day
 Dec 15-16, Barnes Home Mgrs Meeting
 Dec 25, Christmas (Closed)
 Jan 3, New Years Day (Closed)
 Jan 8, Board Meeting
 Jan 24-25, Soil Health Conference (SHP)
 Board Meetings: 2nd Monday @ 10AM

Food Desert Focus of CIS Project
 The Conservation District is working on a project to address food deserts in the community. The project will focus on providing fresh produce to areas that lack access to fresh produce. The project will involve setting up community gardens and providing fresh produce to food banks. The project will also involve providing education to the community about healthy eating. The project will be implemented over a five-year period. The project will be a major step in addressing food deserts in the community.

Tree Walk

The District hosted a fall foliage walk in Webster. District Manager Josh Wagner led the group through the city streets discussing the various boulevard and other tree species used throughout the town. The group focused on trees with great fall colors.



Soil Health Event

The District, in partnership with NRCS, Ducks Unlimited, SDSU Extension, Partners for Fish and Wildlife, SD GF&P, South Dakota Soil Health Coalition put on Soil Health Workshop Sept 14. Topics included: Saline/Sodic Soils, Pit Tours, Cover Crops, Regenerative Ag, and more.

Legislative Banquet

The Coteau Area hosts an annual legislative banquet in October. Area elected officials are invited to listen and share conservation concerns of the area.



PRAIRIE COTEAU PROJECT

After 30 years working for the NEGL project Dennis Skadsen officially retired this season. Cory Zirbel was hired in March to take over as project coordinator. Other big changes, NEGL merged with the Upper Big Sioux Project to form the new Prairie Coteau Watershed Improvement and Protection Project. Beyond Day, Grant, Marshall, Roberts and Deuel counties, areas of Codington, Hamlin, and Kingsbury are now served by the project area. The goal of this project is to protect and improve the water quality of northeast South Dakota glacial lakes, streams and rivers by implanting best management practices that reduce the amount of fecal coliform bacteria, nutrients, and sediment loads entering project water bodies, maintaining their assigned beneficial uses.

Producer Cost-Share Work

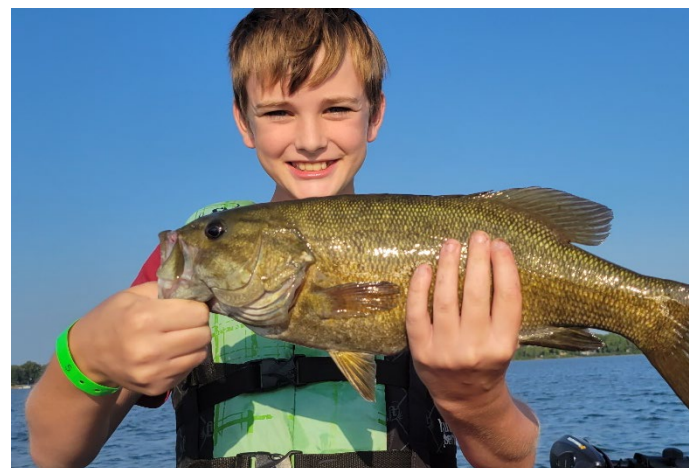
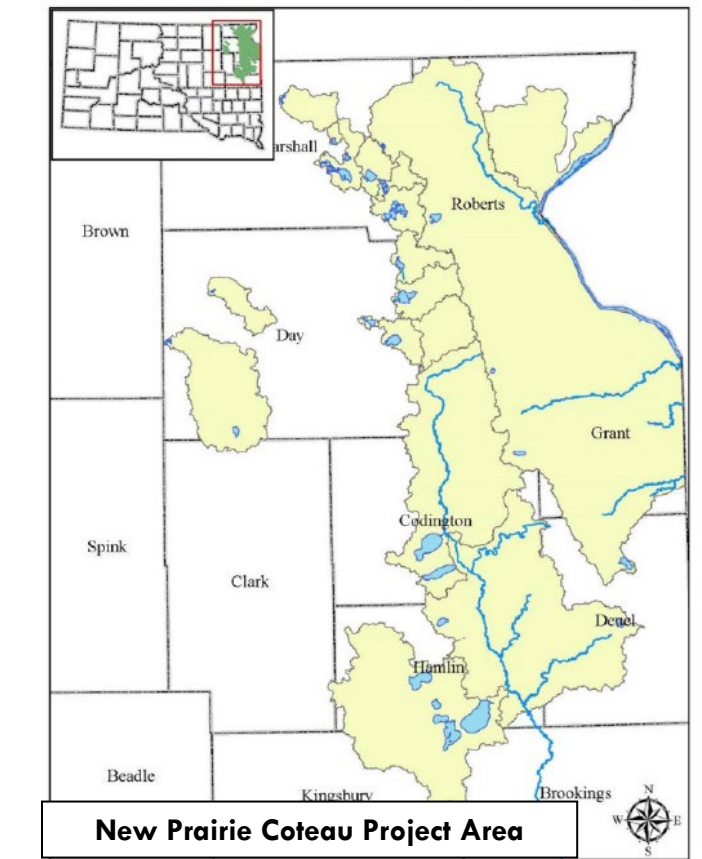
The project was able to help cost-share conservation work such as stream crossings, buffer strip plantings, and critical area plantings. In 2023, \$85,870.40 was paid out to 9 area producers to complete projects in the multi-county region.

Outreach and Education

The project hosted or participated in:

- Envirothon
- Water Festivals
- Earth Day Activities at Fort Sisseton
- Bramble Park Zoon Water Quality Presentations
- Fishing/Adventure Camps at NeSoDak
- EcoEd Day at Fort Sisseton
- NESD Range Contest
- High School Career and Ag Days

Prairie Coteau Project Area



PARTNERS

The Day County Conservation District works closely with the following partners helping promote and administer their programs and bringing conservation to Day County.

- **Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)**



- Contribution Agreement
- Conservation Implementation Strategy (CIS)
 - Upper James River Saline/Sodic Soil
 - Homestead Project
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

- **Ducks Unlimited**



- **Pheasants Forever**



- **South Dakota Soil Health Coalition**



- **South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources**



South Dakota
Association of
Conservation Districts



- **SD Association of Conservation Districts**
- **SD Association of Conservation Districts Employees' Association**
- **National Association of Conservation Districts**



- **GF&P**

- Wood Habitat Program
- Shoreline Restoration



- **US Fish and Wildlife Service**

