

ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Report is presented to highlight the SWCD's accomplishments in 2025. These programs and projects relate to the priorities set by the Board Supervisors which include:

Prevent Wind, Water and Soil Erosion

- **Improve Water Quality and Promote Water Conservation**
- **Promote Conservation and Resource Programs**
- **Promote Energy Conservation**
- **Improve Wildlife Habitat**

These priorities reflect the concerns described in the Lyon County Local Comprehensive Water Management Plan.

2025

LYON SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Lyon SWCD is to:

- Establish programs that assist in the protection of the public health, safety and welfare through Soil & Water Conservation and Protection.
- Encourage land occupiers to conserve and protect our water and soil resources, implement erosion, sediment control and water quality practices.
- Promote conservation through education, trained personnel and supervisors.
- Seek and implement conservation practices and programs that will benefit the landowner, the county, local watersheds, and the nation.



Left to right: (Back Row) John Biren, SWCD District Manager, Gary Laleman -SWCD Board Chairman, John Lanoue - SWCD Board Vice-Chairman, Representing Area 4, Allen Deutz - Representing Area 2, (Front Row) Steve Prairie - Representing Area 5 (Retired),replaced by Justin Hively, Mark Meulebroeck - Representing Area 3 (Retired), replaced by Mason Johnson.

LYON SWCD SUPERVISORS

LYON SWCD AREA SUPERVISORS

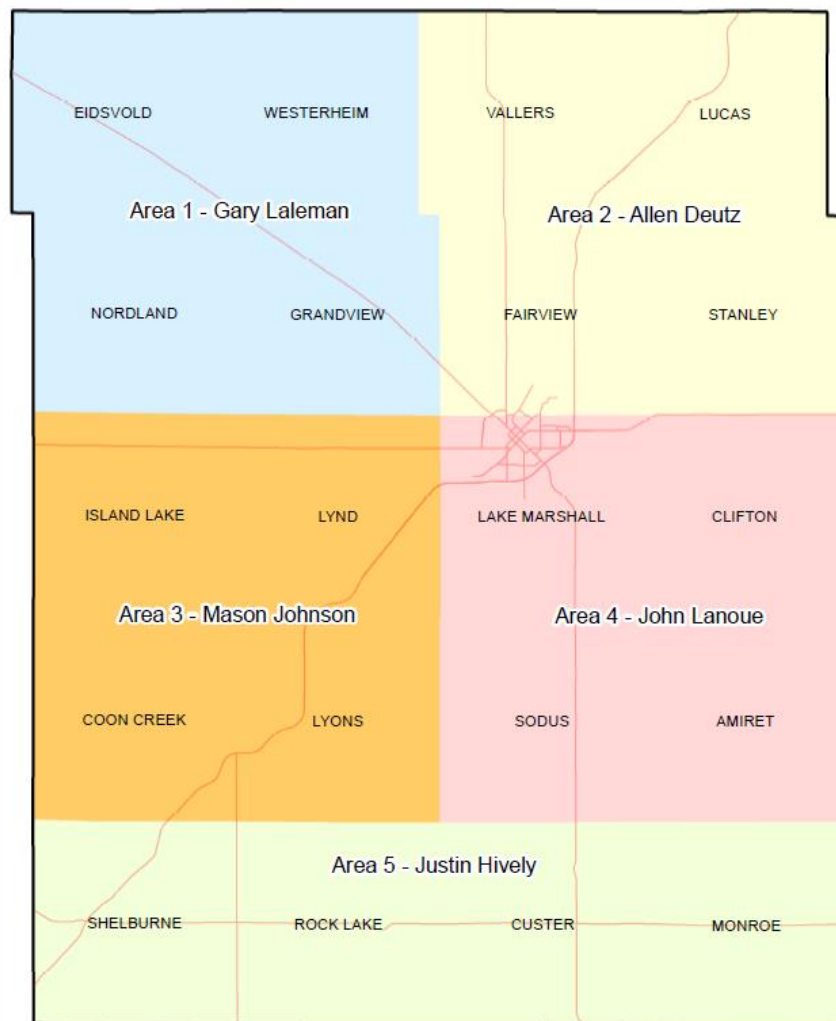
GARY LALEMAN - AREA 1

ALLAN DEUTZ - AREA 2

MASON JOHNSON - AREA 3

JOHN LANOUE - AREA 4

JUSTIN HIVELY - AREA 5



SWCD STAFF:

JOHN BIREN - DISTRICT/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

BEN SKORCZEWSKI - CONSERVATION TECHNICIAN

VACANT – CONSERVATION TECHNICIAN

BROCK BOERBOOM - CONSERVATION TECHNICIAN

ANITA CAUWELS - ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

MARK PEPPER – PHEASANTS FOREVER FARM BILL BIOLOGIST

NRCS STAFF:

KELLY HEATHER – DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST

OWEN COLLINE – AGRONOMIST

HAILEY BORNITZ - SOIL CONSERVATIONIST

JEREMY LARSON – CIVIL ENGINEER TECHNICIAN

VACANT - ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT



LYON SWCD & NRCS STAFF

From Left to Right: Back – Brock Boerboom, Lyon SWCD – Owen Colline, NRCS, Jeremy Larson, NRCS – Blake Giles, Lyon SWCD

Front – Hailey Bornitz, NRCS – Courtney Williams, Lyon SWCD, John Biren, Lyon SWCD – Kelly Heather, NRCS – Anita Cauwels, Lyon SWCD

2025 ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

PROGRAMS THAT THE LYON SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT ADMINISTERS:

REINVEST IN MINNESOTA (RIM)	ENVIRONMENTAL FAIR
STATE COST SHARE PROGRAM	GRANT APPLICATIONS
RAINFALL MONITORING PROGRAM	ARBOR DAY PRESENTATION
FARMFEST EXPO	BUFFER LAW
CLEAN WATER LEGACY GRANT PROGRAMS	DNR WELL MONITORING
ASSISTANCE IN CONSERVATION PLANNING PROJECTS	WETLAND CONSERVATION ACT ADMINISTRATION
DNR WATER PERMIT REVIEWS	FEEDLOT INVENTORY
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS	AGBMP LOAN PROGRAM
ANNUAL PLAN AND REPORTS FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION	WELL DECOMMISSIONING
MAWQCP – 20 TOTAL CERTIFICATIONS	ONE WATERSHED ONE PLAN – YELLOW MEDICINE, DES MOINES, COTTONWOOD-MIDDLE MN & REDWOOD

EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE FOR RENTAL OR USE:

TREE MATTING MACHINE – TREE PLANTER – CRIMPER – MULCHER -10' GRASS SEEDER -TRUAX SEEDER

ASSIST NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) WITH PROGRAMS:

WATER QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAMS (EQIP)
CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSP)	WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVE PROGRAM
CONSERVATION PLANS	STATUS REVIEWS

STATE GRANTS:

Lyon SWCD utilized Conservation Contracts, Conservation Delivery, Local Water Management, State Cost Share, SWCD Aid, Local Water Management and Wetland Conservation Act funds for nine erosion control projects along with engineering fees. Total cost-share for the projects and fees is \$141,018.59. 17 site inspections were also completed.

Local funding from Lyon County was also utilized to assist with 10 Well Sealings. Total cost-share for the projects was \$4,990.00.

Soil Health Delivery Funds were used for 8 Cover Crops and Conservation Crop Rotation projects. Total cost-share amount of projects was \$78,616.49.

Soil Health Mentor Grant funds were used to assist 24 producers within several counties with Soil Health practices. Mentors share their personal experience with soil health practices such as cover crops, no-till and strip-till. Mentors can walk the fields with farmers to see conditions firsthand, help with species selection, provide guidance on when to terminate cover crops, and help calibrate equipment.

Staff completed 3 DNR Well Monitors, 25 Brillion/Truax Seeder Rentals and 13 Rim Easements.

Environmental Fair was held in September at the Lyon County Fairgrounds. Over two days, 1,505 students from area SW MN schools attended. Students participate in sessions including hands-on activities or demonstrations on a variety of topics including trees, soil, water quality, wetlands, recycling, household hazardous waste, native prairie, watersheds, and creatures that share our environment.

Participation with Pipestone and Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation Districts with the 2025 Hwy 14 Tour that was held in February. Crop, Livestock, and Soil Innovation Conference (Classic) in Lake Benton, MN. Approximately 60 producers attended the conference.

Lyon SWCD also works closely with Southwest Prairie Technical Service Area, RCRCA/Area II and NRCS for funding and technical support.

REORGANIZATION

Lyon SWCD, effective January 1st, 2013, became a department within Lyon County, MN. Staff positions as well as all financial responsibility are being paid through Lyon County. Grant funds are maintained and tracked through a designated fund within Lyon County. SWCD operations along with the County Planning and Zoning department are housed and maintained in the same office at 1424 E. College Drive, Suite 600, Marshall, MN.

As part of the County Planning and Zoning department staff are involved with approval of feedlot permits, as well as septic permitting.

All the feedlot regulation, inspection and education were completed by the SWCD staff. Inspections provided staff opportunities to update records, address potential pollution concerns and environmental threats and educate producers of the current feedlot regulations. 21 Feedlot Inspections were completed.

Septic System inspections were completed for verification of soil and system installation certification. Of the thirty-three approved, four of them applied for the County Septic Loan Program funds and were granted approval for funds amounting to \$87,579.82.

Pesticide Applicator Tests were administered through the County/SWCD Office. A total of 78 tests were administered. A Commercial Ag Inspector Grant was granted for \$10,300.00 which will assist with time spent on tests and Ag and Weed Inspection duties.

Comprehensive Plan for the County was completed in November of 2025. 16 months of meetings and planning with different agencies, townships and cities to compile all the information into the plan.

SHORELAND ORDINANCE

The Shoreland Ordinance in conjunction with the Lyon County zoning ordinance provided assistance and education on best management practices in shoreland areas and reviewed proposed land use activities and permits. A total of two permits were issued.

ONE WATERSHED, ONE PLAN

The purpose of the One Watershed, One Plan program is to develop comprehensive watershed management plans that:

- align local water planning purposes and procedures under this chapter and chapters 103C and 103D on watershed boundaries to create a systematic, watershed-wide, science-based approach to watershed management;
- acknowledge and build off existing local government structure, water plan services, and local capacity;
- incorporate and make use of data and information, including watershed restoration and protection strategies under section 114D.26;
- solicit input and engage experts from agencies, citizens, and stakeholder groups; focus on implementation of prioritized and targeted actions capable of achieving measurable progress; and
- serve as a substitute for a comprehensive plan, local water management plan, or watershed management plan developed or amended, approved, and adopted, according to chapter 103B, 103C or 103D.
- Yellow Medicine 1W1P was developed in 2017 and Des Moines River 1W1P in 2023. Cottonwood – Middle MN began in 2025 and Redwood in 2026.

A total of 6 Cover Crop and 2 Projects for the Yellow Medicine 1W1P.

A total of 4 completed and 5 in progress projects for the Cottonwood – Middle MN SWMP
None for Des Moines.

PHEASANTS FOREVER

The Farm Bill Biologist actively promoted and enrolled marginal cropland into the Conservation Reserve Program. Landowner communication is the primary method used by the Biologist to promote various other programs, including the Walk-In access and CREP programs.

LYON SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Entity	Partnership Contribution
Lyon County	Financial, program assistance
Natural Resources Conservation Service	Programs, technical assistance, staff shared
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Consultations, Contract services with SWCD
Area II Minnesota River Basin Projects	Technical, financial for floodwater & retention projects
Redwood - Cottonwood Rivers Control (RCRCA)	Cost Share partner for projects, monitoring of resources
Yellow Medicine River Watershed	Cost Share partner for projects, monitoring of resources
Lyon County Sportsman Groups	Financial for projects, education
MN Association of Conservation Districts	Legislative lobbying, education and information
MN Department of Agriculture	Low Interest loan funds, educational information
SW MN Joint Powers TSA	Engineering Assistance
MN Board of Soil & Water Resources	Program direction, grants, training