

## Board of Water and Soil Resources NATURAL RESOURCES BLOCK GRANT – 2014 Blue Earth County Annual Report

The Natural Resources Block Grant (NRBG) is an annual base grant that partially funds programs in the Blue Earth County Environmental Services Department. The State legislature appropriates NRBG funds to two State agencies, the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), for distribution to local governments. Local governments are required to contribute cash or in-kind match to the NRBG.

Minnesota Law requires local governments to display reports on their website by March 15 each year showing how State appropriations of NRBG and local match funds were used in the previous calendar years. This report is displayed on the County website to provide information about how State NRBG funds were used in County programs during calendar year 2014. The County is also required to submit reports to the BWSR using the BWSR online reporting program, eLINK. The eLINK report pages are at the end of the report.

The total 2014 NRBG was \$82,221, and the required local match contribution was \$65,412. Local match funds are generated locally with permit fees and property taxes. The County's actual costs for all five NRBG programs exceed the program costs required for the NRBG and are not shown in this report.

There are five NRBG program areas that generally align with programs in the Environmental Services Department where eight staff are dedicated to this work. A program summary of the NRBG is displayed in the following table.

### ***2014 Natural Resources Block Grant Summary***

Program	2014 NRBG	Required Minimum Local Match	Total NRBG Program
Water Management Planning	\$10,023	\$21,467	\$31,490
Wetland Conservation Act Administration	\$18,178	\$18,178	\$36,356
Shoreland Ordinance Administration	\$3,243	\$3,243	\$6,486
Delegated Feedlot Program	\$32,177	\$22,524	\$54,701
SSTS	\$18,600	None	\$18,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$82,221</b>	<b>\$65,412</b>	<b>\$144,189</b>

The NRBG remained mostly the same in 2014 compared with previous years. A summary of the total NRBG in recent years is as follows.

**2009 NRBG:** \$88,975  
**2010 NRBG:** \$82,176  
**2011 NRBG:** \$79,269  
**2012 NRBG:** \$82,265  
**2013 NRBG:** \$82,265  
**2014 NRBG:** \$82,221

## LOCAL WATER MANAGEMENT

**2014 NRBG:** \$10,023

**Required Local Match:** \$18,187

The local water management NRBG contributes little to the actual cost of water management planning and implementation in the county. The *Blue Earth County Water Management Plan 2008-2015* includes objectives and actions intended to be practical, measurable and achievable in the planning period. Although there are many partners, implementation of the current plan is mainly the responsibility of the County and the Blue Earth County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). The foundation of the plan is maintaining ongoing programs.

The NRBG was reduced in 2011 compared to previous years. The greatest reduction in the NRBG programs was from the Local Water Management program.

**2009 Water Management NRBG:** \$13,197

**2010 Water Management NRBG:** \$13,725

**2011 Water Management NRBG:** \$ 9,855

**2012 Water Management NRBG:** \$10,023

**2013 Water Management NRBG:** \$10,023

**2014 Water Management NRBG:** \$10,023

Even though the NRBG does not contribute to a full time staff person, the following is a summary of some of the water management plan related activities in 2014.

### Administration and Training

Staff prepared eLINK reports for all NRBG programs in January 2014 and prepared and posted website report in March 2014.

### BWSR Grant Verification

The BWSR Board adopted a "Grants Monitoring, Reconciliation and Verification Policy" (GMRVP) in 2011. This policy requires financial verification of grant reconciliations will be performed on ten percent of all BWSR grants annually to ensure that public funds are spent for the purposes that they were given.

Blue Earth County experienced its first grant verification audit with the BWSR in 2014. County staff were asked to assemble documents from all FY12 grants and meet with several BWSR staff to review the County's financial reports and use of grant funds during calendar year 2012. The BWSR found the County to be in compliance with State requirements for grant management.

### Stormwater Management

Water management staff reviewed stormwater management plans for development proposals, including four Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPP) for three small subdivisions and one industrial use. The MPCA will not review SWPPP for sites with less than 50 acres, so the County contracted with a consulting engineer to review two of the four SWPPPs. None of the four SWPPPs were in compliance with the MPCA NPDES construction permit requirements.

### MDA AgBMP Loan Program

County staff worked to establish Blue Earth County as participating lender for SSTS under the MDA AgBMP loan program. County staff worked with the SWCD, Environmental Services, Taxpayer Services and Finance departments' staff to develop a program administrative plan to begin acting as a lender for the MDA AgBMP Loan Program.

### Hazard Mitigation

Heavy rainfall in late June 2014 caused serious ravine and riverine erosion problems for residents of Blue Earth County. County staff worked with Emergency Management Director and Sheriff's Department, SWCD and NRCS to identify and prioritize properties with damage from landslides and riverine erosion.

County staff prepared a Blue Earth County community impact statement for FEMA and the Minnesota Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security. In 2014 the County Engineer worked to receive Federal grants to buy out two dwellings most threatened by landslides and riverine erosion in 2015.

The Army Corps of Engineers Silver Jackets team notified the County in December 2013 that Blue Earth County was chosen as a pilot project area for developing tools to assist local government with increasing structure setbacks in shoreland areas. There were no updates in 2014.

Aquatic Invasive Species

County staff prepared a draft AIS plan and met with representatives of the Madison Lake Association to discuss ideas for using the grant funds.

Watershed Management

Blue Earth County is located in four major watersheds. The following shows the percentage of land in the county in those watersheds as well as the percent of the watershed in the county.

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***Comparison of Watersheds in Blue Earth County***

Watershed	Percent Land Coverage in County	Percent of Watershed in County
Le Sueur River	48.1 %	34.1 %
Middle Minnesota River	23.3 %	12.8 %
Watonwan River	12.2 %	10.9 %
Blue Earth River	16.2 %	10.2 %
Cannon River	0.2 %	0.01 %

With the MPCA intensive monitoring program and the BWSR One Watershed One Plan, County staff is pulled in multiple directions in addition to working on implementing local priorities in the local water plan. The following are summaries of watershed based activities in 2014.

*Greater Blue Earth River Watershed Alliance (GBERBA)*

County staff attended several GBERBA meetings in 2014 to hear presentations by researchers from the National Center for Earth Surface Dynamics, BWSR engineer, Al Kean, Kandiyohi Ditch Manager, Loren Engelby, and a drainage discussion panel consisting of local ditch managers from Blue Earth and Faribault Counties.

*Greater Blue Earth River Collaborative for Sediment Source Reduction (CSSR)*

The CSSR is conducted by the National Center for Earth Surface Dynamics with funding from the MPCA, MDA and the Minnesota Agriculture Water Resources Center. County staff attended two meetings in 2014 as a committee member.

*Lake Associations*

County staff met with members of the Crystal Waters Project to discuss their work and potential grant funding opportunities and attended the Crystal Waters Project’s “Plant the Park” main fundraiser event. County staff recommended the lake association work to identify and prioritize specific projects before seeking grant funds.

County staff met with the Madison Lake Association to discuss their ideas and concerns about aquatic invasive species.

The SWCD prioritized Lake Crystal and Madison Lake watersheds for work in 2015.

### One Watershed One Plan

The BWSR announcement of their One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) pilot project grants resulted in numerous meetings and discussions related to participating in the new BWSR-funded 1W1P pilot projects in two watersheds (Blue Earth and Le Sueur) and forming a new watershed organization in a third watershed (Middle Minnesota). The County decided to wait for rules and allow more time for 1W1P instead of participating in the BWSR pilot projects in 2014. With County staff heavily committed to local projects work on 1W1P would not be feasible.

In October 2014, Melissa Lewis and Chris Hughes met with County staff to discuss concerns about and transitions to 1W1P.

### MPCA Intensive Watershed Monitoring - Impaired Waters/Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)

The MPCA is in the process of assessing surface waters in Minnesota and has identified water quality impairments in virtually every watershed in Blue Earth County. The MPCA will prepare monitoring reports and Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) for each watershed.

The MPCA is using a ten year cycle to assess major watersheds in the state. The MPCA's schedule for monitoring the four watersheds where Blue Earth County is shown in the following table.

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***MPCA Intensive Monitoring Schedule  
Comparison of Watersheds in Blue Earth County***

<b>Year Starting</b>	<b>Watershed</b>	<b>Percent Land Coverage in county</b>	<b>Percent of Watershed in county</b>
2008	Le Sueur River	48.1 %	34.1 %
2013	Middle Minnesota River	23.3 %	12.8 %
2013	Watonwan River	12.2 %	10.9 %
2017	Blue Earth River	16.2 %	10.2 %
2011	Cannon River	0.2 %	0.01 %

#### *Le Sueur River Watershed Intensive Monitoring*

The MPCA started monitoring the Le Sueur River watershed in 2008. In 2014 County staff attended MPCA WRAPS development meetings. This intensive monitoring and WRAPS process took more than six years and was not completed in 2014.

The MPCA and MSU Water Resources Center continued their Le Sueur River civic engagement through another grant from McKnight Foundation. The Le Sueur River Watershed Network of citizens recommended seven steps toward cleaner water and river health for the Le Sueur River watershed.

#### *Middle Minnesota River Watershed Intensive Monitoring and Civic Engagement*

The MPCA project manager, Bryan Spindler, held meetings with local county and SWCD in each county to develop the civic engagement work plan for the project. There were meetings to discuss the MPCA and DNR's zonation survey project in the Middle Minnesota River watershed and meetings to discuss developing plans for civic engagement. The Middle Minnesota River watershed is awkward to manage because it crosses the Minnesota River and contains mainly first order streams discharging directly to the Minnesota River.

#### *Watonwan River Watershed Intensive Monitoring and Civic Engagement*

The MPCA project manager, Paul Davis, is working with the MSU Water Resources Center to conduct civic engagement activities in the Watonwan River watershed. Mr. Davis indicated that local, county-level staff will not have a significant role in the civic engagement process.

Other Non-NRBG activities

With Clean Water Fund grant from BWSR, County staff is working on a Comprehensive Wetland Protection and Management Plan. A separate progress report for this work is displayed on the County website. NRBG grant funded staff time is not reported as match for this CWF grant.

***For more information about Blue Earth County's Water Management Plan, contact Julie Conrad, 507-304-4381.***

## **WETLAND CONSERVATION ACT**

**2014 NRBG:** \$18,178  
**Less transfer to SWCD:** - \$5,000  
**Total to County:** \$13,178  
**Required Local Match:** \$18,178

Prior to passage of the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) of 1991 more than fifty percent of the County's pre-settlement wetlands were lost due to agricultural drainage, community development and transportation. The purpose of the Wetland Conservation Act, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 8420.0100, is to:

- A. Achieve no net loss in the quantity, quality, and biological diversity of Minnesota's existing wetlands;
- B. Increase the quantity, quality, and biological diversity of Minnesota's wetlands by restoring or enhancing diminished or drained wetlands;
- C. Avoid direct or indirect impacts from activities that destroy or diminish the quantity, quality, and biological diversity of wetlands; and replace wetland values where avoidance to activity is not feasible or prudent.

Implementation of Wetland Conservation Act is the responsibility of both State and local government units (LGU). Local governments are required to administer the Wetland Conservation Act in accordance with State Rules. A Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) assists the LGU by providing regulatory and technical opinions to the LGU. The TEP consists of the Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) manager, the Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR), and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in Shoreland areas. Ultimately, the LGU is responsible for making all of the regulatory decisions for the program.

Administration of the WCA requires coordination with numerous local, State, and Federal agencies. The BWSR promulgates administrative rules for the program, participates on the TEP, and assures proper implementation by LGUs. The DNR conservation officers issue enforcement orders including cease-and-desist orders (CDO's) & restoration / replacement orders. CDO's and restoration / replacement orders are not criminal charges; however, violation of a CDO or restoration / replacement order is a misdemeanor.

Within Blue Earth County, three LGUs administer WCA. The City of Mankato administers the WCA within the city limits, the County Highway Department administers the WCA for County transportation projects, and the County Environmental Services Department administers the WCA in the remainder of the County, including municipalities.

### 2014 WCA Activities Report

The County Environmental Services Department has two staff positions which are certified to review / delineate wetlands. Part of their time is devoted to the administration of the WCA. In 2014 a total of 5 staff days and 28 hours were spent fulfilling the training requirements to remain certified to review / delineate wetlands.

In 2014 County staff provided 700 wetland-related technical assistance contacts. Technical assistance includes answering relatively simple questions about the WCA as well as more complicated review of aerial photos.

The County worked with the SWCD on restoration orders, and the SWCD spent a significant amount of time on WCA restoration projects.

The following tables summarize the County's 2014 WCA report to the BWSR. This report does not include WCA administration in the City of Mankato nor Blue Earth County Highway Department because they do not receive NRBG funds and report activities to BWSR separately.

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**Blue Earth County Report – 2014  
Wetland Conservation Act Administration**

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**Number and Type of Applications**

<b>Type of Application</b>	<b>Number Approved</b>	<b>Number Denied</b>	<b>Number Withdrawn</b>
Replacement Plan	2	0	1
Sequencing	0	0	0
Exemption	12	0	0
No-Loss	4	0	0
Boundary or Type	21	0	1
Total	39	0	1

**Technical Assistance**

Number of landowners for which wetland related technical assistance was provided: 700

**Violations**

Number of potential violations investigated: 9

Number of enforcement actions taken under local ordinance and/or did not result in DNR cease and desist, restoration or replacement orders: 5

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**Blue Earth County Report – 2014  
Wetland Conservation Act Administration  
Exemptions**

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**Number and Type of Exemptions**

<b>Type of Exemption</b>	<b>Number Approved</b>	<b>Number of Square Feet Impacted Permanently</b>
Agriculture	9	0
Drainage	1	0
Wildlife habitat	0	0
Utilities	1	1,396
Federal Activities	0	0
Forestry	0	0
De minimus	1	380
Total	12	1,776

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**Blue Earth County Report – 2014  
Wetland Conservation Act Administration  
Replacement Plans**

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**Number of Replacement Plans and Replacement Methods**

<b>Method</b>	<b>Number Approved</b>	<b>Number of Square Feet Impacted Via Replacement Plan</b>
Wetland Banking	2	534,045.6
Project Specific Replacement	0	0
Combination	0	0
Total	2	534,045.6

The WCA NRBG remained fairly stable for many years.

**2009 Wetland NRBG: \$20,710**  
**2010 Wetland NRBG: \$20,710**  
**2011 Wetland NRBG: \$17,873**  
**2012 Wetland NRBG: \$18,178**  
**2013 Wetland NRBG: \$18,178**

***For more information concerning Blue Earth County's administration of the Wetland Conservation Act, contact Stacey Feser, 507-304-4381.***

**Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources  
Wetland Conservation Act 2014 Annual Reporting Form**

**Use the tab key to navigate between fields.**

Local Government Unit (LGU): Blue Earth County	Organization Type: County	County or Counties if WMO
Name of Person Completing Report: Stacey Feser	Title: Wetland Specialist	Contact Phone #: 507-304-4381
Your Employer Name (if submitting report on behalf of an LGU):		

Does your LGU receive WCA funding from the Natural Resources Block Grant (NRBG)? Yes, directly from BWSR

**NOTE:** Completion of this report is required for all WCA LGUs. It must be received by the BWSR St. Paul office on or before **February 1, 2015**. See the accompanying instructions for details.

- Number of landowner contacts in which wetland related technical assistance was provided during the calendar year: **700** (Please provide your best estimate.)
- Number of applications that were:

<i>Type of Application:</i>	<b># Approved</b>	<b># Denied</b>	<b># Withdrawn</b>
A. Boundary or Type	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
B. No-Loss	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
C. Exemption	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
D. Sequencing	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
E. Replacement Plan*	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

\*Do not include local road authority notifications for projects that qualify for replacement under the BWSR Local Government Roads Wetland Replacement Program according to MN Rule 8420.0544.

- Number of exemptions approved and square feet of wetland impact for each category from MN Rule [8420.0420](#) (provide best estimate for impacts that are not easily quantified):

<i>Type of Exemption:</i>	<b>Number of Approved Exemptions</b>	<b>Sq. Ft. of Wetland Permanently Impacted</b>
Subp. 2. Agricultural Activities	<b>9</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Subp. 3. Drainage	<b>1</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Subp. 4. Federal approvals	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Subp. 5. Restored wetlands	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Subp. 6. Utilities	<b>1</b>	<b>1396.00</b>
Subp. 7. Forestry	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Subp. 8. De minimis	<b>1</b>	<b>380.00</b>
Subp. 9. Wildlife habitat	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1,776.00</b>

Subp. 2g. Agricultural wetland bank exemption **0** **0.00\***

\*See WCA reporting instructions.

4. Number of replacement plans **approved** that replace impacts by the following methods:
- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| A. Wetland Banking:   | <b>2</b> |
| B. Project-Specific Replacement:                                    | <b>0</b> |
| C. Combination of Wetland Banking and Project-Specific Replacement: | <b>0</b> |
- 
- Total replacement plans approved: 2**

5. Square feet of wetland to be **impacted** via an approved replacement plan: **534,045.6 square ft**

6. For approved replacement plans, list project-specific replacement only\* in square feet and corresponding credit amounts as approved in the following categories from MN Rule 8420.0526:

<i><b>Action Eligible for Credit:</b></i>	<b>Square Feet</b>	<b>Repl. Credit</b>
Subp. 2. Upland buffer areas.	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Subp. 3. Restoration of completely drained or filled wetland areas.	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Subp. 4. Restoration of partially drained or filled wetland areas.	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Subp. 5. Vegetative restoration of farmed wetlands.	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Subp. 6. Protection of wetlands previously restored via conservation easements.	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Subp. 7. Wetland creations.	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Subp. 8. Restoration and protection of exceptional natural resource value.	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Subp. 9. Preservation of wetlands owned by the state or a local unit of government	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>

\*For question 6, report project-specific replacement only. Replacement via banking is accounted for via BWSR's banking database.

7. For project-specific replacement wetlands, list the number of each completed or received:

A. Construction Sites Inspected	B. Corrective Actions Ordered	C. Monitoring Reports Received	D. Findings of Satisfactory Replacement
<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

8. Number of **potential WCA violation sites** investigated: **9**

9. Number of **enforcement actions** that were taken under local ordinances and/or that did not result in DNR-issued cease and desist, restoration, or replacement orders (including informal resolution of violations): **5**

10. Number of **local appeals** heard: **0**

11. Does the LGU have a MN WDCP **certified delineator** available (excluding BWSR or SWCD)?

On staff:

On call (i.e. consultant):

Not at all:

12. **Optional:** Please provide information regarding unusual circumstances, time spent on enforcement or major violations, banking application reviews, known exempt activity for which a formal decision was not made, additional detail or clarification of above data, or any other information or comments you would like to share (2,500 characters max). **Question #1 is likely an underestimate of the actual number of contacts made, however this is the number we can substantiate. In question #3 you will see that we have 10 agricultural activities and drainage exemptions approved in 2014 but the square footage is 0. In our reviews we do not document the extent of the wetlands, we make sure the area meets the cropping history and then issue our decision. Blue Earth County (BEC) worked closely with the SWCD to close out a majority of the WCA violations informally. Blue Earth County is still contracted with Waseca County Planning and Zoning to help them with their administration of the WCA. TEP Meetings, phone calls, conversations, and site visits were conducted to**

help them with their new role as WCA administrator. BEC is also in the process of creating a comprehensive wetland management plan for the entire county, which was funded by a Clean Water Fund grant. In 2013 BEC spent time meeting and talking with stake holders, landowners, consultants, and individuals with technical expertise in wetlands to develop the best approach for this task. An assessment of 75 wetlands was performed using MnRAM and the RFQA. BEC has two certified wetland delineators on staff.

13. For LGU staff responsible for implementing WCA, please provide the following for WCA/wetland training attended this reporting year (attach additional if necessary). The University of Minnesota Wetland Delineator Certification Program webpage has a list of pre-approved continuing education programs offered in 2014. Please indicate training session in full days or indicate the number of actual hours.

	Session Title	Training Sponsor	Employee Name	Employee Title	From Date	To Date	Total # of Days	Total # of Hours
					Use format <i>m/d/yyyy</i>			
1	BWSR Academy - Wetland Tracks	BWSR	Stacey Feser	Wetland Specialist	10/28/2014	10/30/2014	3	16
2	Sedges of Minnesota	CCES	Tim Grant	Wetland Specialist	6/12/2014	6/23/2014	2	12
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## SHORELAND ORDINANCE

**2014 NRBG: \$3,243**

**Required Local Match: \$3,243**

The Shoreland NRBG contributes very little to the actual cost of administering the Shoreland Ordinance. Shoreland is generally defined as the land area within 1,000 feet of lakes and 300 feet from rivers. Counties are required by Minnesota Rule to adopt shoreland ordinances consistent with State Rules. Counties receiving the Shoreland NRBG are required to submit an annual report on Shoreland Ordinance administration activities to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The 2014 report submitted to the DNR is on the following page.

The annual Shoreland NRBG grant amount has remained fairly constant.

**2009 Shoreland NRBG: \$3,695**

**2010 Shoreland NRBG: \$3,695**

**2011 Shoreland NRBG: \$3,189**

**2012 Shoreland NRBG: \$3,243**

**2013 Shoreland NRBG: \$3,243**

**2014 Shoreland NRBG: \$3,243**

### 2014 Shoreland Activities Report to DNR

The County Zoning Administrator completed the 2014 Shoreland Ordinance Administrative Activities Report in January 2014. Permits issued in 2014 were: 36 permits for redevelopment, 6 permits for new construction, and 3 permits for grading and filling in the shore impact zone. Eight new lots were created in non-PUD plats.

The Board of Adjustment approved one variance for an OHWL setback. The County Board approved the creation of five new lots in standard plats.

### Bluff Impact Zone – Riverine Erosion and Landslides

Blue Earth County is an area with deeply incised river channels, significant riverine erosion and moderate landslide susceptibility according to the USGS. Heavy rains in parts of the county in June 2014 resulted in the County seeking Federal funds for hazard mitigation buy-outs for two dwellings and several additional dwellings further threatened.

The Army Corps of Engineers Silver Jackets team notified the County in December 2013 that Blue Earth County was chosen as a pilot project area for developing tools to assist local government with increasing structure setbacks in shoreland areas. There were no updates in 2014.

### Agricultural Use Standards – Shoreland Buffer Initiative

Blue Earth County started working on compliance with the Blue Earth County Shoreland Ordinance and Minnesota Rule, Chapter 6120, requiring permanent vegetation within 50 feet of the ordinary high water level for agricultural uses in shoreland areas:

*“Agricultural use standards. Within 50 feet of ordinary high water level: General cultivation farming, grazing, nurseries, horticulture, truck farming, sod farming, and wild crop harvesting are permitted uses if steep slopes and shore and bluff impact zones are maintained in permanent vegetation or operated under an approved conservation plan.”*

To improve management of the riparian area and begin working toward enforcing the shoreland rules buffer standards, the County and SWCD worked together to identify property owners out of compliance for targeted education and cost share assistance. In order to accomplish this goal, additional staff

resources were needed to provide technical assistance to landowners. The County and SWCD applied for and were awarded a FY11 Clean Water Fund grant to implement this project from 2011 to 2013. Grant funds are used to provide dedicated staff at the SWCD to work with landowners who are notified they own property that appears to lack the required buffer based on aerial photo analysis. Most of the staff working on this project are/were not funded by the NRBG or the Clean Water Fund grant. Progress reports on this grant-funded project are available in a separate report on the County website.

The County staff intended to work on a plan to continue the targeted information education phase of the project without grant funds, but with lack of staff time for this work it could not be done in 2014. In March 2015 the County applied to BWSR for additional funds to do this work.

***For more information about the Blue Earth County Shoreland Ordinance and Shoreland Administration Report, contact George Leary, 507-304-4381.***

**2014 ANNUAL SHORELAND ORDINANCE  
ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES REPORT**

2014 Shoreland Block Grant Amount: \$3,243.00

**Directions:** Please answer the following questions for your county’s 2014 activities within the shoreland area (1000 feet from lakes & 300 feet from rivers or the extent of the floodplain, whichever is greater).

**Variations**

1. List the number of shoreland variances you issued in 2014:

Variance Type	# Approved with Conditions	# Approved without Conditions	# Denied
OHWL setback	1		
Bluff setback			
Expansion of nonconforming structure			
Combination of contiguous nonconforming lots of record in common ownership for sale or development as provided under MS Chapter 394.36, Subd. 5, item (d)			
Impervious surface			
Subdivision of land not meeting lot area/width standards			
Building height			
Mooring spaces			
Other (please specify):			

2. For all variance requests, did your Board of Adjustment develop findings of fact for each of the five variance criteria in MS Chapter 394.27, Subd. 7? Yes (yes or no). If yes, do the findings include detailed explanation or rationale for how the criteria were/were not met? Not all of them.

3. If variances are approved with conditions, what are some examples of typical conditions? Obtain construction permit. Proper erosion control. Limitations on vegetation removal.

4. If variances are approved without conditions, why not?

5. For approximately what percent of variance inquiries in 2014 were alternative solutions found (thus reducing the actual number of variance applications)? 50%

6. If alternative solutions are found, what are some typical examples? The property owner had the option of replacing the existing structure within the existing structure footprint.

**Lots & Land Subdivisions**

7. List the number of lots created in 2014:

Type of subdivision or conversion:	Total # of Lots Created	How many of these lots were part of Conservation Subdivisions?	How many of these lots were part of Resort Conversions?
PUD Plats			
Non-PUD Plats	8		
Lot Splits (administrative subdivision)			

8. Does your county ordinance contain shoreland PUD provisions? [Yes](#) (yes or no)
9. Has your county updated its ordinance to comply with 2009 legislative changes regarding existing nonconforming lots in shoreland areas in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 394.36, Subd. 5? [No](#) (yes or no)

**Permits**

10. How many land use permits were issued in shoreland areas in 2014?
  - a. New construction on previously undeveloped lots: [6](#) (total # of permits)
  - b. Redevelopment (e.g., expansion of structures, substantial improvements, new structures added to developed lots): [36](#) (total # of permits)
11. How many permits for grading, excavation, filling, or soil disturbance within the shore impact zone were issued in 2014? [3 shoreland alteration permits.](#)  
Do you generally inspect the work? [When time and staff are available.](#) (yes or no)

**Planning and Enforcement**

12. Did your county update or amend its comprehensive plan in 2014? [No](#) (yes or no)
13. Did your county update or amend its shoreland ordinance in 2014? [No](#) (yes or no)  
If yes, describe the nature of the change:
14. Does your county have any plans to update, amend, or adopt a comprehensive plan or shoreland ordinance in 2015? [Uncertain](#) (yes/no, and if yes, plan or ordinance)
15. Does your county notify the DNR at least 10 days prior to public hearings for variances, CUPs, and ordinance amendments, and within 10 days after final decisions? [Yes](#) (yes or no) If yes:
  - a. Who do you notify? [Dan Girolamo](#) (name of DNR staff person)
  - b. How do you notify them? [Generally by email and phone](#) (mail, e-mail, other)
  - c. What information do you provide? (notice, application, site plans, etc.): [All applicable information.](#)

**Shoreland Buffers**

16. Please describe your efforts to achieve and maintain 50 foot buffers around streams and water bodies on agricultural land in 2014. Please check and describe ALL that apply (feel free to attach additional materials):

✓	<b>Effort</b>	<b>Please describe:</b>
✓	No special effort	
✓	Some action taken	
✓	Condition variance and/or permit approvals with measures to establish/restore buffers	<a href="#">If the parcel involved with a permit, CUP or variance is deficient in a 50 foot buffer area, a condition of the permit, CUP or variance is added to bring the property into compliance.</a>
✓	Condition financial or other assistance with measures to establish/restore buffers	
✓	Specific program to achieve voluntary compliance including some/all of the following strategies (check all that apply): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Aerial mapping/inventory of buffers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation/assessment of compliance</li> <li>✓ Outreach to property owners (letters, literature, site visits, inspections, etc.)</li> <li>✓ Technical and financial assistance (with SWCDs and other resource agencies)</li> </ul>	

✓	Code enforcement (penalties and/or legal action to achieve compliance/restoration)	
✓	Other:	

17. What has your county found to be effective in achieving and maintaining 50 foot buffers? [Targeted education to those out of compliance with technical assistance from a trusted source \(SWCD\) to meet in the field and talk about compliance.](#)

18. What challenges and barriers has your county encountered in achieving and maintaining 50 foot buffers? Please check and describe ALL that apply (feel free to submit additional materials):

✓	Challenges/Barriers	Please describe:
✓	Too controversial	<a href="#">Property owners claim it is a taking of their land.</a>
✓	Lack of staffing/funding/resources	<a href="#">Staff is already busy. The program takes a lot of time.</a>
✓	Lack of data/technical expertise	
✓	Lack of clarity on what's required by law	<a href="#">There is misinformation and miscommunication about whether authority is federal, state or local.</a>
✓	Lack of interaction/opportunity to interface with ag producers	
✓	Level of financial assistance for landowners/ag producers	<a href="#">Until the fall of 2014, the high commodity prices were an obstacle. The high land prices and high rental rates are also an obstacle.</a>
✓	Other: <a href="#">Sustainability.</a>	<a href="#">Most landowners chose not to enroll in in a conservation program. This will increase county responsibility to ensure compliance.</a>

19. What could DNR do to help your county with efforts to achieve and maintain 50 foot buffers? [The DNR should actively encourage ALL counties to work on the compliance issues. There needs to be funding for technical staff and for installing the buffers.](#)

20. Do you require compliance with vegetation management standards for non-agricultural properties? [Yes](#) (yes or no) If yes, describe 2014 activities in the space below:  
[We require shoreland alteration permits for projects such as shoreline armoring, and ice heave repair. We also have standards that limit vegetation removal within shoreland impact zones and within bluff impact zones.](#)

**Resources/Training**

21. What shoreland-related training, guidance, or tools do your staff or Board of Adjustment need?

Please describe below:

- [Shoreline armoring.](#)
- [Re-vegetating shoreline areas](#)
- [Ice heave prevention techniques](#)
- [Replacing turf grass with native vegetation](#)
- [Information is needed detailing the reasons/environmental benefits of the rules.](#)

22. Do you feel that DNR staff is available for assistance when needed? Please describe below:

**Other**

23. Does your shoreland ordinance contain “higher standards” that exceed the statewide minimums in Minnesota Rules, Chapter 6120? Please check and describe ALL that apply (feel free to attach additional information):

✓	<b>Higher Standard Type</b>	<b>Please describe:</b>
✓	Use of a special protection district or lake classification for which higher standards apply	
✓	Lot size & width	
✓	Structure setback from OHWL	
✓	Structure setback from bluff	
✓	Septic system setback from OHWL	
✓	Impervious surface coverage limits	
✓	Special standards applied to nonconforming structures or lots	
✓	Vegetation assessment/restoration	
✓	Stormwater/land alteration	
✓	Shoreland PUD (i.e. conservation design)	
✓	Mitigation for variances	
✓	50-foot vegetative buffer on public ditches	
✓	Other:	

24. Has your county pursued or considered pursuing any special initiatives or outreach efforts to protect shorelands in 2015? Please describe below: [Our County Board is concerned about the deteriorating conditions of some bluff areas near residential developments. It is possible some action will be taken to address this issue in 2015. There has also been some discussion and some interest in increasing the bluff setback requirements. Technical and scientific tools are needed to increase setbacks greater than state rules. One option is the Silver Jackets project which we have not heard anything on for some time.](#)

**Contact Information**

County: [Blue Earth](#)  
 Contact Person: [George Leary](#) Title: [Zoning Administrator](#)  
 E-Mail Address: [george.leary@blueearthcountymn.gov](mailto:george.leary@blueearthcountymn.gov)  
 Phone Number: [507-304-4495](tel:507-304-4495)

**To receive a shoreland grant in 2015, this form must be completed by March 2, 2015.**

*Any questions, please contact: Kathleen Metzker, DNR Land Use Hydrologist, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4032. Tel. 651-259-5694. Please e-mail the completed form to [Kathleen.metzker@state.mn.us](mailto:Kathleen.metzker@state.mn.us). Alternatively, you may fax it to 651-296-1811 or mail it to the above address. E-mail is preferred.*

## STATE-DELEGATED FEEDLOT PROGRAM

**2014 NRBG:** \$32,177

**Required Local Match:** \$22,524

Blue Earth County's feedlot program is a State-delegated program for feedlots under 1,000 animal units. Large feedlots with 1,000 or more animal units require federal, Nonpoint Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits administered by the MPCA. Under the State delegation agreement, the County is responsible for implementation of feedlot rules and regulations, including registration, permitting, inspections, education and assistance, and complaint follow-up. The County receives State funding to administer the delegation agreement and is required to submit annual reports and work plans for review and approval by the MPCA.

There are 361 registered feedlots in Blue Earth County. Blue Earth County has one feedlot officer working in the Environmental Services Department. The feedlot officer completed the 2014 Annual CFO Annual Report January 30, 2015. The 2014 report follows this section.

In 2014 the feedlot officer inspections included: 54 non-NPDES feedlots, 6 NPDES sites, 43 Level 1 land application inspections, 4 Level 2 land application inspections and 6 Level 3 land application inspections. The County feedlot officer prepared staff reports and recommendations for eight feedlot Conditional Use Permits presented to the Planning Commission and County Board for review and approval. There were two Letters of Warning issued by the County feedlot officer in 2014.

The County conducted one workshop in 2014 with 41 feedlot owners attending. The County did one mailing to feedlot owners, and there was one feedlot article placed in the newspaper. The County Feedlot Officer gave presentations at two informational events.

The State legislature appropriated funds to the MPCA to be distributed to delegated counties using a three part formula, including:

**Number of feedlots registered in the county.**

**Minimum program requirements.** (1) Inspect at 7% of the total number of registered feedlots; and (2) meet minimum program requirements identified in the county feedlot workplan form.

**Performance credits.** The amount is determined by the number of performance credits a county accumulates during the year.

The Feedlot NRBG base grant has declined since 2008, with the greatest reduction in 2011. Beginning in 2008, counties were eligible for Feedlot Performance Credit Reimbursement. The intention is to provide more support to counties doing more than the minimum required. The following table shows a comparison of the feedlot NRBG grants to Blue Earth County.

**Comparison of Feedlot NRBG, County Match and Total Feedlot Grants**

Feedlot Program Grants	2014 NRBG	2013 NRBG	2012 NRBG	2011 NRBG	2010 NRBG	2009 NRBG	2008 NRBG
Feedlot NRBG	\$32,177	\$31,880	\$31,880	\$31,880	\$34,115	\$41,373	\$45,113
Required County Match	\$22,524	\$22,316	\$22,316	\$22,316	\$23,881	\$28,961	\$34,681

**For more information about Blue Earth County's Feedlot program, contact Mike Schulte or George Leary, 507-304-4381.**

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Feedlot Program

**2014 Annual County Feedlot Officer Annual Report and Performance Credit Report**

(Data for the Period: January 1, 2014 - December 31, 2014)

County:	<b>Blue Earth</b>
Contact Person:	<b>Michael Schulte</b>
Phone Number:	<b>507-304-4384</b>
E-Mail Address:	<b>michael.schulte@blueearthcountymn.gov</b>
Signature:	<p>_____</p> <p>(Signature of County Board Commissioner) (Date)</p>

**All data must be entered in accordance with the Annual CFO Report Guidance Document.**

*Except where identified, this report address those non-NPDES/SDS site required by 7020 to be registered.*

		No.	PC	PC Total
<b>REGISTRATION</b>				
	1	Feedlots in shoreland with 10 - 49 AU:	19	
	2	Feedlots with 50 - 299 AU:	166	
	3	Non-NPDES/SDS ≥ 300 AU:	111	
	4	Feedlots with NPDES/SDS permits:	66	
	5	<b>Total - Feedlots required to be registered:</b>	<b>362</b>	
<b>PRODUCTION SITE INSPECTIONS (compliance or construction)</b>				
	6	Feedlots inspected in shoreland with 10 - 49 AU:	1	
	7	Feedlots inspected with 50 - 299 AU:	37	
	8	Non-NPDES/SDS ≥ 300 AU inspected:	16	
	9	<b>Total - Non-NPDES/SDS Feedlots inspected required to be registered:</b>	<b>54</b>	
	10	NPDES/SDS sites inspected:	6	
	11	Inspected Feedlots non-compliant with water quality discharge standards:	0	
<b>LAND APPLICATION INSPECTIONS</b>				
Non-NPDES/SDS Sites	12	Feedlots ≥ 100 AU where Level 1 land app was conducted:	29	
	13	Feedlots ≥ 100 AU where Level 1 land app result was non compliant:	10	
	14	Site ≥ 300 AU (or ≥100 AU in DWSMA) where Level 2 land app was conducted:	4	
	15	Feedlots from Line 14 where Level 2 land app result was non compliant:	0	
	16	Feedlots ≥ 100 AU where Level 3 land app was conducted:	6	
	17	Feedlots ≥ 100 AU where Level 3 land app result was non compliant:	2	
<b>SPECIALTY INSPECTIONS</b>				
Non-NPDES/SDS Sites	18	Construction inspections at registered sites (only ONE (1) site visit):	3	
	19	Construction inspections at registered sites (2 or more visits):	3	0.5
	20	Feedlots inspected that are located in shoreland and/or DWSMA:	8	
	21	Complaint inspections at sites required to be registered:	1	
	22	Complaint inspections at sites NOT required to be registered:	1	
	23	On-site assistance inspections:	0	
<b>INSPECTION TYPE (Performance Credit Eligible)</b>				
Based on Number of Sites Inspected by Type	24	Compliance Inspections at non-NPDES/SDS sites:	51	1.5
	25	Construction Inspections at non-NPDES/SDS sites:	3	1
	26	Complaint Inspections: (any size site)	2	0.5
	27	Level 2 Land Application Inspections at non-NPDES/SDS sites:	4	3
	28	Level 3 Land Application Inspections at non-NPDES/SDS sites:	6	0.5
	29	Feedlots with NPDES/SDS permits inspected:	6	0.5
	30	<b>Inspection Type Performance Credit Total: (lines 24-29)</b>	<b>72</b>	

All data must be entered in accordance with the Annual CFO Report Guidance Document.						
Except where identified, this report address those non-NPDES/SDS site required by 7020 to be registered.				No.	PC	PC Total
<b>PERMITTING</b>						
	31	30-day construction or expansion notifications received:		2		
	32	Interim Permits Issued or Modified:		0	2	0
	33	Construction Short-Form Permits Issued or Modified at Sites ≥ 300 AU:		4	1	4
	34	Public meetings held for construction or expansion to ≥ 500 AU:		6		
<b>EMERGENCY RESPONSE (any size site)</b>						
	35	Events where emergency response was conducted: (on-site visit)		0	2	0
<b>PRODUCTION SITE SCHEDULED COMPLIANCE (Achieved in current reporting year)</b>						
	36	Feedlots where a partial environmental upgrade was achieved:		0		
	37	Feedlots where a complete environmental upgrade was achieved:		0	6	0
<b>LAND APPLICATION SCHEDULED COMPLIANCE (Achieved in current reporting year)</b>						
Non-NPDES/SDS Sites	38	Feedlots ≥ 100 AU where Level 1 land app non-compliance was returned to compliance:		0		
	39	Feedlots ≥ 300 AU (or ≥ 100 AU located in a DWSMA) where Level 2 land app non-compliance was returned to compliance:		0		
	40	Feedlots ≥ 100 AU where Level 3 land app non-compliance was resolved:		1		
<b>OWNER ASSISTANCE</b>						
Describe Lines 41, 43 & 44 on Supplemental Form.	41	Workshops or trainings hosted and/or co-sponsored by the CFO:		1	2	2
	42	Number of feedlot owners attending events in line 41:		41		
	43	Number of mailings to feedlot owners:		1		
	44	Feedlot articles placed in newspapers:		1		
<b>STAFFING LEVEL AND TRAINING</b>						
Line 49 Based on One CFO per County Attending Training Event	45	FTEs - (Full Time Equivalents) supplied by the CFO(s):		1		
	46	FTEs supplied by other county staff, including administrative and support staff assigned by the county to the feedlot program:		0		
	47	FTEs supplied through contract with other local government units:		0		
	48	Total Number of FTE positions that supported county program:		1		
	49	CFO - training hours: (Enter total training hours earned)		61.25	0.25	10.8125
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (EAW)</b>						
	50	EAW petitions received:		0		
	51	EAWs prepared by county:		0	4	0
<b>AIR QUALITY NOTIFICATIONS</b>						
	52	Notifications received claiming air quality exemptions:		9		
<b>ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS</b>						
	53	Letters of Warning (LOW) issued:		2		
	54	Notices of Violation (NOV) issued:		0		
	55	Court actions commenced:		0		
<b>OTHER PROGRAM ACTIVITIES</b>						
Describe Lines 57, 58, 59 and 60 on Supplemental Form.	56	Feedlots where a MinnFARM was conducted:		0	1	0
	57	Hours mentoring New CFO's:		0	0.25	0
	58	CFO presentations at informational or producer groups: (per event)		2	1	2
	59	Meetings with other local government and producer groups:		0		
	60	Feedlot Ordinance Revisions:		0		
<b>TOTAL PERFORMANCE CREDITS</b>						
						<b>92.81</b>

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
Feedlot Program

2014 Annual County Feedlot Officer Report  
**Supplemental Information Page**  
January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014

**County Name:** Blue Earth

**Work Plan  
Inspection Goals**

Please describe the progress that you made during the calendar year in meeting your 2014-2015 work plan inspection goals. Your report must provide quantitative results for each inspection, production site and land application goal, listed in your work plan.

- Work plan goal of 25% inspection rate of all county feedlots was not met, achieved a 16.6% inspection rate. Multiple factors lowered the actual inspection rate including other job duties, training events, delayed spring planting season, and biosecurity concerns with PEDv.
- Work plan goal of conducting a Level II Land App Inspection at every site over 100AU was met with mixed results. Previous inspections have not typically included a Level II Land App so many producers did not have all the paperwork available, which resulted in a Level I inspection. Better Level II inspection rates are expected over the next few years as operators become more familiar with the paperwork that is needed.

**Owner  
Assistance Goals**

Please report on the following owner assistance activities that you conducted in the past year. Include a date and description for each of the activities listed.

- Information meetings provided to feedlot owners:
  - February 27, 2014- Blue Earth County in association with MACFO hosted a CAWT training session that included CAWTs, local feedlot operators, and local crop consultants.
  - September 23, 2014- Presented at a South Central Community College agricultural homesteading class. Covered topics including county and state feedlot rules, permitting process, and local zoning requirements. Students all had an agricultural background, many have families involved with raising livestock.
- Newsletters/direct mailings sent to feedlot owners:
  - Annual feedlot newsletter was sent out in the spring to every feedlot permit holder in the county (10+ animal units). New letter addressed topics including spring manure application, animal mortality boxes, and short-term manure stockpiling.
- Feedlot articles placed in local newspapers:
  - March 2014- Worked with BEC Communications Manager to have the spring manure application article from the MPCA released to local newspapers.
- Other information and outreach activities not identified above:
  - Worked with BEC Sheriff's Office on creating a Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) response plan.

**Staffing Level and Training**

Please list the training events that you participated in during the calendar year. Include a date and the number of hours of participation for each of the events listed.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Training</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Unit</b>
2/11/2014	Crop Nutrient Management Conf - Mankato	6	hours
2/26/2014	CFO Web-EX	1.5	hours
3/11/2014	NEW CFO Training Day 1	7	hours
3/12/2014	NEW CFO Training Day 2	7	hours
4/15/2014	NEW CFO Training Land App Day	7	hours
4/22/2014	NEW CFO Training Software Day	7	hours
4/30/2014	CFO Web-EX	1.5	hours
5/15/2014	Regional CFO Training - Owatonna	5	hours
6/25/2014	June CFO WebEx	1.5	hours
8/27/2014	August CFO WebEx	2	hours
9/23/2014	September CFO WebEx	1	hours
10/13/2014	MACFO Conference	13.25	hours
12/29/2014	December CFO WebEx	1.5	hours
<b>Total Training Hours:</b>		<b>61.25</b>	

**Feedlot Enforcement Actions**

Please describe any enforcement actions other than letters of warning, notices of violation, and court actions that you conducted during the calendar year.

- Assisted County Sheriff's Office with resolving an animal neglect/abuse complaint.

**Other Program Activities**

Please list any meetings, including meeting dates, which you attended during the calendar year with local government services and producer groups (including SWCD and NRCS Offices, Minnesota Extension Service, Dairy Inspectors, Minnesota Pork Producers, Minnesota Dairy Association, Minnesota Cattleman's Association).

- MN Ag Expo 1/9/14
- MN Pork Congress 1/14/14
- NRCS Stormwater Meeting 11/12/14

Please use this space to describe any feedlot ordinance revision and/or adoption proceedings for this reporting period.

- No changes were made to the county feedlot ordinance during this time.

Please use this space to list any county feedlot program activities conducted during this reporting period not identified in this form.

- Completed final cleanout/closure of 3 unused liquid manure storage areas

## SUBSURFACE SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEMS (SSTS)

**2014 NRBG:** \$18,600

**Required Local Match:** None required

The SSTS NRBG contributes little to the actual cost of administering the local program. The SSTS NRBG is the only NRBG program that has increased significantly since 2011.

**2009 SSTS NRBG:** \$10,000

**2010 SSTS NRBG:** \$ 9,931

**2011 SSTS NRBG:** \$ 9,931

**2012 SSTS NRBG:** \$18,941

**2013 SSTS NRBG:** \$18,941

**2014 SSTS NRBG:** \$18,600

In the Environmental Services Department, three staff positions are certified SSTS inspectors whose time is partially devoted to administering the SSTS program.

Counties are required to submit to the MPCA a construction report showing the number and type of systems installed and tank report of number of septic tanks each contractor installs. The Minnesota Legislature passed a law in 2003 requiring SSTS installers to submit a fee of \$25 to the MPCA for each septic tank. In order to verify that each installer submits the correct fees to the MPCA, the MPCA also requires counties keep records of all the tanks installed by each SSTS installer and report to the MPCA.

### 2014 SSTS Annual Report Summary

The following table summarizes SSTS construction between 2008 and 2014 as reported to the MPCA by the County.

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**2008-2014 Summary**  
**Subsurface Sewage Treatment System**  
**Report to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency**

Year	Replacement Residential	New Residential	Other	Total
2008	94	45	4	143
2009	71	35	6	112
2010	83	28	5	116
2011	97	18	14	129
2012	98	37	15	150
2013	112	27	12	151
2014	87	23	7	117*

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\*In addition to SSTS construction, 150 parcels with mostly noncompliant SSTS were connected to publicly-owned treatment works through a partnership agreement with the City of Mankato in 2014.

As a result of County ordinance compliance triggers for construction permits and property transfers, 164 compliance inspections were conducted in 2014.

### Sewage Ordinance Section of the County Code

Beginning in 1996 the *Sewage Ordinance Section of the County Code* contained new SSTS compliance “triggers” intended to increase compliance. Since 1996 these compliance triggers have increased rates of compliance in the County. The compliance triggers included:

- 1) Required a compliance inspection at property transfer.
- 2) Affirmed the State-prescribed time frame for upgrades of 10 months for “Imminent Threats to Public Health.”
- 3) Determined the required time for upgrades to failing systems not considered “Imminent Threats to Public Health” to be five years.

The *Sewage Ordinance Section of the County Code* was revised in 2010 with additional compliance triggers for septic compliance inspections. Compliance triggers in Blue Earth County now include:

- 1) Requires a compliance inspection at property transfer.
- 2) Requires an inspection or certificate of compliance for all County construction permits, conditional use permits and variances.
- 3) Affirms the State-prescribed time frame for upgrades to 10 months for systems that are “imminent threats to public health.”
- 4) Determines the required time for upgrades to systems “failing to protect groundwater” to be two years.

These additional triggers are increasing the rate of compliance throughout the County as the previous compliance triggers only addressed property that changed ownership. The results can be seen in the reports and the number of replacement residential systems and other permits is increasing compared to construction of new systems for new construction.

### ***Compliance Inspections***

**A Certificate of Compliance is issued to the owner when:**

- A newly-constructed SSTS is determined to have been built correctly in accordance with modern, applicable rules and the design plan.  
OR
- An existing system is inspected and determined to meet minimum compliance criteria that ensure the SSTS will not cause human health or environmental problems. A Certificate of Compliance for a new system is valid for five years. A Certificate of Compliance for an existing system is valid for three years.

**A Notice of Noncompliance is issued for a non-compliant existing SSTS.**

The Notice of Noncompliance documents the compliance criteria the system fails to meet. Noncompliance falls into two categories:

- ***Imminent threat to public health*** (ITPH) – the system has a sewage discharge to surface water; sewage discharge to ground surface; sewage backup; or any other situation with the potential to immediately and adversely affect or threaten public health or safety.
- ***Failing to protect groundwater*** – the bottom of the system does not have the required separation to groundwater or bedrock.

***For more information about Blue Earth County’s SSTS program, contact Stacey Feser or Tim Grant, 507-304-4381.***

## OTHER STATE GRANTS

Blue Earth County has received other grant and loan funds related to water management. Some of the Environmental Services Department staff partially funded by the NRBG are working on these projects. NRBG funds are not used to meet the match requirements for these projects. Reports are available on the County website.

### **Fiscal Year 2013 Clean Water Fund Accelerated Implementation Grant Greenprint**

**2014 Clean Water Fund Grant:** \$108,000

**Local Match:** \$30,000

Blue Earth County is working with partners to develop a plan for protecting, restoring and enhancing wetlands throughout the county. Most of the plan development will take place in 2015. No NRBG funds are used for match for this grant. Progress reports on this grant-funded project are available in a separate report on the County website.

*For more information contact Julie Conrad in the Environmental Services Department, 507-304-4381*

### **Fiscal Year 2014 Clean Water Fund Accelerated Implementation Grant Blue Earth County / SWCD Watershed Implementation Targeting**

**2014 Clean Water Fund Grant:** \$69,000

**Local Match:** \$25,000

Blue Earth County and SWCD are working with consultants to use sophisticated GIS analysis techniques to determine areas of high importance for BMP implementation. Most of the work was done in 2014. In 2015 the County and SWCD partners will review and finalize the results. No NRBG funds are used to match this grant. Progress reports on this grant-funded project are available in a separate report on the County website.

*For more information contact Scott Salisbury in the Environmental Services Department, 507-304-4381*



## Grant All-Detail Report LWM-NRBG 2014

**Grant Title** - 2014 - Local Water Management - NRBG (Blue Earth County)

**Grant ID** - P14-6248

**Organization** - Blue Earth County

<b>Grant Awarded Amount</b>	<b>\$10,023.00</b>	<b>Grant Execution Date</b>	
<b>Required Match Amount</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>Grant End Date</b>	12/31/2016
<b>Required Match %</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>Grant Day To Day Contact</b>	Julie Conrad

### Budget Summary

	Budgeted	Spent	Balance Remaining*
Total Grant Amount	\$10,023.00	\$10,023.00	\$0.00
Total Match Amount	\$21,467.00	\$21,467.00	\$0.00
Total Other Funds	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$31,490.00</b>	<b>\$31,490.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

*\*Grant balance remaining is the difference between the Awarded Amount and the Spent Amount. Other values compare budgeted and spent amounts.*

### Budget Details

Activity Name	Activity Category	Source Type	Source Description	Budgeted	Spent	Last Transaction Date	Matching Fund
2014 - LWM - Planning and Implementation - Match	Administration /Coordination	Local Fund	Local Cash	\$21,467.00	\$21,467.00	12/31/2014	Y
Planning	Administration /Coordination	Current State Grant	2014 - Local Water Management - NRBG (Blue Earth County)	\$10,023.00	\$10,023.00	12/31/2014	N

## Activity Details Summary

Activity Details	Total Action Count	Total Activity Mapped	Size / Unit
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## Indicators Summary

Indicator Name	Total Value	Unit
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## Grant Activity

### Grant Activity - 2014 - LWM - Planning and Implementation - Match

Description	2014 - LWM - Planning and Implementation - Match		
Category	ADMINISTRATION/COORDINATION		
Start Date	1-Jan-14	End Date	31-Dec-14
Rates and Hours			
Actual Results	<p>NRBG-funded staff was involved with planning activities, including BWSR One Watershed One Plan, watershed meetings and Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Aid. There were numerous meetings and discussions related to participating in BWSR-funded 1W1P pilot projects in two watersheds (Blue Earth and Le Sueur) and forming a new watershed organization in a third watershed (Middle Minnesota). NRBG-funded staff met with Melissa Lewis and Chris Hughes to discuss concerns about and transitions to 1W1P. NRBG-funded and other county staff was involved with assembling documents for the County's first BWSR grants verification. MPCA intensive watershed monitoring projects were started in the Middle Minnesota River watershed and the Watonwan River watershed. The MPCA Middle Minnesota River watershed project manager is working with local county and SWCD in each county to develop the civic engagement work plan for the project. NRBG-funded staff participated in Middle Minnesota River project planning meetings throughout 2014. NRBG-funded staff began development of a plan to use Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Aid to counties. County staff also worked on non-state funded activities, including work on a wetland management plan partially funded with a Clean Water Fund grant.</p>		

## Grant Activity - Planning

Description	Planning		
Category	ADMINISTRATION/COORDINATION		
Start Date	1-Jan-14	End Date	31-Dec-14
Rates and Hours			
Actual Results	<p>NRBG-funded staff was involved with planning activities, including BWSR One Watershed One Plan, watershed meetings and Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Aid. There were numerous meetings and discussions related to participating in BWSR-funded 1W1P pilot projects in two watersheds (Blue Earth and Le Sueur) and forming a new watershed organization in a third watershed (Middle Minnesota). NRBG-funded staff met with Melissa Lewis and Chris Hughes to discuss concerns about and transitions to 1W1P. NRBG-funded and other county staff was involved with assembling documents for the County's first BWSR grants verification. MPCA intensive watershed monitoring projects were started in the Middle Minnesota River watershed and the Watonwan River watershed. The MPCA Middle Minnesota River watershed project manager is working with local county and SWCD in each county to develop the civic engagement work plan for the project. NRBG-funded staff participated in Middle Minnesota River project planning meetings throughout 2014. NRBG-funded staff began development of a plan to use Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Aid to counties. County staff also worked on non-state funded activities, including work on a wetland management plan partially funded with a Clean Water Fund grant.</p>		

## Grant Attachments

Document Name	Document Type	Description
<b>2014 Natural Resources Block Grant</b>	Grant Agreement	2014 Natural Resources Block Grant - Blue Earth County
<b>2014 Natural Resources Block Grant executed</b>	Grant Agreement	2014 Natural Resources Block Grant - Blue Earth County



## Grant All-Detail Report WCA-NRBG 2014

**Grant Title** - 2014 - Wetland Conseration Act - NRBG (Blue Earth County)

**Grant ID** - P14-5683

**Organization** - Blue Earth County

<b>Grant Awarded Amount</b>	<b>\$18,178.00</b>	<b>Grant Execution Date</b>	
<b>Required Match Amount</b>	\$18,178.00	<b>Grant End Date</b>	12/31/2016
<b>Required Match %</b>	100%	<b>Grant Day To Day Contact</b>	Julie Conrad

### Budget Summary

	Budgeted	Spent	Balance Remaining*
Total Grant Amount	\$18,178.00	\$18,178.00	\$0.00
Total Match Amount	\$18,178.00	\$18,178.00	\$0.00
Total Other Funds	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$36,356.00</b>	<b>\$36,356.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

*\*Grant balance remaining is the difference between the Awarded Amount and the Spent Amount. Other values compare budgeted and spent amounts.*

### Budget Details

Activity Name	Activity Category	Source Type	Source Description	Budgeted	Spent	Last Transaction Date	Matching Fund
WCA Administration	Administration /Coordination	Current State Grant	2014 - Wetland Conseration Act - NRBG (Blue Earth County)	\$18,178.00	\$18,178.00	12/31/2014	N
WCA Administration	Administration /Coordination	Local Fund		\$18,178.00	\$18,178.00	12/31/2014	Y

## Activity Details Summary

Activity Details	Total Action Count	Total Activity Mapped	Size / Unit
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## Indicators Summary

Indicator Name	Total Value	Unit
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## Grant Activity

Grant Activity - WCA Administration			
Description	WCA Administration - Match		
Category	ADMINISTRATION/COORDINATION		
Start Date	1-Jan-14	End Date	31-Dec-14
Rates and Hours			
Actual Results	<p>The Blue Earth County Environmental Services Department has two staff with wetland delineation certification. County staff made 700 wetland related contacts in 2014. Nine potential wetland violations were investigated, with five of those not leading to DNR enforcement action. There were 39 wetland applications, with 21 applications for boundary and 12 for exemptions. Most (9 of 12) of the exemptions were for agricultural activities. Wetland impacts totaled 534,045 square feet. County staff also worked on a wetland management plan in 2014.</p>		

## Grant Attachments

Document Name	Document Type	Description
<b>2014 Natural Resources Block Grant</b>	Grant Agreement	2014 Natural Resources Block Grant - Blue Earth County
<b>2014 Natural Resources Block Grant executed</b>	Grant Agreement	2014 Natural Resources Block Grant - Blue Earth County
<b>2014 WCA Report</b>	Grant	2014 - Wetland Conseration Act - NRBG (Blue Earth County)



# Grant All-Detail Report

## Shoreland-NRBG 2014

**Grant Title** - 2014 - Shoreland-NRBG (Blue Earth County)

**Grant ID** - P14-9718

**Organization** - Blue Earth County

<b>Grant Awarded Amount</b>	<b>\$3,243.00</b>	<b>Grant Execution Date</b>	
<b>Required Match Amount</b>	\$3,243.00	<b>Grant End Date</b>	12/31/2016
<b>Required Match %</b>	100%	<b>Grant Day To Day Contact</b>	Julie Conrad

### Budget Summary

	Budgeted	Spent	Balance Remaining*
Total Grant Amount	\$3,243.00	\$3,243.00	\$0.00
Total Match Amount	\$3,243.00	\$3,243.00	\$0.00
Total Other Funds	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,486.00</b>	<b>\$6,486.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

*\*Grant balance remaining is the difference between the Awarded Amount and the Spent Amount. Other values compare budgeted and spent amounts.*

### Budget Details

Activity Name	Activity Category	Source Type	Source Description	Budgeted	Spent	Last Transaction Date	Matching Fund
Shoreland ordinance administration	Agricultural Practices	Current State Grant	2014 - Shoreland-NRBG (Blue Earth County)	\$3,243.00	\$3,243.00	12/31/2014	N
Shoreland ordinance administration	Agricultural Practices	Local Fund		\$3,243.00	\$3,243.00	12/31/2014	Y

## Activity Details Summary

Activity Details	Total Action Count	Total Activity Mapped	Size / Unit
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## Indicators Summary

Indicator Name	Total Value	Unit
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## Grant Activity

Grant Activity - Shoreland ordinance administration			
Description	Shoreland ordinance administration		
Category	AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES		
Start Date	1-Jan-14	End Date	31-Dec-14
Rates and Hours			
Actual Results	County planning and zoning staff administer the shoreland ordinance. In 2014 the County Board of Commissioners approved one variance from the OHWL and subdivision plats creating eight new residential lots in shoreland.		

## Grant Attachments

Document Name	Document Type	Description
<b>2014 Natural Resources Block Grant</b>	Grant Agreement	2014 Natural Resources Block Grant - Blue Earth County
<b>2014 Natural Resources Block Grant executed</b>	Grant Agreement	2014 Natural Resources Block Grant - Blue Earth County



## Grant All-Detail Report Feedlot-NRBG 2014

**Grant Title** - 2014 - Feedlot Program - NRBG (Blue Earth County)

**Grant ID** - P14-0836

**Organization** - Blue Earth County

<b>Grant Awarded Amount</b>	<b>\$32,177.00</b>	<b>Grant Execution Date</b>	
<b>Required Match Amount</b>	\$22,523.90	<b>Grant End Date</b>	12/31/2016
<b>Required Match %</b>	70%	<b>Grant Day To Day Contact</b>	Julie Conrad

### Budget Summary

	Budgeted	Spent	Balance Remaining*
Total Grant Amount	\$32,177.00	\$32,177.00	\$0.00
Total Match Amount	\$22,524.00	\$22,524.00	\$0.00
Total Other Funds	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$54,701.00</b>	<b>\$54,701.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

*\*Grant balance remaining is the difference between the Awarded Amount and the Spent Amount. Other values compare budgeted and spent amounts.*

### Budget Details

Activity Name	Activity Category	Source Type	Source Description	Budgeted	Spent	Last Transaction Date	Matching Fund
Feedlot program administration	Agricultural Practices	Current State Grant	2014 - Feedlot Program - NRBG (Blue Earth County)	\$32,177.00	\$32,177.00	12/31/2014	N
Feedlot program administration	Agricultural Practices	Local Fund	Feedlot fees	\$22,524.00	\$22,524.00	12/31/2014	Y

## Activity Details Summary

Activity Details	Total Action Count	Total Activity Mapped	Size / Unit
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## Indicators Summary

Indicator Name	Total Value	Unit
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## Grant Activity

Grant Activity - Feedlot program administration			
Description	Feedlot program administration		
Category	AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES		
Start Date	1-Jan-14	End Date	31-Dec-14
Rates and Hours			
Actual Results	<p>There are 361 registered feedlots in Blue Earth County. Blue Earth County has one feedlot officer working in the Environmental Services Department. The feedlot officer completed the 2014 Annual CFO Annual Report January 30, 2015. In 2014 the feedlot officer inspections included: 1) 54 non-NPDES feedlots, 2) 6 NPDES sites, 3) 43 Level 1 land application inspections, 4) 4 Level 2 land application inspections and 5) 6 Level 3 land application inspections. There were two Letters of Warning issued by the County feedlot officer in 2014.</p> <p>The County conducted one workshop in 2014 with 41 feedlot owners attending. The County did one mailing to feedlot owners, and there was one feedlot article placed in the newspaper. The County Feedlot Officer gave presentations at two informational events.</p> <p>The County feedlot officer prepared staff reports and recommendations for eight feedlot Conditional Use Permits presented to the Planning Commission and County Board for review and approval.</p>		

## Grant Attachments

Document Name	Document Type	Description
<b>2014 CFO Annual Report</b>	Grant	2014 - Feedlot Program - NRBG (Blue Earth County)
<b>2014 CFO Report Supplement</b>	Grant	2014 - Feedlot Program - NRBG (Blue Earth County)
<b>2014 Natural Resources Block Grant</b>	Grant Agreement	2014 Natural Resources Block Grant - Blue Earth County
<b>2014 Natural Resources Block Grant executed</b>	Grant Agreement	2014 Natural Resources Block Grant - Blue Earth County



## Grant All-Detail Report SSTS-NRBG 2014

**Grant Title** - 2014 - Septic Treatment Systems - NRBG (Blue Earth County)

**Grant ID** - P14-8670

**Organization** - Blue Earth County

<b>Grant Awarded Amount</b>	<b>\$18,600.00</b>	<b>Grant Execution Date</b>	
<b>Required Match Amount</b>	\$0.00	<b>Grant End Date</b>	12/31/2016
<b>Required Match %</b>	0%	<b>Grant Day To Day Contact</b>	Julie Conrad

### Budget Summary

	Budgeted	Spent	Balance Remaining*
Total Grant Amount	\$18,600.00	\$18,600.00	\$0.00
Total Match Amount			\$0.00
Total Other Funds	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$18,600.00</b>	<b>\$18,600.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

*\*Grant balance remaining is the difference between the Awarded Amount and the Spent Amount. Other values compare budgeted and spent amounts.*

### Budget Details

Activity Name	Activity Category	Source Type	Source Description	Budgeted	Spent	Last Transaction Date	Matching Fund
SSTS program administration	Administration /Coordination	Current State Grant	2014 - Septic Treatment Systems - NRBG (Blue Earth County)	\$18,600.00	\$18,600.00	12/31/2014	N

## Activity Details Summary

Activity Details	Total Action Count	Total Activity Mapped	Size / Unit
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## Indicators Summary

Indicator Name	Total Value	Unit
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## Grant Activity

Grant Activity - SSTS program administration			
Description	SSTS program administration		
Category	ADMINISTRATION/COORDINATION		
Start Date	1-Jan-14	End Date	31-Dec-14
Rates and Hours			
Actual Results	<p>The Blue Earth County Environmental Services Department issued 117 SSTS construction and repair permits in 2014. Of those 93 (79%) were replacement SSTS for existing dwellings and other establishments. As a result of County ordinance compliance triggers for construction permits and property transfers, 164 compliance inspections were conducted in 2014. In addition to SSTS construction, 150 parcels with noncompliant SSTS were connected to publicly-owned treatment works in 2014. County staff completed and submitted the 2014 annual report to the MPCA.</p>		

## Grant Attachments

Document Name	Document Type	Description
<b>2014 Natural Resources Block Grant</b>	Grant Agreement	2014 Natural Resources Block Grant - Blue Earth County
<b>2014 Natural Resources Block Grant executed</b>	Grant Agreement	2014 Natural Resources Block Grant - Blue Earth County