Residents of Nobles, Jackson, Murray, and Cottonwood Counties are encouraged to collaborate with the Heron Lake Watershed District (HLWD) as they review how water resources are managed. A meeting will be held to gather public input and concerns about water-related issues on April 7, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. at the Heron Lake Community Center. Refreshments will be served.

Possible areas of interest include water quality and quantity, wetlands management, recreational use of lakes and rivers, stormwater management, drainage ditches, and other topics. The information gathered will be considered in the revision of the HLWD Watershed Management Plan (Plan). Public input on all aspects of water management is invaluable in ensuring that the management plan genuinely reflects local needs and concerns, not just the ideas of experts.

The Plan was originally written in 1972 and is currently in the beginning stages of its second revision. The first update of the Plan was completed in 2001.

Projects undertaken through past management plans include: 23.94 acres of critical area plantings, 10 wildlife ponds/sedimentation basins, 120.59 acres of grassed waterways, 49 terraces, 336.38 acres of wetland restoration, 5 rain gardens, incentives for 45 septic system replacement projects, 4,960.64 acres of filter strips, and semi-annual education opportunities, as well as monthly informational newsletters.

What is a Watershed Management Plan?

A watershed management plan addresses all aspects of surface and groundwater management, including water quality and quantity, wetlands management, recreational use of lakes and rivers, stormwater management, drainage ditches, and other issues. These plans are based on local priorities and combine landowner, conservationist, and government officials' input.

Watershed management plans focus on priority concerns, defined goals and objectives, and measurable outcomes. Once complete, the watershed management plan will be used as a tool to focus the conservation efforts within the HLWD to ensure all of our resources are being used in the most efficient and effective manner to improve the water quality and wildlife habitat.

The success of local watershed management plans can largely be attributed to the input of local citizens identifying water and related resource management needs and mapping out a course of action to address those needs. Management plans reflect the concerns of those who will be affected the most: you and your neighbors.

New RIM-WRP Sign-Up Announced

The Reinvest In Minnesota – Wetland Reserve Program (RIM-WRP) Partnership restores wetlands and grasslands through permanent conservation easements on privately owned lands. RIM-WRP combines the RIM program, administered by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, with the WRP, administered by the US Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service. The RIM-WRP partnership is implemented by local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD).

This is a permanent easement program that includes a one-time payment for enrolled acres. Current rates range from $4,500 to $6,000 per acre. Prices are determined by township according to township average land values. Applications are scored and ranked with priority given to areas of Minnesota that have experienced the greatest wetland losses. Sign-up for this program started March 1, 2011 and will end May 1, 2011.

For more information, please contact your county’s SWCD office.
Heron Lake Watershed District
PO Box 345
Heron Lake, MN 56137

What’s Happening?

April 7, 2011
HLWD Watershed Management Plan Meeting
7:00 p.m. at the Heron Lake Community Center

April 19, 2011
HLWD board meeting
7:00 p.m. at the HLWD office

Note that the HLWD board meeting dates and times are tentative. Please contact the HLWD office for the exact date and time.

Funding for this newsletter is provided by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency through a Clean Water Partnership grant. Please contact us with your questions or concerns! Telephone 507-793-2462; Email: hlwd@roundlk.net