

What is the CWP?

The Crystal Loon Mills Clean Water Partnership (CWP) is a locally managed project that addresses water quality issues in Crystal, Loon, and Mills Lakes. Priority issues include reducing phosphorus, increasing water transparency, decreasing harmful algal bloom intensity and frequency and educating citizens on lake-related environmental concerns.

The goal of the implementation project is to install Best Management Practices (BMPs) in the watershed to improve water quality. Targeted BMPs include buffer strips, open tile inlet conversion, nutrient management, wetland restorations, lake-shore restorations, and rain gardens.

The CWP will be providing financial assistance opportunities for rural, urban, and lakeshore landowners to reduce sources of nutrients and sediment from reaching the lakes. Crystal Loon Mills CWP will be working in cooperation with project sponsors and partners to provide additional incentives for landowners who participate in conservation programs to improve water quality in County Ditch 56 and Crystal, Loon, and Mills Lakes.



Crystal Lake, June 2007, near outlet to Minneopa Creek. Photo by Pat Baskfield

*“Water is the driver of Nature.”
Leonardo da Vinci*

Crystal Loon Mills Clean Water Partnership
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CRYSTAL LOON MILLS CLEAN WATER PARTNERSHIP

Your partners for water quality improvement
in the Crystal Lake Watershed

Cost Share Opportunities for Agricultural Landowners and Operators



County Ditch 56, June 2007. Photo by WRC



BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR LANDOWNERS

Agricultural Producers & Landowners

Agricultural BMPs focus on reducing the amount of phosphorus and sediment reaching tiles and waterways.

BMPs for agricultural producers and landowners include **converting open tile inlets, installing vegetative buffers and grassed waterways, wetland restorations, terraces, water and sediment control basins, and nutrient management planning.**



Drainage ditch with grass filter strip. Photo by NRCS

Ag BMPs are designed to improve water quality by reducing erosion and runoff and trapping nutrients and chemicals. They can also enhance wildlife habitat and promote groundwater recharge.

The CWP provides support for agricultural producers and landowners as a sponsor for low or no-cost water quality related educational events and by providing assistance and resources for landowners interested in installing water quality BMPs. **Additional financial incentives are also available through the CWP** for participants in conservation programs with eligible water quality benefits—such as EQIP, CRP, and SWCD state cost-share.

Cost-Share Incentives

The Clean Water Partnership will be providing cost-share and bonus financial incentives for landowners and operators who participate in best management practices that have a positive impact on water quality.

Nutrient Management Incentives:

- 75% cost-share on soil testing (up to 2 1/2 acre grid sample at \$9/ac);
- 75% cost-share to switch from conventional broadcast application of nutrients to custom variable rate application (based on soil test results and subject to program qualifications)
- Low interest Ag BMP loans available on a competitive basis through Blue Earth County SWCD for purchase of starter fertilizer equipment (Financing available for up to 75% of total cost, 3.5% interest rate, must be water quality related)

Alternate Tile Intakes w/Associated Grass Buffer:

- 75% cost-share on installation of inlets (replacement of conventional inlet with rock-tile or subsurface pattern tile inlet)
- 75% cost-share on seeding grass buffer
- One time up-front bonus payments: alternative intake + buffer (minimum 30' from intake on all sides) = \$400; current intake + buffer only (minimum 60' from intake on all sides) = \$200

Wetland Restorations, Buffer Strips, Grassed Waterways, Terraces and Water & Sediment Control Basins

- Additional cost-share will be offered to supplement existing conservation programs to cover 75% of practice installation
- One time up-front bonus incentives of \$20/acre/yr

Who to Contact with Questions

For general questions about the CWP and how to get involved contact:

Sarah Duda, CWP Coordinator
Water Resources Center (507) 389-2299

For questions with state cost-share and Ag BMP loans contact:

Jerad Bach, District Manager
Blue Earth County SWCD (507) 345-4744

For questions about EQIP and Nutrient Management Initiative contact:

Ryan Braulick, District Conservationist
NRCS (507) 345- 7418

For information on CRP or general Farm Bill questions contact:

Blue Earth County FSA Office
(507) 345-474

For information on soil testing or custom rate nutrient application contact:

Tony Jacobs, Field Marketer
Crystal Valley Co-Op (507) 726-2057

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