



### Evaluating Soil Loss through Tile Systems

A recent post at [www.agwaterexchange.com](http://www.agwaterexchange.com) looks at sediment conveyed by tile systems. While critics usually lumps all forms of agricultural drainage into one category, we looked at data collected at Discovery Farms sites to see if there are differences between different tile types. As many clay and cement tile systems age, they are often replaced with plastic. This data set shows much smaller sediment delivery via plastic tile as compared to clay or cement tile, especially when combined with open tile intakes or where a tile collapse has occurred. This evaluation of the data did not look at nitrates.

Find the blog post here: <http://agwaterexchange.com/2016/10/12/soil-loss-in-tile-drainage-systems/>. To receive an email when new articles are posted, be sure to enter your email address and click “subscribe” near the bottom of the home page.

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### Farmers Lead Watershed Discussion

During the past two years, a group of farmers in the Seven Mile Creek (7MC) watershed in the St. Peter area has worked to provided direction for implementing conservation projects. In addition, and perhaps just as importantly, they have actively shared their experience with non-farmer stakeholders.

A series of meetings organized by MAWRC Watershed Education Specialist, Jeremy Geske, and supported by Great River Greening enabled the group of more than 20 farmers to help identify conservation projects appropriate for the watershed. These farmer-led discussions have provided direction for implementing conservation projects and securing grant funding for those projects.

Geske and 7MC farmer leaders also participated in a watershed stakeholder meeting planning committee, and were instrumental in shaping the discussion. Those farmer leaders recruited an additional 20 farmers from the watershed to participate in a public stakeholder discussion, at which farmers were more than one-third of the total number of stakeholders participating. Thanks to these farmers, and a skilled moderator, the tone of the entire meeting remained positive and productive without the finger pointing that generally occurs at public stakeholder meetings.

This experience provides a template for successful farmer-led watershed discussions that can be replicated in other small watersheds across Minnesota.

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### Land Use Competition Continues

Data from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) show the loss of one million acres of cropland in the last decade. The same report shows an increase of more than 260,000 in state and federally controlled land for wildlife habitat during the same period.

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## Conservation Tillage Conference Set for December 13-14

Make plans to attend the 11th Conservation Tillage Conference on December 13-14, 2016 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Fargo. The CTC provides an opportunity to network and learn more about successfully reducing tillage and planting cover crops to improve soil health.

A full range of topics related to conservation tillage will be presented by several top-rated specialists from across the Corn Belt. The conference will also feature a Farmer Panel which will explore their tillage experiences, a favorite of past participants.

The conference is hosted by University of Minnesota and North Dakota State University Extension. For more information and to register, go to [https://www.ndsu.edu/soilhealth/?page\\_id=2279](https://www.ndsu.edu/soilhealth/?page_id=2279) or [www.DigtheCTC.com](http://www.DigtheCTC.com).

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## Nutrient Management Conferences scheduled for February 2017

The ninth annual Nutrient Management Conference will be held February 7, 2017 at the River's Edge Conference Center in St. Cloud.

The third annual Nitrogen: Minnesota's Grand Challenge and Compelling Opportunity Conference will be held on February 16, 2017 at the Verizon Wireless Center in Mankato.

As in previous years, attendees will hear the latest in nutrient research from Minnesota and across the country. Both events are organized by a team consisting of the MAWRC, U of M Extension and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. The MDA is also the primary sponsor of both events.

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## Clean Water Council Makes Budget/Policy Recommendations

The Clean Water Council, a 28-member body that makes recommendations to the legislature on appropriation of the Clean Water Fund, that portion of the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment to the Constitution passed in 2008. One-third of the funds collected through the state sales tax are directed toward the Clean Water Fund. For the 2018-2019 biennium, \$220 million is recommended for allocation by the Council.

Minnesota farm organizations are represented on the Council by Bob Hoefert and Warren Formo. To view the full recommendation, go to <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/lr-cwc-1sy16.pdf>.

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The MAWRC is a non-profit research and education corporation comprised of 24 agricultural organizations working together to address water issues. For more information, go to [www.mawrc.org](http://www.mawrc.org).

