



LAKE-FRIENDLY FARM PROGRAM

The Lake Friendly Farm Program was created by the Farmer-Led Council to recognize farmers that are doing an outstanding job of managing their farms in a way that protects the water resources in the Prior Lake Spring Lake Watershed District. The program identifies and publicly recognizes existing best management practices in the watershed and assists farmers in identifying potential areas for improvement to help protect our water resources.

Lake Water Quality Connection

Spring Lake and Upper Prior Lake have been identified on Minnesota's list of impaired waters due to an overabundance of nutrients, particularly phosphorus. Elevated nutrients cause excessive algal growth which negatively affects water quality, fish

habitat and recreational enjoyment of these and other valued water resources.

The Lake-Friendly Farm Program seeks to promote agricultural best management practices through recognition of those farms that, through good management, help to protect these water resources within the watershed.

Program Goals

- 1) Publicly recognize and reward farmers who do an outstanding job of managing their farms in an economically and environmentally sound way that protects and improves water resources within the Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District.
- 2) Publicize and promote agricultural best management practices that help improve water quality while maintaining and improving agricultural viability of local farms.
- 3) Increase public awareness of farmers' voluntary contributions to resource protection.
- 4) Create local partnerships to identify new projects and financial resource opportunities for the Lake-Friendly Farm Program and the Farmer-led Council.



If you have any questions about the Farmer-Led Council, or the Lake-Friendly Farm Program, please contact:

Diann Korbel

SCOTT SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
(952) 492-5416 | dkorbel@co.scott.mn.us

PRIOR LAKE - SPRING LAKE
WATERSHED DISTRICT



PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:

Certification Process Overview

The SWCD will work one on one with farmers to conduct a complete field inventory and assessment of current management practices. The results of this inventory and assessment will be used to determine whether performance standards for certification are being met, and if not what additional measures or actions are required. The SWCD will use a database to track and report assessment results.

After completing the assessment, and if they wish to pursue certification, the SWCD will work with the farmer to prepare a formal Conservation Plan. The Conservation Plan, which includes maps, will identify any practices and activities that may be required to be implemented and maintained for certification. This includes any new practices the farmer may need to adopt in addition to practices they already use.

To become certified, the farmer must sign a Conservation Plan Agreement. By signing this, they agree to install, operate and maintain the conservation practices identified in the Plan. The SWCD will conduct regular status reviews to ensure Plans are being implemented. Farmers will annually self-certify.

The farmer may certify any or all farms he/she operates. The smallest unit of land that can be certified is a tax parcel. Any contiguous parcels in operation must be certified at the same time.

The SWCD will provide technical and cost share assistance to assist farmers with implementation of practices when needed and available.

Contingent certification may be provided in cases where the farmer has agreed to implement the requirements of certification, but has not yet had the opportunity to do so due to such reasons as seasonal timing or awaiting funding.

SOIL EROSION

- Soil loss on cropland to be maintained at "T" or less (3-5 Tons/acre/year). T value is the maximum average soil loss tolerance per specific soil.
- Soil loss on cropland within 300' of a water course maintained at 2 Tons/acre/year or less
- No ephemeral gully erosion

EXISTING LAWS

- No outstanding violations of existing laws including:
 - ◊ Wetland
 - ◊ Feedlot
 - ◊ Buffers
 - ◊ Septic systems

TILE INLETS

- Inlets must be treated
- Examples of acceptable treatment:
 - ◊ Rock inlets
 - ◊ Water quality inlets

MANURE SPREADING

- No spreading manure within 25' of a water body or tile inlet
- No spreading manure within 300' of a water body or tile inlet without incorporation within 24 hours.
- Distances may be reduced if shown on plan map

BUFFERS

- Must have 50' average with a 30' minimum on public waters and 16½' minimum on public ditches
- Filter strips on other water course, as adopted by the Watershed District
- Alternative practices may be used where filters are not practical.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

- Grid soil sampling on max 4-year interval
- Phosphorus reduction strategy where soil test P is greater than 25 ppm for non-manured fields and 50ppm for manured fields
- Strategy to be reviewed and approved by SWCD



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Benefits of Becoming a Lake Friendly Farm:

- Provides public recognition of farmers for implementing and maintaining good water quality practices.
- Improves water quality in streams while maintaining productive farmland.
- Promotes more efficient use of fertilizers and pesticides, benefiting all.
- Provides a healthier soil structure.
- Creates an avenue for increased local marketing strategies with Lake-Friendly Farm label.
- Those who become certified may receive:
 - Lake-Friendly Farm sign for display
 - Lake-Friendly Farm Certificate
 - Announcement in local newspapers
 - Recognition at SWCD & PLSLWD events
 - \$5 per acre certification incentive payment, up to \$1,000 per farming operation

How to Participate:

To participate, farms voluntarily send an application to the Scott Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) which can be mailed to the SWCD office or emailed to dkorbel@co.scott.mn.us. Once an application has been received, a conservation planner will schedule a site visit with the land owner or producer. The farm is then evaluated in six main areas:

- Soil Erosion
- Compliance with Existing Laws
- Tile Inlet Protection
- Manure Spreading
- Riparian Buffers and Filter Strips
- Nutrient Management

Certification is given by Scott SWCD with approval by the Farmer-led Council. If the property does not meet the certification criteria, a conservation planner will work with the farmer and/or landowner to develop and implement a plan to become certified as a Lake-Friendly Farm.

The Lake-Friendly Farm Certification is attached to the property/farming operation being certified, not the person. Once certified, if farm management practices are altered in a way that would affect the outcome of the certification, the operation will need to be reevaluated for the program.



Please contact Diann Korbel at Scott SWCD for more information at (952) 492-5416 or dkorbel@co.scott.mn.us.