

# 2014 Drainage Water Management Initiative



**PARTNERSHIP EFFORT WITH AGRICULTURE  
AND MINNESOTA PRODUCERS**

# Background



Ag is continually being scrutinized for the increase in drainage activities across the State. Some of the concerns are not founded based on science and some are science based:

- **What we have science on:** new cropland fields being tiled will increase the release of nitrogen and phosphorous to surface waters;
- New tile water will increase surface water volumes and speed (discharge rates);
- DWM will/can mediate these concerns when part of a conservation system;
- Drainage tile does reduce surface runoff volumes thus potentially reducing soil erosion rates

# Background



Ag is continually being scrutinized for the increase in drainage activities across the State. Some of the concerns are not founded based on science and some are science based:

- **Where science is lacking**: impacts of tiling on flooding;
- Tiling is primary force responsible for the “massive amounts of sediment heading to the Gulf” “Farm Drainage

Choking Lake Pepin” StarTribune article

# Hypothesis



**A well designed initiative, designed by and built with the ag partnership, offering to partner with other conservation groups, will accelerate the achievement of resource conservation goals through voluntary adoption of conservation measures.**

# Approach



The initiative should take a four step approach to be successful:

- Design
- Execution
- Results
- Future Path

# Design



## Elements of Design include:

- Ag support for moving forward in 2014 and incorporating the initiative into MAWQCP in 2013 pilots
- Goals
- Scientific or technical basis...need monitoring (Discovery Farms? ARS partnership?)
- Geographic targeting—early focus on MAWQCP Pilot Watersheds
- Conservation system targeting (Define all options/alternatives for participants/producers)
- Partnerships and leveraging ---show us the \$\$\$ or in-kind support
- Performance outcomes
- Ag driving the “bus”...advisory committee???

# Execution



- **Voluntary, incentive based only**
- MAWQCP pilots only or ???
- Clearly defined conservation systems (practices) that use the “best available science”
- Conservation Partner engagement and contributions
- Ag leadership role (Advisory committee??)

# Results



- Measuring the outcomes that are being achieved?
- How do we tell the story best of the results achieved?
- Measuring/reporting what producers have done or will do that choose not to participate formally in the initiative.
- Advisory Committee releases reports?
- Measuring the stakeholder satisfaction with the initiative?

# Conservation Systems 2014 DWM Initiative



## Focusing conservation practices on tile outlets:

- Saturated Buffers
- Bioreactors
- Drainage Water Management
  - CAP 130 – DWM Plans
  - 587- Structure for Water Control (pump);
  - 554- Drainage Water Management
- Constructed Wetlands - - NRCS Conservation Practice 656
- Conservation Systems Approach
  - Conservation Crop Rotation
  - Cover Crop
  - No Till, Mulch Till, Mulching
  - Nutrient Management (split N applications, basal stock tests, N inhibitors, etc.)
  - Pest Management

# Stakeholder Engagement



## Interested Conservation Partners:

- Prinsco Inc.
- EDF (Environmental Defense Fund)
- Sand County Foundation
- The Nature Conservancy
- State Agencies?
- Agricultural Organizations?

# Schedule/Methods



- **Held initial and very informal discussions with conservation groups**
- **Today's meeting –**
  - **Flesh out methodology, ag support, State agency support**
  - **“Agreed to” next steps....time for folks to make a decision...date?**
    - ✦ **Advisory Committee....ag leadership**
    - ✦ **Contact with conservation groups...next meeting??, etc.....**

# Resources/Questions



- **2013 MAWQCP – EQIP funds**
- **FSA-CRP- CP-39 Constructed Wetland Practice**
- **BWSR-RIM opportunities for constructed wetlands?**
- **Other State funding for 2013?...2014?**
- **Conservation Partnership funds?**
- **SWCD roles?**
- **Conservation Office/TSP training???**

Q & A



**Thank you.....**