

Crow Wing County Soil & Water Conservation District Board Member Highlight

By Bethany Chaplin, MN GreenCorps Member Serving with Crow Wing Soil & Water Conservation District

The Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) are political subdivisions of the State MN Statutes Chapter 103c. Supervisors are elected by the citizens of their county as part of the general elections. Supervisors help to form policy and long-term objectives for their district and work with the SWCD staff to see that policies and plans are implemented. In 1956, Crow Wing SWCD was formed to provide local leadership and implement voluntary soil and water conservation projects through programs and partnerships to Crow Wing County (CWC) and adjacent areas.

Who is your elected Crow Wing County Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisor?

The Supervisors include Leonard Koering, Diane Jacobson, Roger Waytashek, JoAnn Weaver, and Jim Chamberlin.

Bethany Chaplin interviewed Roger Waytashek from District 3 to learn about his involvement on the SWCD Board.

Interview Questions:

1. Why were you interested in being on the SWCD Board?

Rodger has always enjoyed being out in nature. He wants to keep it pristine for future generations.

2. What are your top three items of focus?

His top three items of focus include clean drinking water, clean watersheds, and soil health. He wants to improve the quality of these resources.

3. Please explain your background and past experiences that have influenced your work for the Soil and Water.

Rodger grew up on a farm. He helped take care of cows, chickens, and crops.

4. What are the top issues facing your district in terms of land management and conservation?

The main concern facing District 3 is soil erosion. District 3 has a lot of residential lots that use non-native lawn grass instead of native plants. Native plants have deeper roots which help stabilize soil to prevent/reduce soil erosion.

5. What is your favorite project implemented in your district?

His favorite projects include Pine River Fish Passage. The five rock riffle structures replaced a traditional dam. The passage added 40,000 square feet of key spawning habitat for walleye, smallmouth bass, shorthead, greater redhorse, and several minnow species plus restored access to upstream lake and stream habitats. Click on the link to watch the [Pine River Fish Passage Project](#) YouTube video.

SWCD Supervisor District Map



6. What impresses you most about the job the current board is doing and what do you think needs improving?

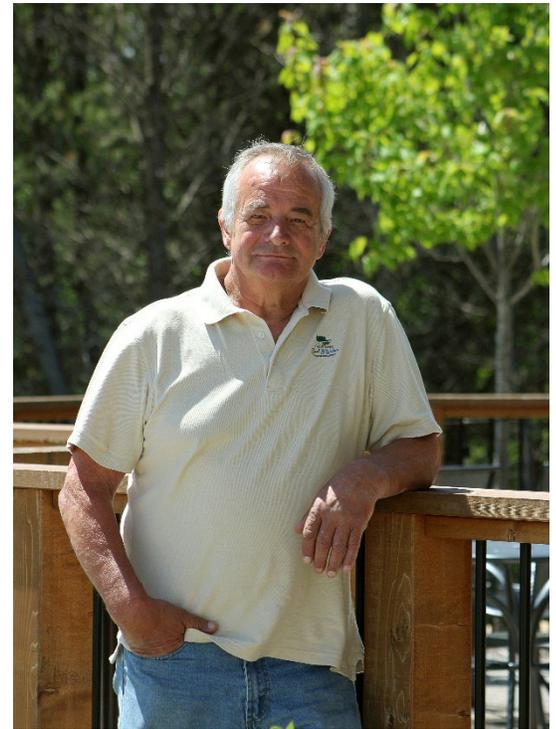
The current board is doing a very good job getting projects in the ground. They have made a big impact in CWC.

7. How long have you been a board member at CW SWCD?

Rodger has been serving on the SWCD Board for 15 years!

8. What does CW SWCD do for the community?

They help give citizens conservation ideas in the community. This includes education and information on Forest Stewardship Plans and Conservation Easements. Rodger has participated in the Healthy Waters Protection, Pine River Easement Program.



We are very lucky to have Rodger on our SWCD Board. He brings lots of knowledge and experiences to our discussions and future projects. Thank you, Rodger, for all your years of service! Our next article will feature Diane Jacobson.

Link:

[Pine River Fish Passage Project](#)
[What Programs are Available?](#)

Please share, watch, subscribe, and comment on Crow Wing SWCD YouTube channel
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5RYE8QHngWrIxIJpa1fMSg>

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