

Two Rivers Watershed District In Roseau, Kittson, & Marshall Counties



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www.TwoRiversWD.com

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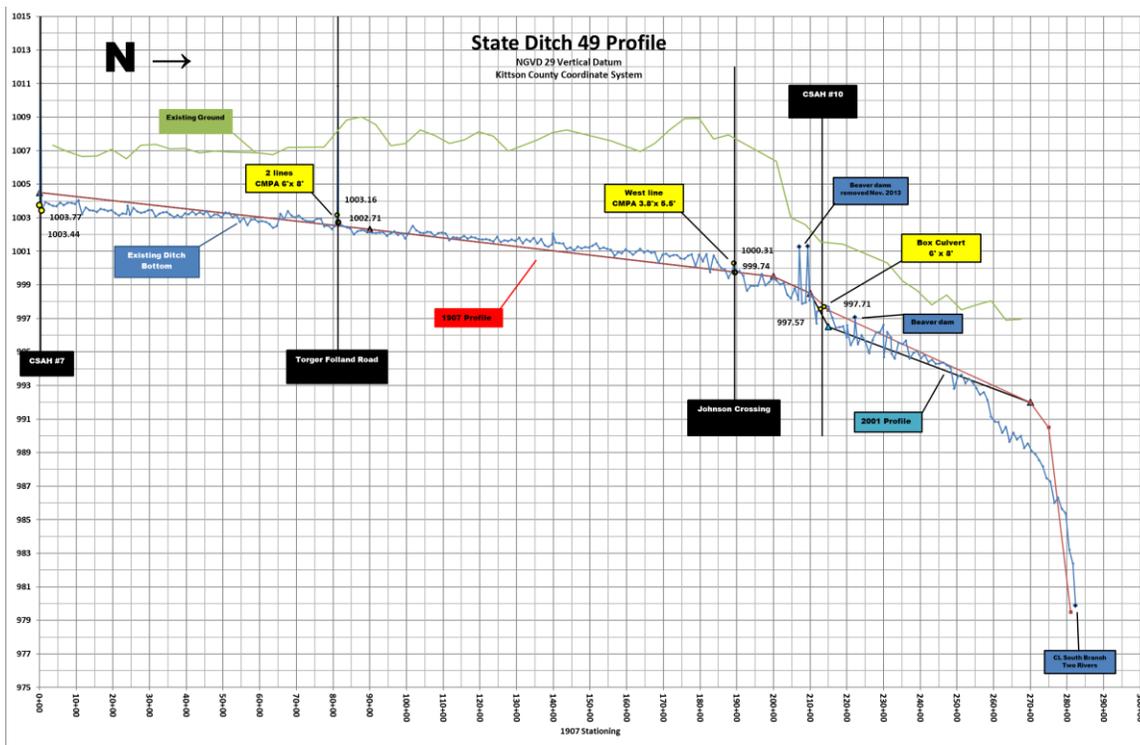
NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Dan Money, District Administrator

Ditching and Drainage Law in NW Minnesota

Drainage is one very important aspect for crop production in northwest Minnesota. It is well documented that too much standing water after a substantial rainfall for too long of a period will cause stress to crops and in severe cases will cause crop loss. Because of this, ditching can be an important tool to remove water off of cropland in a timely manner and convey it to an adequate coulee or river system (outlet). When designing and permitting ditches, the Two Rivers Watershed District advocates an “**adequate and equitable**” approach. This considers that ditches must be adequately sized to be able to drain cropland in a timely manner. However, drainage must also be equitably distributed so that flooding is not reduced in one area but consequently increased in others.

Ditches in our area can be classified into 3 categories – private ditches, road ditches, and legal ditches. Private ditches are self-explanatory. They are paid for and constructed by individuals or groups of individuals, and the long term maintenance is up to the individual. Road ditches often serve as outlets for field and private ditches. They are constructed and paid for by road authorities, however the maintenance & associated costs usually fall to private individuals. Legal ditches are governed by the Minnesota Drainage Law, MN Statute 103E, which has been around since the early 1900’s. These must be petitioned by a group of landowners, and are designed, constructed and maintained either by a County or by a Watershed District. These legal ditches are identified with a name and number, such as “County Ditch #7, State Ditch #49, or Judicial Ditch #10.

While private ditches and road ditches are not required to be maintained, legal ditches by law must be maintained. Private ditches and road ditches do not necessarily have an entity that is responsible for maintaining them, but legal ditches by law must be maintained. Also, private ditches and road ditches do not have a dedicated fund to pay for maintenance, however every legal ditch, by law, has a maintenance fund to provide for debris and sediment removal and for minor repairs. The map below shows the legal ditches within the Two Rivers Watershed District and who is responsible for their maintenance.



Funding for maintenance is obtained by a tax that is levied annually upon the lands that are in the ‘benefitted area’ of the ditch. This in general can be described as all of the lands that drain to a ditch system, and was determined by appraisers at the time that the ditch was established. The Ditch authority determines the levy amount from year to year, based upon maintenance needs.

Questions regarding legal ditches can be directed to our office to the County boards of Kittson, Roseau, or Marshall County (depending on the location of the ditch). More information can also be found on our website, www.tworiverswd.com.

TRWD Welcomes New Board Member

Bruce Anderson from rural Greenbush was recently appointed by Roseau County to serve a 3 year term on the Board of Managers of the Two Rivers Watershed District. He officially began his term on November 1, 2017. He replaces Jim Kukowski, who served on the Board the past 14 years from November 1, 2003 through October 31, 2017.

The 7 member Board is made up of 5 members from Kittson County and 2 members from Roseau County, all appointed by their respective County Boards. Anderson will represent a roughly 300 square mile area of the Two Rivers Watershed District within Roseau County lying south of MN Highway 11. It includes the Cities of Greenbush, Badger, and Strathcona. Drainage systems in this area are State Ditch 90, State Ditch 91, Roseau County Ditch 4, Roseau County Ditch 5, and Roseau County Ditch 13. It also includes the Nereson Impoundment and the Ross #7 Impoundment.

The Two Rivers Watershed District is a local unit of government, and focuses on water issues relating to drainage, flood control, and water quality. It was established in October 1957, and was the second watershed district in the state to be organized.

The District would like to thank Jim Kukowski for his years of service on the Board, and welcomes Bruce Anderson.