



CRWD finishes first major flood project

Work creates structure to hold stormwater in ravine along Cedar River north of Austin

AUSTIN, Minn. – Wednesday, Jan. 8, 2013 – Work on the Cedar River Watershed District’s first major flood-control project recently was completed in an effort to hold back stormwater in a northern Mower County ravine.

CRWD has constructed several water-quality projects through the use of state Clean Water Legacy funding but its recent construction on the Ken Trom property along the Cedar River in Lansing Township was the district’s first impoundment project focused on flood-damage reduction, said Justin Hanson, CRWD resource specialist.

With the project, an estimated four tons of sediment and four tons of phosphorus will be prevented from entering the Cedar River every year, Hanson said.

“The CRWD board and staff are really excited to get this first flood-control project completed,” Hanson said. “This should be a great jumping off point for future, similar projects in the Cedar River Watershed.”

Located northeast of the village of Lansing, the project utilized natural land topography to create a system that will dam up water during a rain event and hold it there in a ravine on the Trom property. The impoundment slows stormwater flows to the Cedar River and provides a holding area for any upstream runoff.

Ponds created by the project are designed to store stormwater and allow excess dirt and agricultural runoff to settle out in the pond and be treated before being released to the Cedar River, Hanson said.

“This is a great example of how projects can be implemented into the agricultural landscape without taking any land out of production,” he said.

CRWD targets projects that provide multiple benefits and leverage outside funding, and the Trom project fit that profile, Hanson added.

At a cost of \$130,000 overall, the project involved \$97,500 in state funding along with \$32,500 from the CRWD.

CRWD staff started work this past spring by surveying and designing the area followed by engineering this summer. During this time, CRWD completed public comment hearings and secured easements from the Troms, who originally had been approached by CRWD staff about the idea for a ravine project.

Trom said he initially tried to think of reasons why he wouldn’t want to do the project but couldn’t think of any. There was nothing for him to lose by participating, he said.

“In 1964, we were going to do a fish pond there, but we were concerned about the runoff and how that might affect the fish,” Trom said. “But I always kept that in the back of my mind.”

CRWD hopes to construct similar ravine projects along the Cedar River in 2014. A grant application has been submitted to address an additional four priority ravine areas in the Cedar River Watershed. CRWD staff will learn later this month whether funds have been awarded for those proposed projects.

About the Cedar River Watershed District

In April 2007, state and local officials formed the CRWD in response to the Cedar River Watershed’s top, worst-known floods occurring in 2000 and 2004. The CRWD’s top priorities are aimed at reducing flooding and improving water quality within the Cedar River Watershed.

Who: Cedar River Watershed District, State of Minnesota and landowner Ken Trom.

What: Partnered to construct the CRWD’s first flood-control structure.

Where: Northeast from the village of Lansing along the Cedar River.

When: Work has been ongoing since spring; construction ended recently.

Why: Site showed great ability to hold back stormwater in a ravine to reduce the level of flooding downstream on the Cedar River.

CONTACTS

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