Nick and Heather Vinje, along with sons, Jack and Owen, of Hunter, ND, were selected as the District’s 2014 Achievement Winner. The Vinje family farms about 1700 acres and were selected for their extensive use of No-Till practices and incorporating Cover Crops into their farming practices using the farm programs EQIP and CSP. They use cover crops in the fall to enrich soil nutrients and biological activity. In November, the Vinje family will be honored at the North Dakota Association of Soil Conservation Districts’ annual banquet in Bismarck. They will receive an aerial photograph of their farmstead and a copy of that photograph will be placed in the NDASCD’s traveling display.

Order your 2015 Handplants

Now is the time to start planning your tree planting project for the spring of 2015. The District has made its initial order from the nursery. If you need assistance in selecting a species, feel free to call the office or you may go to the District’s Online Tree Store; www.casscd.org/Store. On the store’s website, each species the District sells is represented with a picture and description.

Well Sealing Cost-Share Program

I betcha didn’t know you could get cost-share for that old well that has been leaking on the ol’ north 40. It is important to seal abandoned wells as they could cause contamination of the ground water. Several Cass County residents have been able to take advantage of the well sealing cost-share program the District provides. The District can provide up to 75%, with maximum cost-share of $800.00, towards the expense of capping a well. Wayne coordinates the well sealing program and will assist with the necessary paperwork.
Outdoor Heritage Fund

The Outdoor Heritage Tree Planting Assistance Program will provide grant awards to landowners to conserve, protect, and enhance natural resources. Our office can provide technical assistance in designing a tree planting that will address conservation concerns, such as: erosion, water, farmstead and wildlife diversity. Practices that are eligible for cost-share include the tree planting design, machine planting, fabric installation, and tree tubes. A landowner is eligible to receive a maximum grant award of $25,000.00. Grant funds will be reimbursed to an eligible vendor at a cost-share rate of 60% of the total project cost. The landowner covers the remaining 40%.

NRCS Program Updates:

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) – helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resources concerns. Participants earn CSP payments for conservation performance that is established throughout their operation. Accepting Applications Continuously. No Deadline at this time.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers in order to address specific natural resource concerns on their land or operation. Common Practices include: Cover Crops, Reduced Tillage Operations, Nutrient and Pest Management, Windbreak Renovation and Establishment, Grazing Practices and Water Developments and much more.

Prairie Pothole Wetland and Grassland Retention Program (PPWGRP) – is protecting wetlands and grasslands in the Prairie Pothole Region by restoring, utilizing and improving the function of wetlands and grasslands. Restore marginally productive croplands to grasslands and wetlands. Utilize expired CRP for grass-based agriculture. Improve the management to improve resource concerns for working lands or wildlife.

Honey Bee Pollinator Effort (HBPE) – Effort to specifically improve Pollinator Habitat. Practices include Pollinator field borders, Diverse Cover Crops, Pest management Techniques, Conservation Crop Rotations (Canola, Sunflower), Prescribed Grazing and Managed Haying Techniques.

EQIP Organic Initiative – Financial and Technical Assistance to implement conservation practices and addressing resource concerns on organic, transitioning to organic, and exempt from certification operations.

EQIP High Tunnel Initiative – Financial and Technical Assistance to assist producers to extend the growing season for high value crops in an environmentally safe manner. The core practice is a Seasonal High Tunnel.

EQIP On-Farm Energy Initiative – identify ways to conserve energy on the farm through Agricultural Energy Management Plans (AgEMP) for headquarters and/or for landscape. Also provides financial and technical Assistance to help producer implement practices recommended by these plans.

All EQIP Initiatives, PPWGRP, and HBPE applications are due November 14, 2014 to meet this batching period.

If you are interested in finding out more information on programs and how they may be utilized in your operation contact the NRCS Field Office.
**Eco-Ed** at Brewer Lake is an outdoor educational classroom. The weather was great and the District enjoyed having all the students come out for a hands-on day of learning. Students from Maple Valley and Oak Grove Lutheran School, Fargo, traveled between the five stations throughout the day: Woodlands, Prairie, Soils, Wetlands and Water Quality. Samantha Brunner, ND State Bee Inspector, gave the large-group presentation on bees in North Dakota.

**Scholarship Program: Application due January 12, 2015**

$1000.00 scholarship available for high school students going into **Natural Resource Management**!!

The District is excited to be able to offer this scholarship as a way to encourage students to consider a Natural Resource Management career.

CCSCD is accepting scholarship applications until January 12, 2015. The District is encouraging high school seniors from Cass County, ND to apply for the scholarship if they plan to attend a ND accredited college in the fall of 2015. The scholarship is intended for students going into Natural Resource Management, Conservation or other related fields of study.

Students can pick up an application from their school counselor or contact amy.cole@nd.nacdnet.net for an electronic copy.
Upcoming Events

November 11 - Veteran’s Day: Office Closed
November 18 - Board meeting: Fargo Field Office at 8:00am
November 23-25 - NDASCD Annual Meeting, Bismarck
November 27 - Thanksgiving: Office Closed
December 16 - Board meeting: Fargo Field Office at 8:00am
December 25 - Christmas Day: Office Closed

Web Soil Survey
http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov
Easy access for producers to look up their land’s soil productivity. Contact our office if you would like assistance using this valuable tool.

All programs and services of the Cass County Soil Conservation District are offered on a non-discriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age or handicap. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.