The Traverse Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board of Supervisors are excited to announce their selection of the 2018 Traverse County Conservation Partners of the Year: Kevin and Ruth Pederson. The Pedersons are recognized for their dedication to the protection of natural resources in our County. Recognition of his award will be highlighted during the annual Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Convention in Bloomington this December.

Kevin and Ruth actively utilize many conservation practices as a part of their grain and beef farming operation. Most recently, the Pedersons enrolled their pastureland into a unique grasslands management practice through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The purpose of the program is to maintain the diverse native grasses and legumes as a part of a livestock operation. The Pedersons are considering installation of some remote watering facilities and an engineered stream crossing component of this practice. They graze 31 head of crossbred beef steers on the scenic pasture surrounding the farm.

Kevin and Ruth moved to Traverse County and began farming and working with Lande’s High Prairie Farm in 1997. Kevin grew up on a dairy farm in Otter Tail County and was very interested in working directly with the land again. Ruth’s family has a rich history in conservation of natural resources. Her dad, George Lande was recognized for his efforts as the Traverse SWCD’s Conservation Partner of the Year in 1960. Her brother, Paul Lande, was also chosen for the award in 1995. Preserving the quality of the land has always been of top priority of the Landes and Ruth is proud to continue the family’s legacy.

Kevin works with Paul and David Lande to crop a corn, soybean, wheat, alfalfa, and grass hay rotation. He also provides some custom hay service on occasion. He utilizes residue management practices to help keep the soil in place and chooses to use no-till practices to seed crops into sandy soils. He has grid-sampled his fields in 2.5 acre grids to get an precise formula for variable rate nutrient application. The Pedersons maintain 3 acres of farmstead windbreaks and have established filter strips along County Ditch 52 in southern Traverse County.

The Pederson’s raised three sons on their farm. All recognize the valuable experience they gained growing up with a background in agriculture. Thomas is an engineer with Cargill. Matthew is a business representative with the BASF company in Grand Forks. Jacob is currently a midshipman at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.
Pictured is a vegetative buffer established by Kevin and Ruth along County Ditch 52.