Poison Hemlock is a biennial plant in the parsnip or carrot family. It grows 3 to 8 feet in height with a hollow, light green stem covered in purple spots. The leaves are fern-like and can span 12” long and wide. Poison Hemlock has small white flowers that bloom between June – August. Flowers have five white petals of unequal size. Plants usually have many clusters of flowers as noted in the photo below.

This plant has been classified as Invasive - ERADICATE by the MN Department of Agriculture. The plant must be destroyed if located. Traverse County Agricultural Inspector John Fridgen has treated several fields with herbicide to eradicate Poison Hemlock. All parts of this plant are poisonous. The best way to distinguish from other similar looking species is the purple spotted stem.

Poison Hemlock was November 1, 2018.

Buffer Law Compliance Update

Traverse County parcels currently comply with Buffer Law requirements along Public Waters streams, lakes, and wetlands are above 90%. In 2015 Governor Mark Dayton signed into law a new buffer initiative also known as the Buff-A-Law. SWCD staff have been designated the responsibility of compliance determinations and providing assistance to landowners bringing their parcels into compliance with the standards of the law.

As described on a website hosted by the state, Minnesota’s buffer law requires establishment of perennial vegetation buffers up to 50 feet wide along lakes, rivers, and streams and buffers of 16.5 feet along ditches. These buffers will help filter out phosphorus, nitrogen and sediment. Poison Hemlock is one of many weeds in new CRP fields. For implementation for buffers on public waters was November 1, 2017. The deadline for public ditches was November 1, 2018.

Traverse County elected jurisdiction of enforcement for the law for parcels along Public Waters. The Bois de Sioux Watershed District elected jurisdiction of enforcement of the law for parcels along Public Ditches.

Staff will follow up with the few remaining landowners whose parcels of land do not meet the compliance standards of the law. Staff are trained and ready to provide guidance and insight about compliance options including measurement of required buffer widths and alternative practices. If a landowner chooses not to take corrective action to follow the law, a notification of non-compliance will be mailed to the landowner, the state Board of Water and Soil Resources, and the enforcement entity - Traverse County or the Bois de Sioux Watershed District for further action.

Call the Traverse SWCD for additional information. 320-563-8218 ext. 3.

Weed Control in New CRP

Over 3500 acres of grassland were installed in Traverse County in 2018. SWCD staff have received many questions about weed management during the establishment period. Newly planted fields of grass can take 3 years to become fully established but most often are fully established by the end of the second growing season. Do not worry if the field looks weedy, it is completely normal!

• During this time, don’t mow too often or too low.

Normal weed growth in a new CRP field a few months after seeding.

Traverse County has seen an increase in the number of new operations. In the past two years, five new sites were permitted for construction. The types of animals raised at the new sites include chickens, beef cattle, and hogs. Current registration of smaller size feedlots operations in the county are at a total of 27. There are 10 larger sites in operation that require a National Pollution Disposal Elimination System (NPDES) permit through the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Of the 10 large operations, 6 sites raise hogs, three sites have cattle and one is a dairy operation.

Weed growth is really variable from site to site and depends on many factors such as site preparation and planting dates. Some fields might need two clipping passes but many only need a single pass to control weed pressure the first year.

In 2018, staff noticed mostly annual weeds in new CRP fields. If perennial weeds begin to germinate, it is advisable to wait until the second or third year after planting for chemical application. New grasses and flowers are sensitive to herbicide. Always consult a professional for proper herbicide application rates and timing of application on new grassland. Spot spraying perennial weeds is recommended instead of whole field application.

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New SWCD Technician

Traverse SWCD hired Jesse Grohs to fill the District Program Technician position vacated by Casey O’Leary in August 2018. Jesse is excited to provide assistance to landowners who are interested in conservation programs and habitat. Jesse grew up near the Twin Cities but spent time on his grandparent’s farm in Traverse County in his youth. He is excited to move away from the city and enjoy life in the country. He has a passion for deer hunting particularly bow hunting.

County Feedlot Demographics

Traverse County has more than 10 animal units within a shoreland zone or 50 or more animal units outside of a shoreland zone are required to register with Traverse County. County Feedlot Officer Bruce Johnson works with feedlot owners to process permits and complete inspections of farm sites according to MN Pollution Control Agency program oversight. SWCD staff works to submit an annual plan and report each year and is available for questions about program rules and recommendations!
Order trees by December 31 2018 for best availability!

Tree Form Subject to Changes

Traverse SWCD has partnered with the Bois de Sioux Watershed District and a local landowner to install a demonstration project to curb erosion and reduce the frequency of ditch cleaning. This fall, two lined waterway outlets were installed on a field owned by Chadd Berger in Redpath Township, section 32. The purpose of this practice is to stabilize field ditch outlets where they enter a public ditch system. The practice consists of three parts: shaping the field ditch outlet, installing a woven concrete mat, and securing it with rebar ‘staples’ and filling the edges. The product has proven erosion control benefits and is cost effective for field ditches with smaller drainage areas.

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The finished project can be viewed about 6.5 miles northeast of Wheaton on County Road 14.

Like us on Facebook!

Coffee, Cider, & Cookies!

Join us at:
The SWCD Office
304 4th St. N
Wheaton, MN 56296

Information available
On our website:
www.traverseswcd.org

DEMONSTRATION PROJECT:
Lined Waterway Outlets

Site Preparation: Shaping the Outlet
Installation: Anchoring the Mat

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