Sauk River Watershed Drainage Authority
103E Ditch Inspection Report
CY 2018

By Jon Roeschlein, Ditch Inspector
As the Sauk River Watershed Drainage Authority (SRWDA) Ditch Inspector, it is my duty to report that the condition of the 12 public drainage systems under your authority range from poor to good condition.

Several major repairs are planned to bring 4 of the systems back to their As Constructed or Subsequently Improved Condition (ACSIC). Several systems have been recently repaired or are under repair currently. There are a few systems that I recommend survey to determine their condition. Details of each ditch system individually are reported below.
Pope County Ditch 6

- Branch 1
- Branch 2
- Main Trunk
- DNR Hydrography - Lakes

The land area drained by County Ditch #6 lies in Pope County about 7.5 miles south of Westport, Minnesota. The Ditch consists of a main stem and two branches, flowing Northwest and Northeast into Ashley Creek. The total ditch length with branches is 6.7 miles.
Pope County Ditch #6

Visual inspection of this system was completed by ground in 2018. No major issues could be seen visually. A preliminary engineer’s report was completed in September of 2016, indicates the need for repair work, and recommended a Redetermination of Benefits (ROB). The ROB is complete and the repair process is moving forward. The plan was to repair the system in 2018, but due to regulatory concerns, this will likely be delayed until 2019. Noxious weed control was completed in July and August of 2018. Staking of the Buffer Markers will be completed after the repair work is done. Consolidation discussions of PCD #6, PCD #11 and PSJD #1 (Kranz) is on hold until repairs are completed.

A beaver dam was noted late in 2018 on the upper reach of Branch 1. Due to cold weather, I was unable to find a trapper to remove the problem beaver and then remove the dam. It was decided to conduct these activities in the spring 2019.
Pope County Ditch 11

The land area drained by Pope County Ditch 11 lies 7.5 South East of Westport, Minnesota. The Ditch consists of the Main Stem outflowing into Branch One of County Ditch 6 and a lateral outflowing into Kranz Lake. The total ditch length is 3.5 miles.

Date: 10/27/2016
Pope County Ditch #11

Visual inspection of this system was completed by ground mostly at crossing locations. No major issues could be seen visually. A preliminary engineer’s report was completed in September of 2016, indicates the need for repair work. An ROB was completed in 2018 and adopted in early 2019. Consolidation discussions of PCD #6, PCD #11 and PSJD #1 (Kranz) is on hold until repairs are completed. The repair process was continued and will require some work with regulatory agencies in regard to wetland affects. It is planned that the repair will be completed in 2019. Staking of the Buffer Markers will be completed after the repair work is done. Noxious weeds were sprayed in 2018.
Pope/Stearns Joint Ditch #1 (Krantz)

The Drainage area of this system is 6,528 acres located in parts of Pope and Stearns Counties. The ditch is located approx. 4.5 miles SSE of Westport.

Main Channel = 4.16 miles
Branch 1 = .5 miles
Branch 2 = 1.5 miles
Fork 1 Branch 2 = .5 miles
Fork 1 Branch 1 = Abandoned
Pope/Steans Joint Ditch #1 (Kranz)

Visual inspection of this system was completed using aerial drone footage on part of the main system upstream of CSAH 33 and included Branch 2, flown in summer 2018, as well as ground inspection of a few locations. No major issues could be seen visually. A preliminary engineer's report was completed in September of 2016, indicates the need for repair work, and recommended a Redetermination of Benefits (ROB). The ROB was completed in spring of 2018. The discussion to consolidate PCD #6, PCD #11 and PSJD #1 (Kranz) was continued until after the repairs to all three systems are completed. The repair process has resumed with the development of the final repair report and discussions with regulatory agencies regarding wetland impacts. It is planned that the repair process will be completed in 2019. The Raymond Township Weed Inspector issued a notice of Wild Parsnip growing in one location along the ditch which prompted a full ground inspection of the system. No other major issues were documented, knowing that a full repair was planned for 2019-20. Noxious weed control throughout the system was completed in July and August of 2018. Staking of the Buffer Markers will be completed after the repair work is done.
County Ditch 51

The headwaters of CD51 begin approximately 9 miles southwest of the City of Sauk Centre. The ditch has 4.5 miles of open ditch, and flows west to east for approximately 2.3 miles, and then continues north for approximately 2.2 additional miles.

- CD51 Benefited Area
- Hoboken Creek
- Open Channel
- Tile
Stearns County Ditch #51

Visual inspection of this system was completed via ground inspection of areas at road crossings and adjacent to roads. The system is functioning well after the cleanout although there are a few final repairs left to be completed, according to the plans. Unfortunately, there are two landowners, Mr. Kenneth Zimmerman and Mr. Gary Berndt that have refused to allow access on their property to complete those repairs. Buffer establishment is required under MS 103F.48 and MS 103e.021. Staking of the buffer markers will be done in spring 2018 on those lands not owned by Mr. Zimmerman and Mr. Berndt. Noxious weeds and woody vegetation were sprayed on lands not owned by Kenneth Zimmerman and Gary Berndt.
Stearns County Ditch #11

The Drainage area of this system is approximately 10 square miles with the headwaters located 2 miles east of Sauk Centre, the outlet into the Sauk River 2 miles west of Melrose, all North of I-94 in Stearns County.

Main Channel = 9 miles
Branch A = .5 miles
Stearns County Ditch #11

Inspection of this system consisted of ground inspection during the repair work. The repair is complete. Buffers have been seeded where necessary and the posting is complete. Herbicide was applied summer of 2018 in an attempt to control the recently removed woody vegetation and noxious weeds. One landowner, Harvey Middendorf, is grazing the buffer area and I continue to work with him to establish a grazing plan. Work will continue to monitor and maintain the establishment of the buffer. Spraying is planned where needed to control woody vegetation and undesirable plants.

I will continue to monitor the stability of the banks as they were not flattened for stability purposes during the repair and may erode. There is a potential for continued regular maintenance needed on this system.
Stearns County Ditch #9

The drainage area of this system is approximately 20.5 square miles with the headwaters located 3.5 miles West of Greenwald.

Branch 1 begins just north of Meier Grove and aligns to the west of Meier Grove and South to the junction with the main channel. It is approximately 2.5 miles in length and is a combination of open ditch and tile.

Main Channel = 7 miles
Branch 1 = 2.5 miles
Stearns County Ditch #9

Visual ground inspection of this system was completed during the repair construction work, fall of 2018, along with additional ground inspection of a few locations along the main channel. The repair work is underway with all tile being replaced in fall 2018. Work continues over the winter months and into 2019 on the rest of the open channel repairs. Post construction the posting of the buffer will take place. Noxious weed control was completed in July and August of 2018. Moving forward we will work to finish the repair and level and seed spoils.
Stearns County Ditch #26

Stearns County Ditch #26 is approximately 20 miles in length, comprised of the main and 4 laterals. The drainage area is outlined in Red and is approximately 32 square miles.

The main channel shares the alignment of Getchell Creek. The ditch begins approximately 3 Miles NNE of Freeport and outlets in the Sauk River approximately 4 miles SSW of New Munich.
Stearns County Ditch #26

Visual inspection of this system was completed using aerial drone footage, flown in mid-summer 2018, by kayak north of Upper Valley Road and downstream of Getchell Lake to CR 176, along with ground inspection of the rest of the system at crossings and by atv. This system had recently been repaired. Several erosion control measures had been completed consisting of toe protection with rip-rap and coir logs. These areas appeared to be very stable and vegetation was regenerating well. Posting of the buffer is complete. Bank sloughing/toe erosion continues on the portion of the main north of 330th Street between Oakview Road and County Highway #11. Also noted were several bank erosion locations between the outlet of the main and this location. The channel DS of Getchell Lake was heavily infested with submergent vegetation late in the year. An attempt was made to obtain a permit to use an aquatic herbicide to treat the vegetation but was denied. Water levels were high late in the season causing issues with low water crossings and accessibility to farmland. Eventually the water receded in the fall and landowners were able to harvest their crop. South of Upper Valley Road, sloughing was noted and repaired during the winter 2018. It has since been reported that the system is functioning much better. Beaver were a problem in the Upper Valley Road crossing. The township cleared the crossing at their expense. Butch Thull was hired to level spoils from the recent repair work and to seed the buffer in 2018. Work was not finished in 2018 and will continue in 2019. A 100 ft long bank slough was repaired and armored in section 33 of Oak Township. Noxious weeds along with trees and brush were sprayed in 2018.

I anticipate this system will continue to require maintenance due to steep banks and sloughing issues. There will continue to be sediment removed and bank sloping as failures occur.
County Ditch 15

Legend

- County Ditch 15
- Municipality Boundaries
- CD15 Benefited Area

County Ditch 15 consists of a main stem and two branches. The ditch flows from north to south terminating approximately 3,300 feet east of County Ditch 26. The main stem of the ditch is just over 5 miles, branch 1 is just under half a mile, and branch two is a little over 3 miles.
Stearns County Ditch #15

Inspection of this system consisted of ground inspection at road crossings and multiple segmented inspections via ATV. This system had recently been repaired. There were no significant issues noted in the channel. Buffer Posting is complete. The buffer is generally not in the condition expected in some areas because the seedbed had not been prepped as expected and the lack of weed control. I continue to work to get the buffer seeding established with weed maintenance and additional seeding. Noxious weeds were sprayed in 2018.

The unpermitted culvert crossing for Fred Schlangen is being processed. Mr. Schlangen has applied for a permit and retained an engineer to evaluate the appropriate design opening that will not cause adverse effects downstream.

I will continue to monitor the stability of the banks as they were not flattened for stability purposes during the repair and may erode. There is a potential for continued regular maintenance needed on this system.
Stearns County Ditch Zion-Monson

Stearns County Ditch Zion-Monson lies just NW of Roscoe. It is approximately 3 miles long and drains approximately 15 square miles.
Stearns County Ditch #Zion-Munson

Visual inspection of this system was completed by ground inspection at ditch crossings and by ATV during buffer posting. The ROB for this system was completed in 2017. There were no obvious maintenance issues observed on this ditch.

No recent survey has been completed to determine the condition compared to the ACSIC. It is unknown when this system was last surveyed. It may be beneficial to survey this system to know its condition as it has not been surveyed since the SRWDA has become the drainage authority. However, if the landowners do not feel the system needs repair, we can wait with any survey work. An informational meeting may be prudent after the growing season 2019.

All of this ditch system has adequate buffer adjacent to it as it passes mostly through low meadow land. Noxious weeds were sprayed in 2018.
Stearns CD 19

Legend

County Ditch 19

County Ditch 19 Benefited Area

County Ditch 19 is approximately 6 miles south of Richmond. The ditch system consists of a main stem and two branches. The main stem is 8,700 feet, branch 2 is 623 feet, and branch 1 is 371 feet. The ditch ends and turns back into a natural waterway outleting on the South end of Long Lake.
Stearns County Ditch #19

Visual inspection of this system was completed by ground inspection at ditch crossings. The ROB for this system was completed in 2017. Heavy tree growth was found in section 13 of Eden Lake and section 18 of Luxemburg Townships.

No recent survey has been completed to determine the condition compared to the ACSIC. It is unknown when this system was last surveyed. It may be beneficial to survey this system to know its condition as it has no: been surveyed since the SRWDA has become the drainage authority. However, if the landowners do not feel the system needs repair, we can wait with any survey work. An informational meeting may be prudent after the growing season 2019.

A more detailed buffer inspection will be completed when the buffer posting is completed summer of 2019. Buffer establishment will be done on the areas necessary. Noxious weeds were sprayed in 2018.
Stearns County Ditch #24

Stearns County Ditch #24 is located about 5 Miles SE of Richmond. The Main is about 1 mile in length with one lateral approximately 0.25 miles in length. The ditch drains about 1 square mile.
Stearns County Ditch #24

Visual inspection of this system was completed by ground in 2018. No issues were observed. Buffer posting was completed in 2018. No major issues were noted during the inspection. The ROB process has been authorized and the viewers have been appointed. It is unknown when this system was last surveyed although I would not recommend it at this time. The system appears to be functioning adequately.

There are approximately 9 assessed landowners on this small system. It has been discussed whether an ROB is really needed on this system.
Stearns County Ditch 17

The headwaters of CD17 begin approximately 1.5 mi west of the City of Waite Park. The ditch flows south to North for approximately 3.5 miles. CD 17 consists of the main, two branches, and a fork on Branch 1.

- SCD #17 Benefited Area
- SCD #17 Open Ditch
Stearns County Ditch #17

Visual inspection of this system was done by ground at most ditch crossings. Limited survey work was done to establish the legal grade for the Sieben Cattle Crossing. It was noted that the existing grade at that location was 0.6’ above the ACSIC. Correspondence has been received from several landowners/individuals describing the system in poor condition. A full inspection of the system will be completed in late spring 2019 during the posting of the buffer.

If the board deems appropriate, I would recommend a full survey of the system be completed in 2019 in preparation for a possible repair. This may lead to a finding where an ROB would be in order.

END
Respectfully submitted.

[Signature]

Jon Roeschlein, Ditch and Permit Coordinator/Ditch Inspector
Sauk River Watershed Drainage Authority

Date: 5-1-2019