

# Otter Tail County Buffer Initiative Implementation Schedule

Revised (2/10/2015)

**Purpose:** The purpose of this initiative is to assist landowners and the County to move in the direction of 100% compliance with Minnesota's Shoreland Management Rule for Agricultural Use Standards (Minnesota Rules, Chapter 6120, part 6120.3300, subpart 7, item B) and Otter Tail County's Shoreland Management Ordinance for Agricultural Uses Standards, as noted in Section IV. 4.B. on page 17 in the Shoreland Management Ordinance of Otter Tail County, Minnesota (8/1/13).

**Expected Completion Date:** December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019.

## Phase 1

- Identify and inventory areas of resource concern within the Shore Impact Zone & Bluff Impact Zone along all public waters in Otter Tail County. Shoreland areas with agricultural use that may be lacking the required 50 ft. permanent vegetation buffer in the Shore and Buffer Impact Zones will be identified using high resolution 50-cm spring "leaf-off" imagery from the Spring Aerial Imagery Program (SAIP) and 1-meter aerial imagery obtained during peak growing season "leaf-on" from the National Agricultural Imagery Program (NAIP).
- Create a database of landowners that may not be in compliance (i.e. Property location, date of mailings, responses, and general notes). The database will be shared with the County and will be actively maintained throughout the Initiative.
- Areas of resource concern will be identified by actively using spatial analysis, and going through all the County public waters at a small scale process (section by section, and township by township). To accomplish this, a systematic approach will be used. The County will be broken up into 3 Stages. This is a collaborative partnership with West Otter Tail SWCD & East Otter Tail SWCD. The 3 stages are color coded on Initiative map, and the stages group townships together to better streamline this large task of the inventory process.
- Maps of potential areas that maybe lacking the required 50' permanent vegetation will be created and georeferenced in GIS software with the County database to inventory landowners and track the voluntary compliance process.
- Letters will be mailed informing/educating landowners of Minnesota's Shoreland Management Rule and Otter Tail County's Shoreland Management Ordinance for Agricultural Use Standards for shoreland areas. The letter will give landowners contact information for potential conservation programs to assist them in becoming compliant.

- A separate letter will be mailed to landowners with existing CRP contracts to encourage them to keep them in vegetation after contract expiration.
- A factsheet on available conservation programs will be developed and mailed to landowners.
- Work with participating landowners to identify buffer boundary and assist them with program eligibility and enrollment.

## **Phase 2**

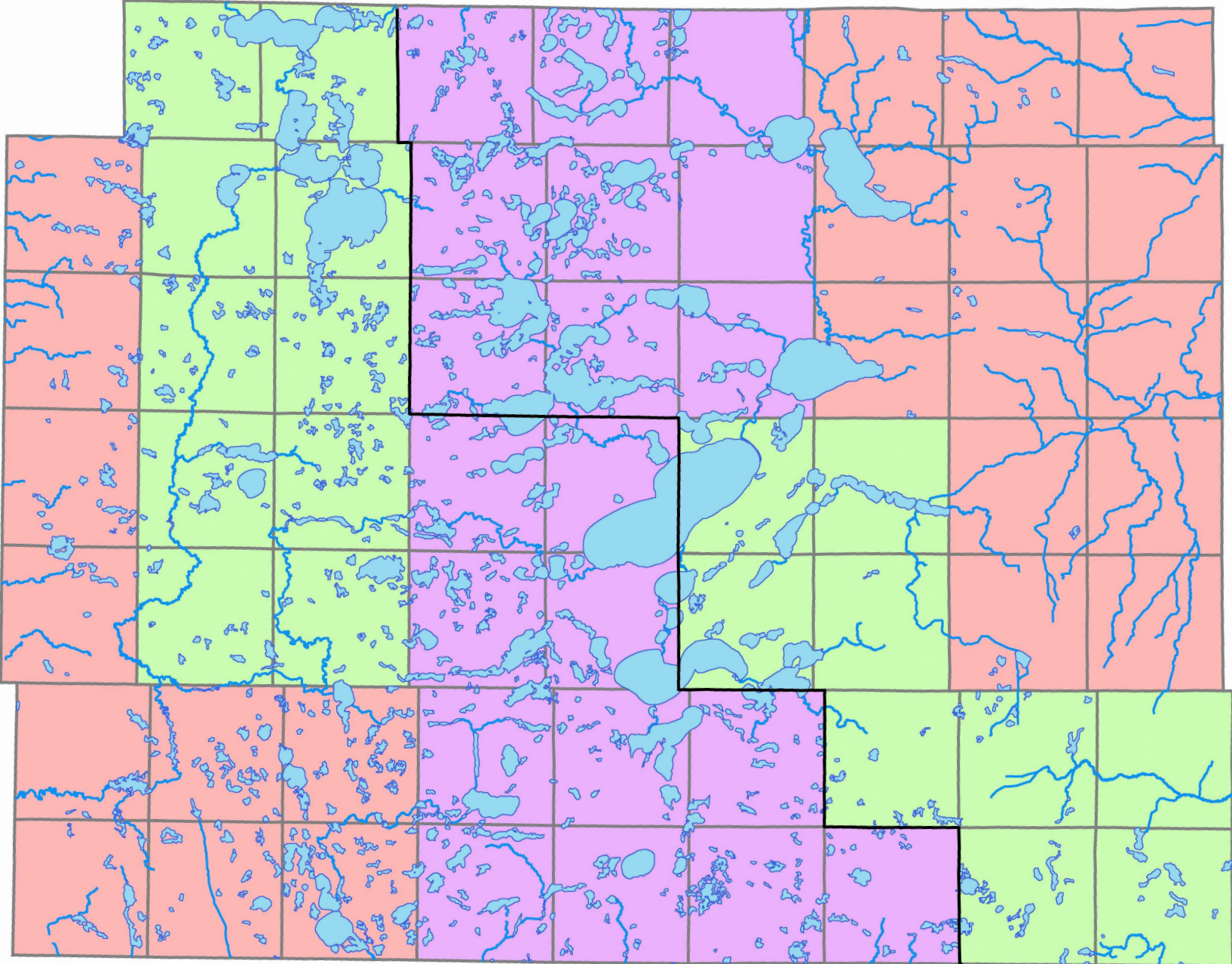
- Assess and inventory areas of resource concern within the Shore Impact Zone & Bluff Impact Zone along all public waters in Otter Tail County a second time. The database is maintained and updated with landowner's compliance progress.
- Landowner's who did not respond or did not move toward compliance will be contacted a second time.
- A second letter will be sent highlighting the success of the first Phase and will be worded stronger than the first (i.e. You are not in compliance vs. you may not be in compliance)
- A factsheet will be developed on the success of the program and programs to assist landowners.
- Work with participating landowners to identify buffer boundary and assist them with program eligibility and enrollment.

## **Phase 3**

- Assess and inventory areas of resource concern within the Shore Impact Zone & Bluff Impact Zone along all public waters in Otter Tail County a last time.
- The database is maintained and updated with landowner's compliance progress.
- Final letter sent will highlight success of Phases 1 and 2. Final letter could contain language similar to the following:
  - This is your final notice and you have \_\_\_\_ days to establish a buffer on all public waters on your property before legal action is taken by the County.
  - This is your final option to voluntarily comply with the Minnesota Shoreland Management Rule and the County's Shoreland Management Ordinance before the County enforces the State Rule and County Ordinance.
- Work with participating landowners to identify buffer boundary and assist them with program eligibility and enrollment.

In addition, the SWCDs will be working with the County Ditch Inspector to implement buffers along county ditches as required in drainage law 103.E

# OTTER TAIL COUNTY BUFFER INITIATIVE SCHEDULE



**EAST OTTER TAIL  
SOIL AND WATER**  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

