



# POLLINATOR PROUD PROJECTS: Reinvest in Minnesota



## Lehmann-Jorgenson RIM Easement

**PARTNERS:** Landowners; James Lehmann- Dennis Jorgenson Partnership. Project Manager: David Fier. Agency; Lincoln SWCD, MN BWSR, FSA, NRCS



**PROJECT SITE:** This site is located in Hansonville Township in the furthest North West corner Lincoln County and lays adjacent to an 80 acre Minnesota DNR WMA. The easement has 160 acres newly planted to native grasses and flowers with additional forbs added upon request. There are 47 acres of restored, previously restored and existing wetlands. The restoration was created by disrupting tile and ditches, We restored the wetlands back to: wetland sedges, grasses, cattails and water. There is also 5 acres of a wildlife shrub/conifer planting. Outside the easement there is a shelterbelt with food plots for deer pheasants and turkeys.

**PLANTING and MAINTENANCE:** The upland acres were previously a brome mix and the cooperater David Fier had an extensive plan for site prep work which he put into effect. This included destroying brome cover, removing volunteer trees and picking tons of rocks. His plan also included several tillage passes, rolling to pack and smoothen then seeding with no-till drill. The site was sprayed with herbicide and has been spot clipped to suppress the thistles. Leafy spurge and Canada thistle will continue to be weed concerns. Future weed management control methods include mechanical, biological and spot spraying. FSA's Mid-contract management is setup along with that, the SWCD and landowner will set up a long term management plan for the easement.



**WHAT WORKED:** The seed mix was designed following BWSR guidelines with the help of the SWCD and Jason Thronbak, Biologist at Millborn seeds in Brookings SD. The original mix included 8 warm & cool season native grasses and 13 wildflowers. 4 additional forbs were added to give additional diversity and specifically enhance bee habitat.

**Disappointments:** We could not find an acceptable seed source of Milkweed to accommodate monarch butterflies. The seed sources were not in our local eco-region. This project from inception to completion took more than 18 months to completion. Wet springs and weather delays complicated seedbed prep and seeding.

**Landowner comments:** This program demonstrates that a lot of work on the part of the SWCD and the project manager, (David Fier) was necessary to result in a successful RIM easement. David Fier was selected Conservation Farmer of the year in 2004. Without his commitment, the project may have failed. Randy and his colleagues at the SWCD, FSA, & NRCS were exemplary in their professionalism. I commend them for their dedication to the project

**Written by:** James Lehmann

## Miranowski RIM Easement



**PARTNERS:** West Otter Tail SWCD, BWSR, NRCS, FSA, Pheasants Forever, and the Pomme de Terre River Association

**PROJECT SITE:** This site is located in Clitherall Township South of Battle Lake in Otter Tail County. This easement site contains approximately 91 acres of restored native grasses and wildflowers, 34 acres of existing wetlands and 10 acres of forest land.

**PLANTING & MAINTENANCE:** The upland acreage was planted in the spring of 2012 using a standard no-till grass drill into soybean stubble. As part of ensuring adequate establishment the landowner mowed the entire acreage in 2012 and 2013 to reduce annual weed and thistle competition. Future management will include thistle control (chemical and

mechanical) and the required Mid-contract Management activity while in CRP. After the CRP contract has expired the SWCD and Landowner will set up a long term management plan for the easement.

**WHAT WORKED:** The West Otter Tail SWCD designed a more diversified mix to be planted on program acres such as CRP and RIM, including this easement. This mix included a total of 29 species including 11 grasses and 18 wildflowers. This increased diversity allowed us to plant some of those species not commonly utilized in typical conservation practices plantings such as New England Aster, Ironweed, Leadplant and Blue Aster. An additional benefit of the increased diversity is that we included a variety of species that offer flower blossoms with different sizes, shapes and colors which is a must for attracting a wide variety of pollinator species.

**Pollinator Fun Fact:** In the U.S. alone, the value of honey bees to agriculture is estimated at between \$14.6 and \$18.9 Billion per year!

**Written and Photos by:** Aaron Larsen, Technician  
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