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A routine demonstration of preferential flow to a research group was nothing routine to a group of environmental engineers.

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RAISE YOUR VOICE

YOUR FORUM TO REACT TO PUBLISHED ARTICLES, TO EXCHANGE IDEAS, AND DESCRIBE INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO CONSERVATION INCLUDING LEGISLATION

Partnerships make for success

With regard to the benefits of wetland restoration on flood mitigation [Shultz, et al. 2003. The feasibility of restoring previously drained wetlands to reduce flood damage. *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation*, 58(1): 21-29], there is a need for more research. Nevertheless, intuition would lead one to the hypothesis that wetlands in any wetness condition and time of year could provide a certain amount of flood mitigation value. Also, a simple hydrograph of discharge over time before and after wetland restoration shows that reducing peak discharge can be accomplished with proper design. Also, greater levels of flood mitigation could be achieved with water level management that creates drier wetland conditions in the springtime (March, April, May) in Minnesota and during convective storm periods in June and July in

Minnesota. Flood mitigation benefits can be derived from wetland restoration however it may be difficult to achieve the most benefit for wildlife and water quality when designing specifically for flood mitigation. Furthermore, the cost-benefit and value of wetland restoration is certainly improved when considering wetland functions, including water quality and wildlife. Murray County, Minnesota Ditch 27 is an example where the cost-benefit ratio was determined to be desirable for wetland restoration at several different levels. In another instance, the drainage authority in Faribault County, Minnesota, decided against a petition to perform a costly improvement and drainage system due to large costs, wildlife habitat destruction, and inadequate downstream outlet for additional drainage water from the proposed improvement. It is very important that all benefits of wetlands be

included in any cost-benefit analysis, particularly in geographic areas with challenging priority water quality and land use diversity issues.

—Chris Hughes, Board Conservationist
Minnesota Board of Water and Soil
Resources New Ulm, MN

Readers are invited to express their views on land and water management.

Please make your letter less than 150 words. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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— Deb Happe, Editor

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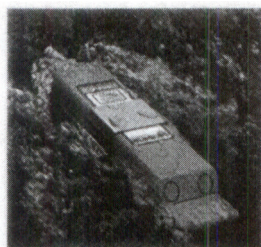
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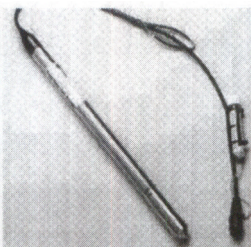
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