

Root River Field to Stream Partnership Recognized for Environmental Efforts

May 23, 2018. The Environmental Initiative, a nonprofit organization that works with business, nonprofit, and government leaders on environmental problems, has recognized the Root River Field to Stream Partnership for environmental efforts. At its annual awards banquet, the Environmental Initiative honored the Root River Field to Stream Partnership with its Rural Vitality Award. The partnership began in 2009 to better understand how agricultural practices affect the health of local rivers and streams. It's focused on the Root River in southeastern Minnesota. This partnership includes farmers and their advisers, the MDA, Minnesota Agricultural Water Resource Center, The Nature Conservancy, industry, local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, state agencies and academic researchers.



Kevin Kuehner speaks at the 2018 Environmental Initiative Awards banquet. Participating partners in the Root River project were also represented on stage.

The Root River Field to Stream Partnership is a water monitoring project that combines data collection, strong personal relationships, and conservation action. Administered by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, this project conducted intensive surface and groundwater monitoring in order to determine the effectiveness of agricultural conservation practices. By working closely with water conservation districts and farmers, a total of 90 grass waterways spanning more than 65,000 feet have been installed in high priority areas. Thirteen new water and sediment control basins and catchment ponds were also installed, and nearly 200 acres of cover crops have been planted— among other outcomes. These results were achieved through close and careful coordination and targeting with local farmers. The RRFSP's 98 percent participation rate is a result of dedicated staff, concerted effort to help farmers with applications, continual follow-up, and a carefully built trust and relationships.



Root River Field to Stream Partners accepting the award include (L-R) Warren Formo, Dave Walter, Rich Biske, Kevin Kuehner, Ron Meiners, Donna Rasmussen, Gary Larson, Margaret Wagner, Adam Bielke and Jennifer Ronnenberg