. **MAAO Agricultural Committee Meeting**

**2012 Fall Conference**

**Breezy Point Resort,**

**Breezy Point, MN**

**September 25th, 2012**

The Ag Committee met on 9/25/2012 at the Fall Conference. Members present were: Mike Dangers, Joyce Schmidt, Steve Carlson, Al Heim, Sue Schulz, Tom Reineke and Jeanne Henderson. New Ag Committee member for Region 1 is Ron Vikre, Fillmore County.

Chair Henderson asked the committee members if they include the one acre 2nd ag site (set aside for ag buildings, such as barns, storage facilities) as one of the ten contiguous acres needed for a parcel to qualify for the agricultural classification. Ag Committee members stated they do.

Green Acre factors were discussed - if counties were using them with the mostly ag market right now. There are times it is still necessary to have Green Acres and if it applies counties will still use Green Acre values.

Discussion was also held on the Rural Preserve program and how counties were handling that program. Some are sending out letters notifying property owners of the need to enroll the 2b acreage if they want to. Some are even going door to door to let property owners know. With the deadline coming up to enroll, some counties are being proactive to let property owners know about the program and help them enroll.

The MAAO Agricultural Committee drafted a letter, dated August 3, 2012, in support of the release of CRP acres from the FSA office. The letter was sent to President Baker and this issue will need to go up to the Federal level. With crop prices and rents where they are at, properties with these restrictions are showing a decrease in value based on a few sales that have come thru. The longer the time left in the program the more it has affected the sale price. This information is based on only a few sales but is showing up as a factor.

Legislative Auditor’s Report regarding Conservation Easements - Chair Henderson will contact Judy Randall, of the Legislative Auditor’s Office, for an up-date on the Conservation Easement report being prepared for the legislators.

Submitted by,

Sue Schulz