



Root River Soil and Water Conservation District

Agricultural Service Center

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MINUTES OF THE ROOT RIVER SWCD

April 9, 2026

The Root River Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors met on April 9, 2026 at the Ag Service Center in Caledonia, Minnesota for its regular meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Feldmeier at 1:02 p.m.

Members Present:

Joe Driscoll
Matt Feldmeier
Glenn Kruse
Jerry Welke

Members Not Present:

Ken Anderson

Others:

Dave Walter, Jean Meiners, Dan Wermager and Janice Messner – SWCD staff; Ryan Hytry – NRCS staff; Dave Copeland – BWSR staff; Bob Scanlan, MN Department of Ag.

Those present took part in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes: **Motion** by Kruse, seconded by Driscoll, approving the minutes from the March 12, 2026 board meeting.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

Employee Time Records: **Motion** by Kruse, seconded by Driscoll, approving the Employee Time Records.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

Treasurer's Monthly Report: Welke recommended the March 2026 treasurer's report be placed on file for audit.

AGENCY REPORTS

Dave Copeland, Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR) Report

- Copeland shared the RFP sign up period for the CWF Projects and Practices Grant closed March 25, 2026. Eleven applications from Area 7 were received. A nitrogen management request will likely be funded with BWSR finalizing grants in August. Copeland felt Root River SWCD will likely be able to tap in to those funds via the grant applicant.

Houston County Environmental Services Report

- Meiners stated she is now set up to assist with the Ag BMP Program funding requests and has assisted one producer.

Ryan Hytry, NRCS Report

- Hytry reported two EQIP applications for grade stabilization structures are being funded.
- Hytry shared 41 CRP re-enrollments were received during the sign-up period.

- Hytry stated there has been five or six landowners recently expressing interest in funding for the Roofs & Covers BMP. A CNP is needed for these types of projects. The average cost is \$2,500 - \$3,500. Walter stated \$10,000 is available through TSA7 for this purpose. Discussion followed regarding a current bottleneck for getting these and meeting other manure management needs. Hytry shared a landowner has received EQIP funding for a waste storage facility but will need additional state funding to make the project financially feasible. Opportunities were discussed and it is likely the needed state funds will be obtained for the project.

Dave, Walter, District Manager Report

- Walter reported Welke and himself will be helping with the Area Envirothon on May 6, 2026.
- Walter stated SWAG sampling will be starting in May.

PROGRAM REPORTS

- **WCA** – Walter reported the TEP meeting was cancelled for this month. He shared that he is working with the City of Hokah regarding the swimming pool and shared an obstacle they are facing.
- **Buffer Law** – Walter stated he has started doing the compliance checks.
- **SWAG** – Walter shared prep work is underway for the upcoming sampling season.
- **RIM** – Walter informed the board he will be starting the RIM inspections in May.
- **MDA Spring Grove Twp. Walkover** – Scanlan shared a Local Advisory Group meeting was held April 7, 2026 for producers in Spring Grove and Black Hammer townships. He continues to do walkovers, is providing manure sample kits and calibrating manure spreaders. Nutrients from manure has been a discussion topic with the producers.

MASWCD & MACDE

- Walter shared him, Messner and Wermager attended the SE MACDE Spring meeting held March 24, 2026. Messner shared the topics and information learned from the meeting.

WATERSHED UPDATES

Bear Creek – No report.

Crooked Creek – Meiners shared Crooked Creek Watershed District is no longer interested in participating in a shared website. The board is currently working on updating their by-laws. Meiners stated the annual inspection tour is scheduled for April 29, 2026 with a rain date of April 30th.

Walter stated the County is updating their website and Messner was recently involved in a training. Messner shared there will be an opportunity to do more with our page on the county website. She stated she would be inputting the SWCD's information on our website page.

Root River 1W1P – Wermager shared the Planning Work Group met and discussed the current cover crop policy. Possible areas of change discussed included a three year contract vs. a one year contract along with a possible rate per acre increase.

Winnebago – No report.

WinLaC 1W1P – Wermager stated he submitted photos of the urban stormwater project completed this past year in La Crescent for the annual update report.

PROGRAM & STAFF REPORTS:**Jean Meiners, Technician**

- **MDA Private Well Mitigation (RO Systems)** – No report.
- **MDH Safe Drinking Water Tap-In** – No report.

- **MDH Well Inventory Grant** – Meiners reported she completed first quarter reporting. The report showed 21 missing wells were reported by landowners and 153 updates were made on the tracking information platform. She stated letters were recently mailed to 41 landowners in Spring Grove Township and 182 landowners in Wilmington Township.
- **BMP Projects** – Meiners shared she has been working with NRCS to determine what projects will need state funding in order for projects to move forward.

Dan Wermager, Technician

- **Alliance Grant** – Wermager shared a round of payment checks were distributed in mid-March. The current workload consists of data input and amending contracts.
- **ARPA** – No report.
- **Soil Health Delivery Grant** – Wermager stated he has put together cover crop plans for two cost share applicants.

Janice Messner, Administrative Assistant

- **Volunteer Nitrate Monitoring Network** – No report.
- **Trees** – Messner reported all but 75 trees have been sold. Trees will be arriving April 21, 2026 and pick-up day is scheduled for April 24th. Postcards will go out April 13th with the pick-up date information. Messner gave a brief analysis of the tree sales from this year compared to last year.
- **Rain Monitoring Program** – Messner shared she has recruited new volunteers to replace the retirement of two volunteers. They were in Mayville and Black Hammer townships. She also found a volunteer for Union Township. Messner stated she has sent letters to recruit for Sheldon and Money Creek townships.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCIAL COMMITTEE: No report.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE: No report.

TSA7 (Joint Powers) COMMITTEE: No report.

OLD BUSINESS – No report.

Copeland and Scanlan exited the meeting during a recess at 1:54 p.m.

Meeting resumed at 2:25 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS & ACTION ITEMS

Motion by Driscoll, seconded by Kruse, approving the Intensive Watershed Monitoring Sub-Agreement between Fillmore SWCD & Root River SWCD.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

Motion by Driscoll, seconded by Welke, approving the Sub-Agreement between TSA7 & Root River SWCD - SE MN Nutrient Management Initiative in the amount of \$131,500.00.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

Motion by Kruse, seconded by Welke, approving registration and lodging expenses for Messner to attend the 2026 Administrative Conference June 17 – 18, 2026.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

COST SHARE PROGRAMS**FY26 SE MN Nutrient Management Initiative Cost Share** *(Funding up to 75% of cost estimate not to exceed \$131,500.00)*

Name	Contract	Total Cost Estimate	Cost Share Amount Requested	Project	Completion Date
Heintz Badger Valley Farms LLC	01FY26SEMNNMI	\$227,271.45	\$131,500.00	313 – Waste Storage Facility	12/31/2026

Motion by Driscoll, seconded by Kruse, approving contract #01FY26SEMNNMI Heintz Badger Valley Farms LLC 313 – Waste Storage Facility \$131,500.00. Funding Source FY26 SE MN Nutrient Management Initiative Cost Share.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried

1W1P ROOT RIVER WATERSHED-BASE IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING PROGRAM *(Funding up to 90% of cost estimate with or without other non-state funding source)*

FY24 Root River 1W1P Cost Share *(Grant expiration 12/31/2026)* Available Funds \$ 24,254.66

FY26 Root River 1W1P Cost Share *(Grant expiration 12/31/2028)* Available Funds \$ 256,764.00

FY24 Root River 1W1P Cost Share Request *(Funding up to 75% of cost estimate with or without other non-state funding source)*

Name	Contract	Total Cost Estimate	Cost Share Amount Requested	Project	Completion Date
Mierau, Bob	38FY24RR1W1P	\$2,307.00	\$1,730.25	351 – Well Decommissioning	11/30/2026

Motion by Kruse, seconded by Driscoll, approving contract #38FY24RR1W1P Mierau, Bob 351 – Well Decommissioning \$1,730.25. Funding Source FY24 Root River 1W1P Grant.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried

It was acknowledged the FY24 Root River 1W1P Cost Share – Remaining balance \$22,524.41 was moved to FY24 Root River 1W1P Feedlot Cost Share.

FY24 Root River 1W1P Feedlot Cost Share Request *(Funding up to 90% of cost estimate with or without other non-state funding source)*

Name	Contract	Total Cost Estimate	Cost Share Amount Requested	Project	Completion Date
Heintz Badger Valley Farms LLC	39FY24RR1W1P	\$227,271.45	\$73,044.31 (FY24 RR1W1P Feedlot)	313 – Waste Storage Facility	12/31/2026

Motion by Driscoll, seconded by Kruse, approving contract #39FY24RR1W1P Heintz Badger Valley Farms LLC 313 – Waste Storage Facility \$73,044.31. Funding Source FY24 Root River 1W1P Grant Feedlot Allocation.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried

FY26 Root River 1W1P Cost Share Request *(Funding up to 90% of cost estimate with or without other non-state funding source)*

Name	Contract	Total Cost Estimate	Cost Share Amount Requested	Project	Completion Date
Becker, Pat	01FY26RR1W1P	\$18,921.00	\$2,883.90	410 – Grade Stabilization Structure	12/31/2026
Jore, Doug	02FY26RR1W1P	\$12,133.00	\$6,034.70	410 – Grade Stabilization Structure	12/31/2026
Eikens Family Farm LLC	03FY26RR1W1P	\$24,282.66	\$21,854.39	410 – Grade Stabilization Structure (3)	12/31/2026

Motion by Kruse, seconded by Driscoll, approving contract #01FY26RR1W1P Becker, Pat 410 – Grade Stabilization Structure \$2,883.90; #02FY26RR1W1P Jore, Doug 410 – Grade Stabilization Structure \$6,034.70; #03FY26RR1W1P Eikens Family Farm LLC 410 Grade Stabilization Structure (3) \$21,854.39. Funding Source FY26 Root River 1W1P Grant.
Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Kruse and Welke Opposed: None Motion carried

SOIL HEALTH DELIVERY GRANT (Funding \$40.00/acre single specie cover crop; \$50.00/acre multi-specie cover crop)
FY26 Soil Health Delivery Cost Share (Grant expiration 12/31/2028) Available Funds: **\$20,000.00**

FY26 Soil Health Delivery Cost Share Request (\$40.00/acre single specie; \$50.00/acre multi specie)

Name	Contract	Total Cost Estimate	Cost Share Amount Requested	Project	Completion Date
Hammel, James	04FY26SHD	55 acres @ \$40.00/acre – single specie	\$2,200.00	340 – Cover Crop	11/1/2026
Morey, Curt	05FY26SHD	121 acres @ \$40.00/acre – single specie	\$4,840.00	340 – Cover Crop	11/1/2026

Motion by Driscoll, seconded by Kruse, approving contract #04FY26SHD Hammel, James 340 – Cover Crop \$2,200.00 – single specie \$40/acre @ 55 acres; #05FY26SHD Morey, Curt 340 – Cover Crop - \$4,840.00 – single specie \$40/acre @ 121 acres.
Funding Source FY26 Soil Health Delivery Grant.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Kruse and Welke Opposed: None Motion carried.

ARPA – (Spending expiration 12/31/2026) Available Funds \$ 4,969.39

The cancellation request for Kruckow, Fred - \$800.00 (Push-Up Pond no pipe) was acknowledged.

Conservation Contracts (Funding up to 90% of cost estimate with or without other non-state funding source)

FY26 Conservation Contracts (Grant expiration 12/31/2028) Available Funds **\$21,720.80**

FY27 Conservation Contracts (Grant expiration 12/31/2028) Available Funds **\$23,690.00**

FY26 Conservation Contracts Cost Share Request (Funding up to 90% of cost estimate with or without other non-state funding source)

Name	Contract	Total Cost Estimate	Cost Share Amount Requested	Project	Completion Date
Hongerholt, Josh	02FY26CS	\$6,143.00	\$5,528.70	468 – Lined Waterway with 342 – Critical Area Planting	12/31/2026

Motion by Driscoll, seconded by Kruse, approving contract #02FY26CS Hongerholt, Josh 468 – Lined Waterway with 342 Critical Area Planting \$5,528.70. Funding Source FY26 Conservation Contracts Grant.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Kruse and Welke Opposed: None Motion carried

MDH TAP-IN COST SHARE FUNDING PROGRAM (Funding at 50% or 100% of cost estimate)

MDH Tap- In Cost Share Grant (Grant expiration 4/1/2027) Funds Available

WINLAC 1W1P COST SHARE PROGRAM (Funding percentage based on ranking)

FY25 WinLaC 1W1P Ag Practices Cost Share (Grant expiration 12/31/2027) Available Funds **\$24,500.00**

FY25 WinLaC 1W1P Non-Structural Cost Share (Grant expiration 12/31/2027) Available Funds **\$7,500.00**

FY25 WinLaC 1W1P Vegetative Management & Pollinator Planting Cost Share (Grant expiration 12/31/2027) Available Funds **\$5,000.00**

WinLaC 1W1P CRP (Grant expiration 12/31/2026) Available Funds **\$2,000.00**

*****Accounts Payable:*****

Voucher #	Item	Amount
5145	Ron Carlsen – Rent – April	\$ 1,287.00
5146	Kwik Trip – Fuel – SWCD Trucks	\$ 213.71
5147	VISA – Trees Postcards	\$ 18.82
5148	Iowa DNR Nursery - Trees	\$ 1,395.00
5149	Quill LLC – MDH Well Inventory - Envelopes	\$ 70.52
	Total	\$ 2,985.05

Motion by Kruse, seconded by Driscoll, approving payment of the above accounts payable.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

***** WinLaC 1W1P Accounts Payable *****

Voucher #	Item	Amount
63	Winona SWCD – Forestry Practice – Inv 2024-901 Krage = \$350.00, Inv 2024-904 Cynor = \$350.00, Inv 2024-906 Erickson = \$350.00; Managed Grazing – Inv 2023-05 Wachholz = \$8,332.90; Vegetative Management & Pollinator Planting – 2024-905 McGuire = \$2,250.00, Inv 2024-903 Todd = \$900.00, Inv 2024-902 Crawford = \$1,350.00; Ag Practices – Inv 2023-901 Mundt = \$11,352.00, Inv 2023-902 Benedett = \$10,796.85, Inv 2023-903 Shea = \$12,605.00, Inv 2023-904 Evers = \$12,676.00, Inv 2024-909 Clear Crest = \$11,724.20, Inv 2025-901 Valley Acres = \$23,620.50, Inv 2025-903 McMartin = \$16,052.80 & \$3,181.10, Inv 2025-905 Storm = \$5,221.35, Inv 2025-904 Kronebusch = \$3,000.00	\$ 124,112.70
64	SE MN Technical Support JPB – TSA7 Technical 2026 Q1	\$ 5,278.55
	Total	\$ 129,391.25
	Transfer of funds from Eitzen State Bank Acct # 8115 (FY23) to Cash General Fund	\$ 103,327.35
	Transfer of funds from Eitzen State Bank Acct # 9623 (FY25) to Cash General Fund	\$ 16,681.00

Motion by Kruse, seconded by Welke, approving payment of the above accounts payable and transfer of funds.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

Motion by Welke, seconded by Kruse to adjourn the meeting.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

NEXT MEETING -- Regular Meeting, May 14, 2026, 10:00 a.m. Ag Service Center

Approved: May 14, 2026
Date

Joe Driscoll
Secretary

Original signed document is available upon request at Root River Soil & Water Conservation District.