



Root River Soil and Water Conservation District

Agricultural Service Center
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Caledonia, MN 55921

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<https://www.co.houston.mn.us/department/soil-and-water/>

MINUTES OF THE ROOT RIVER SWCD

February 12, 2026

The Root River Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors met on February 12, 2026 at the Ag Service Center in Caledonia, Minnesota for its regular meeting.

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

Members Present:

Ken Anderson
Joe Driscoll
Matt Feldmeier
Glenn Kruse
Jerry Welke

Members Not Present:

Others:

Dave Walter, Jean Meiners, Dan Wermager and Janice Messner – SWCD staff; Ryan Hytry – NRCS staff; Zack Glaunert, Quail Forever & Pheasants Forever; Dave Copeland, BWSR staff; Jeremy Burt, Houston County Feedlot Officer; 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 January 8, 2026 board meeting.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

Employee Time Records: Motion by Feldmeier, seconded by Welke, approving the Employee Time Records.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

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

AGENCY REPORTS

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

- Copeland shared a competitive grant, BWSR Projects & Practices Drinking Water Sub-Grant, being funded through Clean Water Legacy funds opened February 11, 2026. He shared Fillmore SWCD is applying as a continuation to the nitrate BMP well sealing pilot work.
- Copeland indicated a new continuous CRP sign-up opens February 12 – March 20, 2026 and general sign-up March 9 – April 17, 2026.
- Copeland announced the SE MACDE Spring Meeting will be March 24, 2026 and he has been asked to give a BWSR update.
- Copeland stated he will be covering his counterpart's area while on maternity leave.

Zack Glauert, Quail Forever & Pheasants Forever Report

- Glauert shared he is working on two RIM applications and has two additional landowners interested in applying.
- Glauert reported he will be attending and presenting at Pheasant Fest February 19 – 22, 2026.

Jeremy Burt, Houston County Environmental Services Report

- Burt shared the Feedlot Workshop will be March 4, 2026 at Good Times, Caledonia, MN.
- Burt stated MPCA is breaking down the rule revisions into three categories and reviewed some of the proposed changes.
- Burt indicated his office has an Ag BMP Loan Program. Funds are available at a 3% fixed rate. Walter share Meiners will be assisting with initial electronic information requests in our office.
- Burt reported MDA has release a new noxious weed list and reviewed the changes.

Ryan Hytry, NRCS Report

- Hytry indicated they are working on EQIP with pre-approvals being released in March and April 2026.
- Hytry reiterated the information on the CRP sign-up.

PROGRAM REPORTS

- **WCA** – Walter reported the TEP panel met onsite with a landowner in Hokah Township who has been doing some ditching work in a wetland area. He shared a landowner in Spring Grove Township would like to reroute their driveway through a wetland area on their property. Walter shared the needed fixes to bike trail are being permitted.
- **Buffer Law** – Walter stated he has put together the maps for site inspections. Yucatan Township will be the focus area this year. Meiners has mailed out the letters.

PROGRAM REPORT

- **MDA Spring Grove Twp. Walkover** – Scanlan reported the Nitrogen Management meeting for Spring Grove Township producers was held January 28, 2026. He indicated eight producers and one agronomist were in attendance. He shared there will be a follow up meeting in March or April 2026.

Scanlan stated outreach letters have went out to crop producers in Black Hammer Township. This will be his next focus area.

MASWCD & MACDE - Walter shared the MASWCD Legislative Briefing and SWCD Day at The Capitol will be March 17 - 18, 2026.

Walter stated a SE MACDE meeting will be held Tuesday, March 24, 2026 in Goodhue County.

WATERSHED UPDATES

Bear Creek – No report.

Crooked Creek – No report.

Root River IWIP – Walter stated a Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 23, 2026.

Winnebago – No report.

WinLaC IWIP – Wermager reported the Policy Committee met Monday, February 9, 2026. Elections were held and the officers, day-to-day grant contact and fiscal agent will all remain the same. He stated in the upcoming months a work plan and budget will be put together for the FY27 grant. The Committee will review it at the August 2026 meeting. Wermager shared the Committee changed the Funding Policy for well sealing projects increasing the cap from 75% up to a cap of \$3,000 to 75% up to a cap of \$5,000. Messner shared they will be sponsoring three grazing mentor/mentee partnership and stated if anyone within the watershed area in the county is interested to let us know. Messner also stated with the Continuous CRP sign-up WinLaC is offering a \$1,000 incentive payment to landowners. Root River SWCD has \$2,000 available if they are in the WinLaC watershed.

PROGRAM & STAFF REPORTS:

Jean Meiners, Technician

- **MDA Private Well Mitigation (RO Systems)** – No report.
- **MDH Safe Drinking Water Tap-In** – Meiners shared she has fielded questions from two landowners. One with lead concerns and the other with coliform.
- **MDH Well Inventory Grant** – Meiners reported she has mailed 393 letters within two townships. During a recent meeting she was asked to provide MDH with an approximation of the number of unverified wells left in the county. Meiners reported there are approximately 1,685. MDH will be trying to obtain additional funds to expand the work for the remainder of the county.
- **BMP Projects** – No report.

Dan Wermager, Technician

- **Alliance Grant** – Wermager shared the slight change to the payment process for the program and stated a payment would be going out within a month.
- **ARPA** – No report.
- **2026 I-90 Soil Health Tour** – Wermager stated the 2026 I-90 Soil Health Tour was held February 6, 2026 at the Hokah Fire Station. A postcard invitation was mailed to all landowners in the county with 40 plus acres. This resulted to 35 producers in attendance. Staff and board supervisors in attendance all concurred the content of the event was good knowledge to have.

Janice Messner, Administrative Assistant

- **Volunteer Nitrate Monitoring Network** – No report.
- **Trees** – Messner reported tree sales are a bit on the slow side. To date 43 orders have been placed totaling 3,250 trees. Messner reviewed the availability of various tree species. She stated she may do a mass emailing in an attempt to increase orders being received.
- **Rain Gauge Monitoring** – Messner shared packets will be mailed to the participants soon. She stated there is a need for a volunteer in Winnebago and Black Hammer townships.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCIAL COMMITTEE: No report.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE: Walter stated he and the personnel committee met with the Houston County HR director and assistant to discuss the Minnesota Deferred Compensation Plan (MNDCP) and Minnesota Deferred Compensation 457(b) Plan (MNDCP).

TSA7 (Joint Powers) COMMITTEE: Walter shared he and Welke attended a TSA meeting on January 28, 2026. They reported all committees and officers will remain the same for the year and the budget was reviewed.

OLD BUSINESS – None.

Scanlan exited the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS & ACTION ITEMS

Motion by Feldmeier, seconded by Kruse, approving the 2026 Envirothon Dues of \$175.00.
Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke Opposed: None Motion carried.

Motion by Feldmeier, seconded by Welke, declining the FY26 Conservation Investment National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) membership opportunity for 2026.
Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke Opposed: None Motion carried.

Motion by Welke, seconded by Kruse, approving the SE SWCD Technical Support JPB 2026 Annual Membership Dues of \$4,000.00.
Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke Opposed: None Motion carried.

Copeland exited the meeting at 2:02 p.m.

Motion by Feldmeier, seconded by Kruse, approving the following change to the Personnel Policy – 4.14a Severance Pay - “... *If an employee has unused sick/safe leave, 50% of his/her hours not to exceed 360 hours will be enrolled in Minnesota State Retirement System’s Health Care Savings Plan (HCSP). Upon an employee’s death, contributions owed but not yet paid to the Health Care Savings Plan (HCSP) will be paid to the employee’s estate.*”
Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke Opposed: None Motion carried.

Motion by Feldmeier, seconded by Kruse, adopting Section 5.08 Other Benefits Defined Contribution Plan as written in the Root River SWCD Personnel Policy updated February 12, 2026.
Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke Opposed: None Motion carried.

Motion by Driscoll, seconded by Kruse, approving the WinLaC 1W1P 2026 RAW Webapp hosting contract at a fee of \$125.00.
Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke Opposed: None Motion carried.

COST SHARE PROGRAMS

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**

ARPA – (*Spending expiration 12/31/2026*) Available Funds \$ **6,469.39**

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**
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
5127	Ron Carlsen – Rent – February	\$ 1,287.00
5128	Kwik Trip – Fuel – SWCD Trucks	\$ 79.10
5129	VISA – Annual Fee = \$25.00; Postage = \$186.61; MDH Well Index Postage = \$310.39; Root River 1W1P Civic Engagement Expenses = \$386.31	\$ 908.31
5130	Goodhue SWCD – Envirothon Dues	\$ 175.00
5131	Houston County Treasurer – License Plate Renewal 2017 GMC	\$ 21.25
5132	SE SWCD Technical Support JPB – 2026 Annual Membership Dues	\$ 4,000.00
5133	Houston County Recorder – Recording fee	\$ 46.00
5134	Quill LLC – Office Supplies	\$ 139.97
		\$
	Total	\$ 6,656.63

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

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

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

Voucher #	Item	Amount
57	TSA7 – FY25 Technical 4 th Qtr. 2025	\$ 17,689.15
58	Wabasha SWCD – FY25 Technical 3 rd & 4 th Qtrs. 2025 = \$5,646.92; FY25 Proj Dev 3 rd & 4 th Qtrs. 2025 = \$1,051.61; FY25 Projects Non-Structural Walkes, Roger = \$5,143.00; FY25 Projects Non-Structural Walkes, Rachel = \$1,655.83; FY25 Projects Ag Practices Partial Payment Reiter \$1,857.59; FY23 Projects Non-Structural Walkes, Roger = \$857.00; FY25 WinLaC CRP Contracts 2025WinLaC-Wab-CRP1 – 2025WinLaC-Wab-CRP9 = \$1,00/each = \$9,000.00	\$ 25,211.95
59	Olmsted SWCD – FY25 Projects Well Decommissioning – Contract #25WinLaC-Olm-01 = \$2,686.88; Contract #25WinLaC-Olm-02 = \$3,000.00	\$ 5,686.88
60	Wabasha Forestry Committee – FY25 Education – Wabasha Forestry Day sponsorship 2/13/26	\$ 500.00
61	Brinks Wetland Services LLC – FY25 Project Development - WinLaC RAQ webapp 2026	\$ 125.00
	Total	\$ 49,212.98
	Transfer of funds from Eitzen State Bank Acct # 8115 (FY23) to Cash General Fund	\$ 1,857.59
	Transfer of funds from Eitzen State Bank Acct # 9623 (FY25) to Cash General Fund	\$ 37,498.39

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 Feldmeier to adjourn the meeting.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 2:23 p.m.

NEXT MEETING -- Regular Meeting, March 12, 2026, 1:00 p.m. Ag Service Center

Approved: 3-12-26
Date

Be Driscoll
Secretary