



Root River Soil and Water Conservation District

Agricultural Service Center

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Caledonia, MN 55921

(507) 724-5261 Ext. 3

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

MINUTES OF THE ROOT RIVER SWCD

March 12, 2026

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

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Feldmeier at 1:00 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; Julie Olinger, Farm Service Agency (FSA); Bob Scanlan, MN Department of Ag.

Those present took part in the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence in remembrance of past board supervisor Roger Stenhoff.

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

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

Employee Time Records & Supervisor Per Diem: Motion by Driscoll, seconded by Kruse, approving the Employee Time Records and Supervisor Per Diems.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

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

AGENCY REPORTS

Julie Olinger, Farm Service Agency Report

- Olinger shared the sign up period for the Farmer's Bridge Assistance Program is currently open and will close April 17, 2026. It is 100% assistance on certified 2025 crops. Assistance for specialty crops such as fruits and vegetables is expected to be coming. Again the crops must have been certified in 2025 to qualify for assistance.
- Olinger stated SDRP (Supplemental Disaster Relief Program), two phase crop insurance, is available.
- Olinger indicated a CCRP sign up is available until March 20, 2026 and a general CRP sign up is available until April 17, 2026. There must be cropping history for four out of the past six years to qualify for enrollment. The average rate per acre for CCRP is \$198.00 and \$187.00 per acre for general CRP.

Olinger exited the meeting at 1:28 p.m.

Ryan Hytry, NRCS Report

Feldmeier shared Hytry’s written report stating:

- EQIP application ranking deadline is March 20, 2026. Applications should be preapproved in the beginning of April.
- CRP renewal status reviews for 2026 expiring contracts deadline is March 20, 2026.
- Hytry has been covering NRCS office in Lewiston two to three days per week. This will be ongoing for the foreseeable future. Papenfuss is also assisting with EQIP and CRP for the Lewiston field office but has been staying in the Caledonia office.

Dave, Walter, District Manager Report

- Walter reported Root River SWCD will be receiving \$255,000 in cover crop cost share funds with additional dollars for technical assistance.
- Walter shared Fillmore SWCD is applying for a climate smart grant to replace the Alliance grant. If the application is successful it will offer cost share for three watersheds which will include Root River.
- Walter stated there is also a Feedlot grant for \$131,500 available to us. This is at 75% cost share and it can be piggy backed with other state and/or federal funding. Applications for these cost share dollars must be ranked.

PROGRAM REPORTS

- **WCA** – Walter reported there is no update but monthly meetings are held.
- **Buffer Law** – Walter stated he and Meiners attended a meeting in Rochester, MN to review new buffer updates. Where public waters are located buffers must be in place on each side of the public waters. Counties and watershed districts can now opt in or opt out of performing enforcement. If they do so BWSR will do the enforcement. Also, BWSR can revoke a county of watershed district’s enforcement option.
- **MDA Spring Grove Twp. Walkover** – Scanlan reported he has started doing walkovers in Black Hammer Township. He plans to host another township meeting for Spring Grove and Black Hammer Township producers within the next couple of months. Scanlan shared he is encouraging producers to sign up for EQIP funding to do feedlot fixes. A comprehensive nutrient management plan and feedlot fix design are needed for an EQIP funding sign up.

MASWCD & MACDE - Walter shared the SE MACDE Spring meeting will be held Tuesday, March 24, 2026 in Red Wing, MN. Three staff plan to attend.

WATERSHED UPDATES

Bear Creek – No report.

Crooked Creek – Meiners shared Crooked Creek Watershed District is interested in having a joint website with Root River SWCD. Discussion followed with a review of other SWCD websites and what our page looks like on the county’s website. ADA compliance and BWSR requirements were shared. Pricing through Fillmore County Journal is \$7,000 for a four year contract. Supervisors asked Meiners to see how much the Watershed District is willing to contribute financially to a website.

Scanlan exited the meeting at 2:03 p.m.

Root River IWIP – Wermager shared the Policy Committee met February 23, 2026. The main focus was the plan update which is being put together by Rachel Olm at HEI.

Winnebago – No report.

WinLaC IWIP – No report.

PROGRAM & STAFF REPORTS:

Jean Meiners, Technician

*** WinLaC 1W1P Accounts Payable ***

Voucher #	Item	Amount
62	Goodhue SWCD – FY25 Education – 2025 Fall Media Campaign w/Zumbro Watershed - KTTC	\$ 2,500.00
	Total	\$ 2,500.00
	Transfer of funds from Eitzen State Bank Acct # 9623 (FY25) to Cash General Fund	\$ 2,500.00

Motion by Driscoll, 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 2:48 p.m.

NEXT MEETING -- Regular Meeting, April 9, 2026, 1:00 p.m. Ag Service Center

Approved: 4-9-26
Date


Secretary