

AITKIN COUNTY SWCD
307 2nd STREET NW, ROOM #216
AITKIN, MN 56431

Minutes of the Aitkin County Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting held on Tuesday, August 18, 2026 at the Aitkin County Government Center, 3rd Floor Training Room. Meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Those present were:

Those absent were:

Francis Dierickx, Chair
Tom Fasteland, Vice Chair
Bob Janzen, Treasurer
Franklin Turnock, Secretary
Dan Gravley, Reporter
Janet Smude, District Manager
Lori Nelson, District Secretary
Brett Arne, MN BWSR Board Conservationist

Additions to the agenda:

- Tim Terrill, Mississippi Headwaters Board
- Bills over \$3000
 - Laurie Peterson, Wilkins, Cost-Share Reimbursement \$3846.73
 - Morrison Twp., \$23,589.80 Brd. 1W1P
 - Defenbaugh, Mille Lacs, Cost-Share Amendment/Ext. 10/17/26 to 6/5/27
 - Ekren, Mille Lacs, Cost-Share Project Proposal \$9202.13
 - Todd County SWCD \$4018.30

A motion was made by Bob Janzen and seconded by Dan Gravley to approve the agenda as amended. Approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Frank Turnock and seconded by Tom Fasteland to approve the July 21, 2026 minutes. Approved unanimously.

TREASURERS REPORT

Discussion. A motion was made by Dan Gravley and seconded by Tom Fasteland to accept the July financial statement. Approved unanimously.

Discussion re: CDs \$150,000

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Bob Janzen to approve \$150,000 into CDs (best rate that can be found). Approved unanimously.

CHECKS WRITTEN

A motion was made by Bob Janzen and seconded by Tom Fasteland to approve checks written. Approved unanimously.

AWARDS NOMINATION

Janet is working on the Awards Nomination for Conservation Cooperator.
Discussion re: BSALWMP Group Award. Janet will look into.

FARM BILL BIOLOGIST REPORT-Jamie

- RIM update
- Prescribed Burn Association meeting

BILLS OVER \$3000

CARLTON COUNTY SWCD, BIG SANDY 319/\$8272.50

A motion was made by Frank Turnock and seconded by Tom Fasteland to approve payment of \$8272.50 to Carlton County SWCD. Approved unanimously.

PHEASANTS FOREVER, \$3250

A motion was made by Bob Janzen and seconded by Dan Gravley to approve payment of \$3250 to Pheasants Forever. Approved unanimously.

CROW WING SWCD, \$28214.55/MISS BRD. 1W1P PHASE I

A motion was made by Dan Gravley and seconded by Frank Turnock to approve payment of \$28214.55 to Crow Wing SWCD. Approved unanimously.

CROW WING SWCD, \$8242.94/MISS BRD. 1W1P PHASE II

A motion was made by Bob Janzen and seconded by Dan Gravley to approve payment of \$8242.94. Approved unanimously.

TODD COUNTY SWCD, \$4018.30 MISS BRD. 1W1P

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Frank Turnock to approve payment of \$4018.30. Approved unanimously.

TIM TERRILL, MISSISSIPPI HEADWATERS BOARD

Tim Terrill gave a presentation 2026 SWCD Mississippi Headwaters Board General Overview.

BREAK

CALL MEETING BACK TO ORDER

PHOTO CONTEST

Photos and scoresheets were handed out and photos were voted on by the SWCD Board.

2026 CHANGES MONITORING PLAN FOR BUFFER COMPLIANCE TRACKING (AS REQUESTED BY BWSR)

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Bob Janzen to approve the 2026 Changes Monitoring Plan for Buffer Compliance Tracking as requested by BWSR. Approved unanimously.

VOLUNTEER LUNCH

We are looking to have our Volunteer Lunch, along with recognizing the Conservation Cooperator and photo contest winner late September early October. Long Lake Conservation Center was suggested for lunch. Ideas for a gift were travel mug, SWAG bag with related SWCD items—use picture from photo contest winner to print notepads, magnets, etc., chip clips, wind chimes, etc. A motion was made by Frank Turnock and seconded by Dan Gravley to approve a budget of \$1000 for Volunteer Lunch and gifts. Approved unanimously.

POTENTIAL SEPTEMBER TOUR

Discussion. A tour of American Peat Technology (APT) will be held the afternoon of our regular September SWCD Board meeting. A motion was made by Frank Turnock and seconded by Dan Gravley to have a box lunch.

MORRISON TWP., COST-SHARE REIMBURSEMENT/\$23,589.80
MISS BRD 1W1P

A motion was made by Bob Janzen and seconded by Tom Fastland to approve payment of \$23,589.80 to Morrison Township. Approved unanimously.

LAURIE PETERSON, WILKINS LAKE/\$3846.73, MISS BRD 1W1P

A motion was made by Frank Turnock and seconded by Bob Janzen to approve payment of \$3846.73 to Laurie Peterson. Approved unanimously

COST-SHARE AMENDMENT, DEFENBAUGH, MILLE LACS

A motion was made by Tom Fastland and seconded by Dan Gravley to approve a cost-share amendment for Defenbaugh for an extension on cost-share project from 10/17/26 to 6/5 27. Approved unanimously.

COST-SHARE PROJECT PROPOSAL, EKREN, MILLE LACS/\$9202.13
RUM RIVER 1W1P

A motion was made by Dan Gravley and seconded by Bob Janzen to approve a cost-share assistance contract for Ekren, Mille Lacs shoreline project \$9202.13 or 75% of the total eligible cost, whichever is less. Approved unanimously.

SNAKE RIVER REPORT-Dan

No projects approved.

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT-Janet

- Miss Brd. 1W1P reconciliation went pretty well.
- Miss Brd. Steering Committee, extension of grant-need to talk to Brett about this
- Miss Grand Rapids meeting (listening session)
- Snake River Watershed, possible project with C. Moser
- Starry Trek was held on Aug. 8, 2026.
- Lake Association Summit
- Miss Brd. 1W1P, GR 1W1P, and DC 23 invoices

DISTRICT TECHNICIAN REPORT-Sam

- Riparian Buffer update
- Culvert Inventory, finished field inventory of Turner Twp., finished the culvert inventory hard copy for Nordland Twp.
- Forestry update
- No Till Drill
- Shoreland—discussed tree planting with several landowners to help slow shoreline erosion.

SOIL HEALTH SPECIALIST OUTREACH SPECIALIST REPORT-Veronica

SOIL HEALTH

OUTREACH

- Lake Association Summit
- Planning a presentation MN Women in Conservation Webinar
- Native Plant training/tour hosted by Laura Kipf, our previous Pheasants Forever person

PROJECTS

- Working on a new soil health project in Kimberly to implement in the Spring of 2027
- Reworking a project for landowners who are interested in a wildlife Habitat planting

COUNTY AG INSPECTOR

- Attended the Ag Inspector short course in New Ulm, MN

OUTREACH

- Rivers & Lakes Fair-Planning for the 2027 Rivers & Lakes Fair will begin in November.

OTHER

- Water samples delivered to Brainerd, A.W. Labs
- Helped set up Lake Association Summit
- Keeping facebook updated with events and updating the website
- Helping with the Miss Grand Rapids media site requests
- Helping plan a native plant bingo in Tamarack

-Helping with a well sealing contract

PROJECT COORDINATOR/AIS REPORT-Brian

No reports. Brian gave his resignation and his last day of work will be at the end of the month.

WATERSHED MGMT/WETLAND SPECIALIST REPORT-Ellie

SHORELINES

- Site visits
- Project development and technical assistance on projects
- Developing plans and planning out timelines based on priority to adjust to the influx from the Miss. Grand Rapids ad campaign.

WETLANDS

- TEP meeting 7/22
- RO sent for Hagman

WATERSHEDS

- Rivers & Lakes Fair planning wrap up meeting 7/24
- SWAG monitoring (3x per month)

OTHER

- Cedar Lake Shoreline Restoration Demo. 7/25
- Lake Association Summit 7/30
- Native Plant Training, Laura Kipf

MN BWSR CONSERVATIONIST REPORT-Brett

- Program updates (RIM)
- New Cost-Share inspection forms
- RIM Forestry
- Contract Training
- Forest Stewardship Plan Guidance (3rd Party)

DC REPORT-Tom G

- Update on conservation practices installed
- Application deadline for FY27 EQIP and CSP is 9/11/26
- Prescribed Burn Association meeting held on 8/17/26
- Forage & Grassland Tour 9/2/26
- New hire in NRCS/Aitkin (part-time)

TSA 3 REPORT-Tom

No report. Next meeting is September 24, 2026

Tom discussed the upcoming SFIA (10% cut). A letter should be coming out soon allowing landowners to pull out of SFIA if they choose.

Tom Fasteland, Bob Janzen, and Frank Turnock will attend the Area III Fall meeting.

A motion was made by Dan Gravley and seconded by Tom Fasteland to adjourn at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Franklin Turnock
Secretary