



Root River Soil and Water Conservation District

Agricultural Service Center

805 N. Hwy. 44/76, Suite 1

Caledonia, MN 55921

(507) 724-5261 Ext. 3

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

MINUTES OF THE ROOT RIVER SWCD January 8, 2026

The Root River Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors met on January 8, 2026 at the Ag Service Center in Caledonia, Minnesota for its regular meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Anderson at 1:00 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.

Officers & Appointments

Motion by Kruse, seconded by Driscoll, approving the 2025 officers and committee representatives remain the same for 2026. Chair – Kenneth Anderson, Vice-Chair – Matt Feldmeier, Secretary – Joe Driscoll, Treasurer – Jerry Welke, Reporter – Glenn Kruse, Finance Committee – Driscoll and Welke, Personnel Committee – Feldmeier and Kruse, TSA7 Committee – Welke, Root River One Watershed, One Plan – Kruse and alternate Feldmeier, Mississippi River – Winona/La Crescent 1W1P – Welke and alternate Driscoll.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

Meeting Date & Time

Motion by Feldmeier, seconded by Welke, approving the monthly Root River SWCD board meetings be held on the second Thursday of the month at 10:00 a.m. May – October and 1:00 p.m. November – April at the Ag Service Center in Caledonia, Minnesota.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

Minutes: **Motion** by Kruse, seconded by Feldmeier, approving the minutes from the December 11, 2025 board meeting.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

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

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

Treasurer's Monthly Report: Welke recommended the December 2025 treasurer's report be placed on file for audit.

AGENCY REPORTS

Zack Glaunert, Quail Forever & Pheasants Forever Report

- Glaunert shared he serves as an advisor on the SE MN Prescribed Burn Association. The annual meeting will be held January 17, 2026. A burn plan training is planned for landowners in conjunction with the meeting.
- Glaunert reported he attended the BWSR Annual Convention. He also stated he meet with representatives from each school in Houston County along with Rushford High School to develop Steward Improvers Teams which are conservation based.
- Glaunert indicated he has been working on brush management plans and RIM applications.

Jeremy Burt, Houston County Environmental Services Report

- Burt reported end of year reporting is taking place and a recent hot topic is commercial solar.
- Burt shared the Feedlot Workshop will be March 4, 2026 at Good Times, Caledonia, MN.

Ryan Hytry, NRCS Report

- Hytry indicated they are working on preliminary planning for EQIP applications.
- Local work group notes were shared.

Dave Walter, District Manager

- Walter stated he has been on building site visits.

PROGRAM REPORTS

- **WCA** – Walter shared he has been on a proposed building site visit that has a tributary to public waters in Mound Prairie Township. Various agencies are meeting to give input on the proposed building site. He also reported a landowner has been some ditching work in Hokah Township.
- **Buffer Law** – No report.

AGENCY REPORT

Dave Copeland, BWSR Report

- Copeland shared eLink grant reporting is due February 1, 2026. He indicated an RFP for Clean Water Funding will be available in mid-February. The high priority for these funds will be drinking water protection areas.
- Copeland stated spring training for SWCD employees is scheduled for March 31, 2026 and will be virtual sessions in a.m.

PROGRAM REPORT

- **MDA Spring Grove Twp. Walkover** – Scanlan reported he is wrapping up his site visits with feedlot operators. He will be creating one sheet nitrate handout for easy access for operators. Scanlan stated he is moving his focus to crop producers in Black Hammer Township.

Scanlan shared on January 28, 2026 a Nitrogen Management meeting will be held in Spring Grove, MN for Spring Grove Township producers.

MASWCD & MACDE – No report.

WATERSHED UPDATES

Bear Creek – No report.

Crooked Creek – No report.

Root River IWIP – Wermager stated the Planning Work Group met on December 22, 2025 and started the plan review. It will be reviewed by section. Wermager reported BWSR has approved funding for the FY26/27 Root River IWIP Grant.

Winnebago – No report.

WinLaC IWIP – Messner reported the day-to-day grant contact, Sheila Harmes, retired December 31, 2025. Her predecessors are Dicey Spring and Brian Berthiaume.

PROGRAM & STAFF REPORTS:

Jean Meiners, Technician

- **MDA Private Well Mitigation (RO Systems)** – No report.
- **MDH Safe Drinking Water Tap-In** – Meiners shared she assisted a landowner applying for a free water test kit.
- **MDH Well Inventory Grant** – Meiners reported the mailing to locate unverified wells has had a response rate of approximately 50% of the landowners receiving letters in Wilmington Township and 25% in Spring Grove Township.
- **BMP Projects** – No report.

Dan Wermager, Technician

- **Alliance Grant** – Wermager shared round one participants have received two payments to date. Round two participants have received one payment and round three participants are currently signing contracts. He reported between Fillmore and Houston counties 22,000 acres of cover crops were planted using this grant funding.
- **ARPA** – No report.
- **2026 I-90 Soil Health Tour** – Wermager stated the 2026 I-90 Soil Health Tour will be in Hokah, MN on February 6, 2026 at the Hokah Fire Station.
- **MPCA SWAG** – Wermager shared planning is underway for May through September sampling. Sampling will be done once a month during 2026 and 2027 and are at different bodies of water than the previous round of sampling.
- **Nitrate Webinar** – Wermager indicated a virtual nitrate webinar is scheduled for January 13, 2026. It is open to SWCD staff and landowners.

Janice Messner, Administrative Assistant

- **Volunteer Nitrate Monitoring Network** – No report.
- **Trees** – Messner reported tree sales are occurring. She shared a comparison on the number of orders received to date is very similar to the number of orders during the same time frame last year. Messner noted the number of trees sold are down but expected sales to increase going into spring.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCIAL COMMITTEE: No report.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE: Walter stated he and the personnel committee will be meeting with the Houston County HR director in the near future to discuss the Minnesota Deferred Compensation Plan (MNDCP).

TSA7 (Joint Powers) COMMITTEE: Walter shared a TSA meeting is scheduled for January 28, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.

OLD BUSINESS

Walter shared to 2017 GMC Sierra is being sold for \$14,000. The transaction will take place the first or second week in February.

NEW BUSINESS & ACTION ITEMS

Motion by Feldmeier, seconded by Welke, approving the WinLaC Sub-Agreement Amendment 1 with Winona County, Olmsted SWCD and Southeast Minnesota Technical Support Joint Powers Board.

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

Motion by Kruse, seconded by Welke, approving the 2026 Supervisor Per Diem rate of \$125.00 per meeting.

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

Motion by Driscoll, seconded by Kruse, approving the MASWCD FY26 Dues in the amount of \$7,654.59.

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

Motion by Feldmeier, seconded by Welke, approving the 2026 MACDE Dues in the amount of \$25.00 per staff member.

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

Motion by Feldmeier, seconded by Driscoll, approving the bid and entering in the engagement letter for the district’s 2025 year-end financial audit with Peterson Company, Ltd. Bid amount \$5,300.00 for SWCD funds and \$650.00 for WinLaC 1W1P funds.

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

Motion by Kruse, seconded by Driscoll, approving the SE Minnesota Safe Drinking Water for Private Well User Sub-Agreement.

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

Motion by Feldmeier, seconded by Driscoll, approving Resolution 2026-01 Root River SWCD 2026 Guidelines on Use of SWCD Aid Payments.

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

Motion by Feldmeier, seconded by Kruse, approving a JAA increase request for Jean Meiners.

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

Motion by Driscoll, seconded by Kruse, delegating signing authority for Dave Walter on grants, grant amendments and sub-agreements.

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

Walter shared the Area 7 Envirothon will be held May 6, 2026 and has volunteered Welke to be a judge for the competition.

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 \$ 20,247.59*

FY24 Root River 1W1P Cost Share Payment Request

Name	Project/Contract #	Total Cost Estimate	Actual Project Cost	Request
Hoscheit Dairy Farms LLC	24FY24RR1W1P Grassed Waterway	\$32,898.00	\$27,775.25	\$27,775.25 @ 90% = \$24,997.73 EQIP = \$19,625.60 Crooked Creek Watershed District = \$3,500.00 Cost Share Allocated to project = \$5,879.20 Payment Amount Approved = \$1,872.13 <i>Slippage for reallocation = \$4,007.07</i>

Motion by Feldmeier, seconded by Welke, approving payment for Contract #24FY24RR1W1P Hoscheit Dairy Farms LLC – Grassed Waterway (412) in the amount of \$1,872.13 and re-allocating \$4,007.07 to FY24 Root River 1W1P Grant. Funding source FY24 Root River 1W1P Grant.

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

FY24 Root River 1W1P Cost Share Payment Request

Name	Project/Contract #	Total Cost Estimate	Actual Project Cost	Request
Feldmeier, Matt	33FY24RR1W1P Roofs & Covers	\$97,056.60	\$89,983.11	\$89,983.11 @ 90% = \$80,984.80 Cost Share Allocated to project = \$87,350.94 Payment Amount Approved = \$80,984.80 <i>Slippage for reallocation = \$6,366.14</i>

Motion by Driscoll, seconded by Kruse, approving payment for Contract #33FY24RR1W1P Feldmeier, Matt – Roofs & Covers (351) in the amount of \$80,984.80 and re-allocating \$6,366.14 to FY24 Root River 1W1P Grant. Funding source FY24 Root River 1W1P Grant – Feedlot funds.

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

ARPA – (Spending expiration 12/31/2026) Available Funds \$ 10,688.59

ARPA Payment Request

Name	Project/Contract #	Actual Project Cost	Request
Feldmeier, Matt	Roofs & Covers - Engineering	\$4,688.00	\$4,688.00 @ 90% = \$4,219.20 Payment Amount Approved = \$4,219.20

Motion by Driscoll, seconded by Kruse, approving payment for Feldmeier, Matt – Roofs & Covers (351) Engineering in the amount of \$4,219.20. Funding source ARPA.

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

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 **\$9,660.80**

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
5115	Ron Carlsen – Rent – January	\$ 1,287.00
5116	Kwik Trip – Fuel – SWCD Trucks	\$ 70.52
5117	Coordinated Business Systems, Ltd. – Office Machine Maintenance Kyocera – Taskalfa 4052CI	\$ 1,109.67
5118	Hoscheit Dairy Farms LLC - #24FY24RR1W1P – Grassed Waterway	\$ 1,872.13
5119	Iowa DNR State Forest Nursery - Trees	\$ 265.00
5120	MN Counties Intergovernmental Trust – Liability Ins = \$3,878.00 Worker’s Compensation = \$3,599.00	\$ 7,477.00
5121	MASWCD – FY26 Dues	\$ 7,654.59
5122	Quill LLC - Office Supplies	\$ 40.59
5123	Petty Cash – Meals = \$0.23; Education = \$0.16; Vehicle Maintenance = \$5.00	\$ 5.39
5124	Minnesota Revenue – 2025 Sales & Use Tax	\$ 713.00
5125	Feldmeier, Matt – #33FY24RR1W1P – Roofs & Covers (FY24 Root River 1W1P = \$80,984.80 & ARPA = \$4,219.20)	\$ 85,204.00
5126	VISA – Membership Dues - 2026 MACDE Dues = \$100.00; Vehicle Maintenance - 2017 GMC = \$175.73	\$ 275.73
	Total	\$105,974.62
	Transfer of Funds from Cash General Fund to Bear Creek Watershed Investment Acct. 10033399	\$ 1,000.00
	Transfer of Funds from Cash General Fund to Winnebago Watershed Investment Acct. 10033340	\$ 1,000.00

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.

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

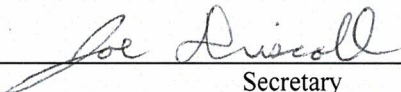
Voucher #	Item	Amount
55	Fillmore SWCD – FY25 Technical 4 th Qtr. 2025	\$ 1,731.60
56	Winona County – FY25 Admin 4 th Qtr. 2025 = \$4,093.60; FY25 Project Development = \$95.26	\$ 4,188.86
	Root River SWCD – FY23 Technical 4 th Qtr. 2025 = \$359.52; FY25 Admin 4 th Qtr. 2025 = \$181.31; CRP Admin 4 th Qtr 2025 = \$16.48	\$ 557.31
	Total	\$ 6,477.77
	Transfer of funds from Eitzen State Bank Acct # 8115 (FY23) to Cash General Fund	\$ 359.52
	Transfer of funds from Eitzen State Bank Acct # 9623 (FY25) to Cash General Fund	\$ 6,101.77

Motion by Feldmeier, 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.

Chair Anderson declared the meeting adjourned at 2:04 p.m.

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

Approved: 2-12-26
 Date


 Secretary



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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