

**KOOCHICHING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
COURTHOUSE COUNTY BOARD ROOM  
715 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET \* INTERNATIONAL FALLS \* MN \* 56649  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2018**

Members Present:	Ralph Lewis	District I
	George Aitchison	District II
	Richard Dreher	District IV
	Al Linder	District V
 Members Absent:	 Eldon Voigt	 District III
 Others Present:	 Pam Tomevi	 District Administrator
	Jolen Simon	Program Coordinator
	Eric Olson	Resource Conservationist
	Sam Soderman	Water Resource Specialist
	James Aasen	Forest Resource Specialist
	 Kevin Adee	 Koochiching County Commissioner
	Wayne Skoe	Koochiching County Commissioner
	Tom Dougherty	Rainy Lake Property Owners Association
	Jim Yount	Rainy Lake Property Owners Association
	Dale Johnson	Rainy Lake Property Owners Association
	Dan Vellieux	Rainy Lake Property Owners Association
	Dr. Jeff Hardwig	Polar Polers Ski Club
	Steven Johnson	Polar Polers Ski Club
	Burgess Eberhardt	Polar Polers Ski Club

Chair Linder called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

- 2018/2-1 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Dreher to approve the agenda as presented.  
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**
- 2018/2-2 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Dreher to approve the minutes dated January 8, 2018 as presented.  
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**
- 2018/2-3 Motion by Dreher, seconded by Lewis to approve the Treasurer’s report ending January 31, 2018 as presented.  
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**
- 2018/2-4 Motion by Aitchison, seconded by Lewis to approve Accounts Payable in the amount of \$385.00 (details on file) and to allow payment of ordinary and necessary bills between February 6, 2018 and March 5, 2018, not to exceed budget.  
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**
- 2018/2-5 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Dreher to ratify paid bills, check numbers 10329 to 10357 including electronic transfers, in the total amount of \$52,679.82 (details on file).  
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

## **Guest Introductions**

The Board welcomed Tom Dougherty, President of the Rainy Lake Property Owners Association (RLPOA) and fellow members Jim Yount, Dale Johnson, and Dan Vellieux.

Dougherty narrated a slide presentation and discussed how high water events have broken cattail mats loose, creating navigation hazards, blocking access to the main channels, creating critical habitat loss (i.e. fish spawning), and causing damage to commercial and private property.

Further discussion included potential grant opportunities, additional partners, and current efforts by Voyageurs National Park (VNP) to create a plan for cattail disposal after it is harvested to keep the invasive seed from germinating in the future. Commissioner Adee suggested contacting the Laurentian Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council for possible grant writing assistance and commented that he would also discuss with the County Board.

Dougherty asked the SWCD for technical and administrative assistance in addressing the floating cattail mats and the problems associated with them.

**2018/2-6 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Linder authorizing staff to provide technical and administrative assistance to the RLPOA in addressing concerns with floating cattail mats. Specific assistance may include establishing partnerships, prioritizing high-density cattail areas, helping create an aquatic plant management plan for Rainy Lake, and assisting with applicable grant applications.**  
**Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

The Board welcomed Dr. Jeff Hardwig, Steven Johnson, and Burgess Eberhardt, who represented the Polar Polers Ski Club. The group requested SWCD assistance with grant writing to help fund the expansion of a bog walk project currently planned for summer/fall of 2018 and the possible addition of an outdoor learning center along the Tilson Creek Ski Trail system. At present, the trail system is inaccessible outside of winter months and must currently be accessed through private property near Gold Shores. Expanding boarded bog walks at key locations would provide public access to a 15-mile trail system and connect visitors with the Voyageurs National Park (VNP) trail. Creating year-round access would provide a multi-use destination for bikers, bird-watchers, hikers, photographers, students on field trips, and would also be wheel-chair accessible.

**2018/2-7 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison to provide technical and administrative assistance to the Polar Polers Ski Club in addressing year-round accessibility to the Tilson Creek Ski Trail system. Specific assistance may include assisting with a Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) or other applicable grant applications, technical guidance, and public outreach and engagement.**  
**Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

## **Supervisor Reports**

None

## **Committee Reports:**

The Budget Committee presented the 2018 Operating Budget for review and approval.

**2018/2-8 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Dreher approving BC 2018-1 as presented (details on file).**  
**Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

The Personnel Committee presented the 2018 Staff Wages and Benefits for review and approval.

**2018/2-8 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Dreher approving PC 2018-1 as presented (details on file) effective 1/1/2018.**  
**Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

### **NRCS**

The District Conservationist is on vacation and did not submit a monthly report. The district administrator reported that this position will be vacated by the current DC as of March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

### **District Administrator Report**

See attached.

**2018/2-9 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Dreher authorizing the district administrator to transfer a minimum of \$25,000, maximum of \$50,000 from the checking and savings accounts at Border State Bank into 19-month CDs under the current “Sweetheart of a Deal” promotion.**  
**Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

### **Resource Conservationist Report**

See attached.

### **Water Resources Specialist Report**

See attached.

### **Forest Resource Specialist Report**

See attached. Discussion also included buffer cost-share update.

### **Program Coordinator**

See attached.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **2017 PERA Exclusion Report:**

**2018/2-10 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Dreher approving the 2017 PERA Exclusion Report as presented.**  
**Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

#### **CPL-Rat Root River:**

The district administrator reported that one bid was received for the construction of two spawning riffles along the Rat Root River.

**2018/2-11 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison authorizing Up North Builders as the contractor for the construction of two riffles to be completed by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019 through Rat Root River Enhancement grant funds.**  
**Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

#### **NRCS Technical Service Provider (TSP) Working Agreement:**

The district administrator discussed having the forest resource specialist register as a Technical Service Provider (TSP) with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Discussion included whether the certification should be registered under the District as a whole, or under the forest resource specialist individually.

**2018/2-12 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison authorizing the District to enter into an NRCS Technical Service Provider (TSP) Working Agreement stating that we will maintain a TSP certified employee on staff for the duration of this agreement.  
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

**Upcoming Meetings:**

**Board Approval:**

The Board discussed upcoming meetings for the 2018 Board/Staff Retreat and the Area VIII meeting in Bemidji on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**2018/2-13 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Dreher to table the 2018 Board/Staff Retreat scheduling and authorize the board and staff to attend the Area VIII meeting on March 2 in Bemidji.  
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

**GENERAL BUSINESS:**

The Board reviewed an invitation from MPCA to attend a presentation on February 27<sup>th</sup> in Northome regarding the Bartlett Lake Paleolimnological Study that was recently completed. It was noted that addressing impairments in Bartlett Lake is a high priority in the Koochiching County Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan. Supervisor Dreher and the resource conservationist will attend as representatives of the District.

**Confirm Next Meeting Date:**

The next regular board meeting of the Koochiching SWCD will be held on Monday March 5, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the courthouse board meeting room.

Linder asked about the possibility of publishing of the SWCD Board meeting minutes in the local newspaper to further promote the District. The district administrator recommended that the Education/Public Relations Committee discuss and report back to the Board.

The forest resource specialist discussed a possible nomination for a SFI Logger of the Year Award.

The district administrator requested the Board remove her as a member of the Education/Public Relations Committee and assign the program coordinator in her place.

**2018/2-14 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Linder to amend motion 2018/1-2 regarding committee members follows:**

- **Education/Public Relations Committee: Al Linder/Richard Dreher/Program Coordinator**

**Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

**Adjourn Meeting:**

**2018/2-15 Motion by Linder, seconded by Dreher to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 p.m.  
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Dreher, Linder. Motion carried.**

**Submitted by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Board Secretary, George Aitchison**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Approved:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Board Chairman, Al Linder**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

# Koochiching SWCD District Administrator Report

January 2018

- ) **Aquatic Invasive Species:**
  - Invoicing and grant tracking;
  
- ) **Boise Wood Ash:**
  - Landowner assistance with soil samples; Invoicing and 2018 contract proposal; partner meeting with PCA;
  -
- ) **County Buffer:**
  - Cooperative Weed Management meeting;
  
- ) **CPL-Rat Root River:**
  - RFP for spawning riffles;
  
- ) **Conservation Delivery**
  - Landowner assistance on water levels; final water plan updates/send out for state agency review; meeting with NRCS District Conservationist and new Soil Con Tech;
  
- ) **LF-NIPF2:**
  - Landowner FS contracts; grant tracking/update to invoices; work plan/budget review;
  
- ) **Local Capacity**
  - Administration/staff coordination;
  
- ) **MPCA Contracts**
  - WPLMN amendment/invoicing/grant tracking; RBW watershed document review/invoicing/grant tracking; RBI invoicing/grant tracking;
  
- ) **Natural Resource Block Grant:**
  - eLink reporting; landowner assistance/discussion re: potential projects (floating cattail mats and wetland bog walk); meeting with Rep. Rob Ecklund; LCCMR grant information;

## **General Administration:**

- ) W2/1099 distribution and submission; 2018 operating budget; Budget/Personnel Committee meetings; 2018 treasurer report form updates; 2018 billing rates, Board meeting prep/follow-up items; Board minutes/agenda; staff meetings/training; calendar update/time tracking; Payroll; PERA; FWT/SWT; bank statement reconciliation; QB transactions/updates; Treasurer Report; Accounts Receivable; Accounts Payable, budget updates; bank deposits/online banking; staff meetings; file/record maintenance; general phone/mail/email

Submitted by:

Pam Tomevi, District Administrator

# Resource Conservationist Report

## January 2018

### WCA

- Talking to ESD on notices for upcoming projects and decisions with other agencies.
- Assisting landowners with permit process and identifying areas of wetlands on possible wetland properties in the area.
- Working with DNR, BWSR, and ACOE on getting information for permits and actual project implementation.
- Work with local organization on submitting grant application documents regarding proposed projects and impacts.
- Year end tasks with county and highway project applications.

### Wood Ash

- Assisting landowners with process/working with DH contracting.
- Holding/not receiving any more long permits due to the amount of permits that are already out there pending and amount of workload for the contractor. I will continue permitting long fields when improvements are made and fields are caught up on spreading and hauling.
- Working with DH contracting on permits and areas to dump/spread with current conditions.
- Meeting with PCA on general program tasks and day to day activities.

### CPL – RRR

- Permitting, working with DNR on request for proposals, advertisement for bids, contacting landowners, general tasks for project.

### Water Quality

- Sampling mainly on monthly event basis now.
- Calls to project manager and other agencies to check status on other river conditions and entering data.
- Data recording/updating and attend MPCA led trainings/phone conferences.
- Conference calls with MPCA staff on continued sampling.
- Year end data submittal and final report for program.
- Switching over to amended contracts for additional sampling and grant changes with MPCA.

Submitted by: Eric Olson

# Water Resource Specialist Report

## January 2018

### AIS

- Inspection program
- AIS invoicing
- 2018 Inspection program planning
- 4<sup>th</sup> quarter billing

### Rainy Basin

- Contract amendments/changes
- LF sampling contract writeup changes
- Sampling planning with MPCA staff
- Culvert inventory review
- 4<sup>th</sup> quarter billing

### SWAG

- Contract Changes
- 4<sup>th</sup> quarter billing
- Budget review
- Pre-sampling call w/ MPCA and LOW SWCD

### Local Capacity

- Water plan
- Landowner questions/walk-in
- Littlefork SWAG contract work
- County Mapping
- MapLogic download and review for plat book

### WPLMN

- Sampling
- FLUX review, catchup

### Miscellaneous

- Emails

Submitted by: Sam Soderman

# Koochiching SWCD Forest Resource Specialist's Report

January 2018

## Local Capacity-Forestry

- J Researched general forestry and forest health topics.
- J Processed contracts for several upcoming Forest Stewardship Plans and began field work.
- J Continued introductions and networking with SWCD partners, various agency staff, and landowners.
- J Completed a forest stewardship plans and began another.
- J Began NRCS Technical Service Provider Application
- J Attended the U of M Extension Forestry/Wildlife Review at the Cloquet Forestry Center

## Cooperative Weed Management Area

Coordinated and organized a preparation meeting and continued establishment process with the MN DNR Northeast Planner.

## NIPF 2

- J Discussed and promoted the project as landowners respond to the invitation letters.
- J Processed final invoices and survey results.
- J Tracked in-kind agency match with the help of DNR PFM staff.
- J Worked on creation of the project book.

## MN Buffer Initiative

- J Reviewed BWSR and MN DNR Buffer Law updates and guidance as they became available
- J Coordinating with the County Buffer Committee in establishing local jurisdiction and processes.
- J Addressed responses to the buffer letter and discussed landowner options.
- J Helped the county ESD draft the county buffer ordinance and prepare for public comment meeting.
- J Continued thorough review and updating of buffer mapping affected parcels.

## District Tree Program

- J Inventoried last year's tree orders and determined tree order amounts for 2018.
- J Ordered trees and coordinated with several landowners on special orders.

Submitted by: James Aasen

Forest Resource Specialist



# **Koochiching SWCD Program Coordinator Report**

## **January 2018**

### **Local Capacity:**

- eLINK data entry and submit final financial reports for completed grants, submit all interim reporting for 2/1/18 deadline
- Finalize water plan and submit for State review (review period is through 2/7/18)
- Envirothon planning call and follow-up communication with planning team, volunteer recruitment
- Contract amendment discussion
- Website updates and research ideas for additional information on the site

### **Rainy Basin MPCA**

- Amendment updating
- Semi-annual reporting
- 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter invoice completion and submittal

### **Rainy Basin International & Watershed Coordinator**

- Semi-annual reporting
- 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter invoice completion and submittal

### **WPLMN**

- Complete and submit 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter invoice

### **PCA Wood Ash**

- End User Forms sent, and up to date
- Updated permits, and spreading
- Update summary, hauling reports and spreading reports, permit coversheets
- Met with contractor periodically to discuss hauling/spreading progress
- Met with new PCA staff to update on regular wood ash procedures

### **NRBG Grants**

- Climatology data entry and mail forms to U of M, submit to NRCS, mail calendars and forms to volunteers
- eLINK data entry reporting and match calculations; all reports submitted by 1/26/18 for the 2/1/18 reporting deadline

### **General Administration**

Customer walk-in general assistance; board meeting prep; minutes and agenda; minutes book updating; reporting; website maintenance; credit card tracking; holiday; vacation

Submitted by:

Jolén Simon

Program Coordinator