

ROLE OF A SUPERVISOR AS A COMMUNITY LEADER

As a community leader, you help guide your community in natural resource issues.

Specifically, you are responsible for:

- Acting as a local grassroots representative for soil and water conservation.
- Maintaining good conservation on the land you manage.
- Acting as a spokesperson on conservation and environmental issues.
- Utilizing existing and new innovative programs to promote conservation at the local level, such as:
 - Poster & Essay contest
 - Newsletter
 - Tree Programs
 - Forest Stewardship
 - Erosion Control
 - Tours
 - Exhibits, demonstrations, etc.
- Discussing the district's programs with businessmen, civic and sporting clubs, professional groups, educators, and farm owners and operators.
- Joining various planning organizations and agencies, within the conflict of interest guidelines, and helping to guide these people in the use of good resource management practices.



**FOR MORE
INFORMATION,
CALL THE
SWCD AT 218-283-1174**

Information courtesy of the Minnesota
SWCD Supervisor's Handbook

SUPERVISORS & STAFF OF THE KOOCHICHING SWCD

Supervisors

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT RUNNING FOR SUPERVISOR OF THE KOOCHICHING COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT (SWCD)

The Koochiching Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) is a local agency that provides access to natural resource management and conservation services. In cooperation with local, state, and federal agencies, the SWCD provides technical, financial, and educational assistance to address natural resource concerns. Assistance is available to all taxpayers and land users within the borders of Koochiching County.



ROLES OF A SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT (SWCD) SUPERVISOR

Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisors are elected officials who have been entrusted with some of Minnesota's most precious assets: our natural resources. Your primary responsibility is to ensure that your community uses its natural resources wisely, with an eye toward the future. To do this, you must seek and achieve a delicate balance between people and the land we inhabit.

In order to be an effective board member and feel a sense of accomplishment for the people you serve, you must have a good working knowledge of your responsibilities as (1) an SWCD board member, (2) an elected official, and (3) a community leader.

ROLE OF A SUPERVISOR AS AN SWCD BOARD MEMBER

There are three key aspects to the role of a supervisor as an SWCD board member: policy development, annual and long-range planning, and working with the district staff.

Policy Development:

The SWCD board of supervisors is a policy board, meaning that its primary focus is not on running the day-to-day activities of the district, but on setting overall policy and long-term objectives. The staff then uses these policies and objectives to ensure that the district is proceeding in the general direction laid out by the board. Typical policy development may include personnel management, charges for services, election of officers, training, and technical assistance.

Planning:

Because board members focus on long-range objectives and goals, one of the most important parts of your job is developing your district's annual and comprehensive plans. Supervisors must be involved in all aspects of plan development and implementation, particularly in determining the long-term objectives of the district. Although, theoretically, the board members write the plan and the staff carry it out, realistically, staff involvement is often critical in the plan development and supervisors often have a strong role in carrying out the plan. Main areas of planning include:

- Definition of purpose
- Prioritization of resource concerns
- Development of objectives
- Determination of actions

Working With Staff:

Although the policies and annual and long-range plans developed by the board will guide the district staff in everyday activities, there are a number of more specific items you should work on with the staff.

- Delegate responsibilities to employees.
- Set work priorities.
- Develop annual and long-range budgets.
- Identify training needs and arrange schedule for board and staff
- Develop an employee evaluation system.
- Provide adequate clerical and technical help to meet the needs of your district. Provide each employee with a specific job description.
- Obtain a surety bond for all individuals within the district organization entrusted with district funds and equipment.

- Review and comment on protected waters permits.
- Attend monthly board meetings and serve on various committees as assigned.
- Approve or reject conservation plans.
- Look for new programs to expand existing programs.
- Support local, state, and national associations to keep lines of communication open and provide representation of SWCD concepts to all levels.
- Prepare an annual activities report.

ROLE OF A SUPERVISOR AS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL

As an elected official, you're responsible for operating the district as a political subdivision of state government. In addition to establishing district conservation and legislative priorities, other duties include:

- Establishing policies to implement state grants programs.
- Maintaining a working relationship with other political bodies and state agencies, including BWSR, USDA, FSA, NRCS, county commissioners, county extension, and other agencies.
- Entering into memorandums of understanding or working agreements with as many agencies as necessary to coordinate the conservation and development of resources in the district.
- Pursuing funding options for district operation as opportunities arise.
- Cooperating with other districts and watersheds in resource activities.
- Monitoring your actions to comply with program rules and regulation.