

**KOOCHICHING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE
MONDAY, JUNE 7, 2021 at 7:00 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT IN COUNTY BOARDROOM: Supervisors Voigt and Linder

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: Supervisor Lewis

OTHERS PRESENT IN COUNTY BOARDROOM: Jolen Simon

OTHERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: Pam Tomevi, Sam Soderman, Kevin Adee (Koochiching County Commissioner); Jody Peek (NRCS); Will Lee (NRCS); Wayne Skoe (Koochiching County Commissioner)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Supervisors Aitchison and Dreher

Chair Voigt called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

2021/6-1 Motion by Linder, seconded by Lewis to approve the agenda as presented.

Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Voigt, Linder. Motion carried.

2021/6-2 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Linder to approve the minutes from the May 3, 2021 regular meeting with a correction.

Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Voigt, Linder. Motion carried.

2021/6-3 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Linder to ratify paid bills, check numbers 11165 to 11174 including electronic transfers, in the total amount of \$58,683.84 (details on file).

Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Voigt, Linder. Motion carried.

2021/6-4 Motion by Linder, seconded by Lewis to approve the Treasurer's report ending April 30, 2021 as presented.

Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Voigt, Linder. Motion carried.

2021/6-5 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lewis to allow payment of ordinary and necessary bills between June 8, 2021 and July 12, 2021, not to exceed budget.

Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Voigt, Linder. Motion carried.

Guest Introductions

None.

REPORTS

Supervisor Reports:

Voigt reported on his attendance at the MN SWCD Forestry Association meeting. Aiken County brought forth a resolution to encourage the continuation of BWSR's forestry support efforts. The District Administrator read aloud a similar resolution submitted by Voigt:

BWSR Continued Forestry Support

Whereas, proper forest management leads to healthy forests, soil health, good air and water quality, improved wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities; and

Whereas, the “Land of 10,000 Lakes” needs SWCD’s to provide forest management assistance to help keep the “10,000 Lakes” healthy; and

Whereas, many SWCD’s have foresters on staff that provide detailed forest management assistance to private landowners; and

Whereas, many other SWCD’s provide some level of forestry assistance including tree sales; and

Whereas, SWCD forest management assistance is recognized and supported by State agencies and citizens.

Therefore be it resolved, that the MASWCD strongly encourage the BWSR to continue their significant forestry support to SWCD’s, both technically and through the procurement and administration of forest related grants.

2021/6-6 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Linder to approve the Koochiching SWCD resolution entitled “BWSR Continued Forestry Support” as presented and authorize staff to submit to Area VIII for discussion/approval.

Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Voigt, Linder. Motion carried.

Next Area VIII Meeting: Friday, June 25th at Beltrami County Courthouse, hosted by Crow Wing SWCD.

Committee Reports:

None.

NRCS District Conservationist Report:

- NRCS is monitoring the drought status, as payments could be triggered if it were to reach a certain point.
- A new employee will begin in Brainerd on July 6th. There are two positions open in Bemidji.
- Local Working Group Meeting will take place on June 14th.
- CSP: 7 applications ranked in Koochiching and 3 in Lake of the Woods County. They were ranked as of May 28th but results have not become public at this time.
- RCPP program is new this year for improving forest health and wildlife resources.
- Conservation Incentives Contracts is a pilot project only, but MN is not taking applications until 2022.

District Administrator Report:

See attached.

Resource Conservationist Report:

See attached.

Water Resources Specialist Report:

See attached.

Additional discussion pertained to Ash River and Kabetogama AIS inspection sites, neither of which currently have a decontamination unit. It was noted that Voyageurs National Park is in the process of purchasing a unit. Discussion also included positive AIS program feedback received from boaters, specifically one gentleman traveling from Red Lake to Rainy Lake who called ahead to inquire about decontaminating his boat before launching.

Forest Resource Specialist Report:

See attached.

Program Coordinator:

See attached.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS**Livestock Producer Workshop**

The District Administrator reviewed an email from the Lake of the Woods SWCD asking the Koochiching SWCD to consider covering soil and manure testing fees for Koochiching County producers who register and attend their upcoming workshop on July 30th. The workshop will take place at a livestock producer's farm up by Long Point, north of Williams and will include presentations from the Sustainable Farming Association, UMN Extension, NRCS, and MDA. Topics covered will include rotational grazing, forage and pasture productivity and soil testing, NRCS programs and the MN Water Quality Ag Cert Program.

2021/6-7 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Linder authorizing the District to pay for soil and manure testing fees for the first 10 Koochiching County producers who register and attend the Lake of the Woods Producer Workshop on July 30th, total cost not to exceed \$600.

Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Voigt, Linder. Motion carried.

Rainy Basin WRAPS Amendment

2021/6-8 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Linder supporting the amendment as proposed and authorizing the District Administrator's signature.

Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Voigt, Linder. Motion carried.

Permits

None.

General Business

- City of Big Falls Wellhead Protection Plan has been approved
- The Water Resources Specialist informed the Board that, due to the lack of District owned equipment, he used his personal cordless drill to assist with field work, during which time it was lost.

2021/6-9 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Linder authorizing the District to purchase needed field equipment, not to exceed budget, and approving the replacement of the lost drill, not to exceed \$200.

Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Voigt, Linder. Motion carried.

2021/6-10 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Linder acknowledging that board meeting minutes from April 2020 through May 2021 were not able to be signed due to remote work and meetings during COVID and, on the advice of CPA, all past and future unsigned approved minutes will be signed and dated with current date when Chair and Secretary are available to sign in person.

Public Comment:

None.

Confirm Next Meeting Date:

The next regular board meeting of the Koochiching SWCD will be held on **Monday, July 12 at 7:00 p.m. via teleconference/in-person.**

Adjournment:

2021/6-11 Motion by Linder, seconded by Lewis to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Voting yes by roll call: Lewis, Voigt, Linder. Motion carried.

Submitted by:

Board Secretary, George Aitchison

Date

Approved:

Chair, Eldon Voigt

Date

Koochiching SWCD District Administrator Report

April 2021

- **AIS**
 - Invoicing/grant and expense tracking; program communications with staff
- **BWSR Conservation Delivery**
 - eLINK updates; 1W1P discussions/resolution distribution; landowner assistance; website updates; no till drill info
- **BWSR Local Capacity**
 - Staff oversight/assistance; IRLWWB WebEx/WLC meetings; public assistance on data access re: water level information
- **County/District**
 - COVID-19/Legislative updates; staff meetings/work load updates; Board Meeting; County Board minutes; MCIT reports and uploads for annual risk assessment, EDP inventory, and annual payroll summary; upgrade for financial software (Quickbooks Pro 2021); landowner calls/questions; process tree and native plant sales; COVID vaccine
- **DNR Contracts:**
 - Invoicing/grant and expense tracking; program communications with project managers;
- **MPCA Contracts**
 - Invoicing/grant and expense tracking; program communications with project manager/partners; change orders
- **Natural Resource Block Grant**
 - Shorewood Drive geotechnical report review; eLINK updates; 319 NKE work plan development with staff/MPCA
- **Wood Ash**
 - Invoicing/grant and expense tracking; Landowner assistance

General Administration

- Board meeting prep/follow-up items; Board minutes/agenda; 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; file/record maintenance; general phone/mail/email

Submitted by:

Pam Tomevi, District Administrator

Resource Conservationist Report

April 2021

WCA

- 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.
- Continued work on WCA tasks and updating Koochiching ESD on in-progress projects.
- Work with various landowners on regulations and upcoming projects.

Wood Ash

- Assisting landowners with process/working with DH contracting.
- Ash production is on average lower (~2 loads/day).
- Working with DH contracting on permits and areas to dump/spread with current conditions.

CPL Grants

- Assisting RLPOA on feasibility of obtaining a grant for increasing water flow, removing cattails, and restoring native veg.

Water Quality

- Calls to project manager and other agencies to check river level status.
- Ice out on all sites as of 3/30, now routinely sampling 9 sites based on flow and water levels.

Miscellaneous

- Various meetings, program changes, office coverage, mainly due to covid-19 responses to programs.
- 319 grant meetings and discussion on how to proceed with grant process with staff.
- Findings on Shorewood Drive from WSB engineering for a geotechnical report. Findings too be discussed between City of Int'l Falls, SWCD, Kooch County, and JPB on May 11th during county board meeting.
- Attended Bartlett Lake management meeting to discuss lake progression and plans.
- Haz. Waste collection scheduled for May 26th at 12.
- Tree pickup May 6-7.

Submitted by: Eric Olson

Water Resource Specialist Report

April 2021

AIS

- Calls/emails w/ Always There Staffing
- Inspection program documents filed
- 2021 NSL contract review/budget
- Watercraft inspection program planning
- Training coordination for inspectors
- Inspector equipment prep

SWAG

- 2021 monitoring call

RBW

- Geomorph work w/ DNR MPCA
- Sediment fingerprinting field work
- Field work prep
- EQUIS Data entry, photolog, field notes
- BF watershed work planning, emails with MPCA staff
- BF call w/ MPCA, Itasca
- Rat Root River conversation with MPCA
- Rat Root River document review
- Stressor ID review
- Stormwater/WWTP chats with MPCA
- Rapid River and Lower Rainy mapping, project development

LWM

- Rapid River WRAPS conversations
- Staff meeting
- Watershed field work planning
- Water plan watershed work
- Jackfish Bay grant planning
- 319 grant
- LF Monitoring and Assessment report

WPLMN

- Sampling

Miscellaneous

- Emails
- Staff meeting

Submitted by: Sam Soderman

Koochiching SWCD Forest Resource Specialist's Report

April 2021

Local Capacity-Forestry

- Researched general forestry and forest health topics.
- Many landowner discussions involving native plant programs, FSP's, CAP's, SFIA, 2C tax designation, tree planting etc...
- Continued to write outreach articles for social media pages.
- Worked with multiple landowners to coordinate forest plans.
- Conducted field work on two properties and completed the writing and mapping of two forest plans.
- Participated in the EPA 319 Grant development discussions.

Tree and Native Plant Sales

- Processed and ordered trees for requested custom orders for spring sale.
- Continued fielding calls regarding the regular spring sales and updating inventories.
- Coordinated delivery of stock through nurseries and organizing space for this year's sale.

NIPF Wrap-up Grant

- Discussion and planning with BWSR stewardship coordinator on existing and future grants.

Northern Landscape Committee

- Coordination and correspondence with participants and speakers.

MN Buffer Initiative

- Updated BuffCAT compliance tracking page and BWSR staff on county compliance progress.
- Began initial buffer field monitoring.

Submitted by: James Aasen

Forest Resource Specialist

Koochiching SWCD Program Coordinator Report

April 2021

Local Capacity:

- RSDP board meeting and project selection
- Website page development and updates
- 319 review and meeting

MPCA Rainy Basin Watershed Grant

- Coordination regarding Lower Rainy and Rapid River Watersheds with LOW and EOR
- Big Fork Team Meetings
- Little Fork discussions
- Invoicing

PCA Wood Ash

- Updated summary, hauling reports and spreading reports
- Invoicing
- Coordination with DH and PCA
- Invoicing
- Wood Ash Partner Meeting: 4-29-21

NRBG Grants

- eLINK data entry
- website work
- Climatology reporting
- Planning for Outdoor Education Day, June 1st

General Administration

Board meeting prep; minutes; plat book customer assistance; website maintenance; credit card tracking; weekly staff meetings and email cleanup, internet safety training

Submitted by:

Jolén Simon

Program Coordinator