

**KOOCHICHING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2023 at 7:00 P.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT IN PERSON:** Supervisors Lewis, Voigt, Aitchison

**MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE:** Dreher, Reller

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

**OTHERS PRESENT IN PERSON:** Jolen Simon, Pam Tomevi, James Aasen, Marcie Peeters

**OTHERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE:** Chad Severts (BWSR)

Chair Lewis called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**2023/10-1 Motion by Aitchison, seconded by Voigt to approve the agenda as presented.  
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Reller. Motion carried.**

**2023/10-2 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison to approve the minutes dated September 11, 2023 as presented.  
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Reller. Motion carried.**

**2023/10-3 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison to ratify paid bills for July and August, check numbers 11431 to 11446 including electronic transfers, in the total amount of \$89,375.39. (details on file).  
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Reller. Motion carried.**

**2023/10-4 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison to approve the Treasurer's reports ending July 31 and August 31, 2023 as presented.  
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Reller. Motion carried.**

**2023/10-5 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison to approve accounts payable in the amount of \$262.00 (details on file), and authorize payment of ordinary and necessary bills between October 3, 2023 and November 6, 2023, not to exceed budget.  
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Reller. Motion carried.**

**Guest Introductions**

Chad Severts, BWSR Board Conservationist, attended the meeting and discussed the new Conservation Contracts Program, formerly known as the "Cost Share Program". Main changes include more eligible activities and more funding can be used for technical assistance if needed. Additional discussion included a review of changes in the last legislative session to several program grants including Soil Health and One Watershed One Plan.

**REPORTS**

**Supervisor Reports:**

Voigt reported on his attendance at the MASWCD Forestry Committee meeting where discussion included upcoming changes to the current BWSR support staff role on the Committee and the need to find a replacement for administrative support.

**Committee Reports:**

The Personnel Committee met on 9/25/23 as a follow-up meeting to review personnel changes and scheduling.

**NRCS District Conservationist Report:**

None.

**Program Coordinator:**

See attached.

**Forest Resource Specialist Report:**

See attached.

**Water Resources Specialist Report:**

See attached.

**Resource Conservationist:**

See attached.

**District Administrator Report:**

See attached.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS****AgBMP Loan Program**

The District Administrator reviewed a current request and the process for the AgBMP Loan Program. Discussion also included the District Administrator's signature and whether or not there needed to be board approval. There was consensus that the District Administrator may process these requests as they come in and then report to the Board at the following board meeting.

**BWSR Grants**

The District Administrator reported that BWSR grants are now being executed with digital signatures rather than signing hard copies. Discussion included general authorization to execute BWSR grants as opposed to single authorization for each grant as they arrive.

**2023/10-4 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison authorizing the District Administrator to serve as the authorized representative on all BWSR grants.**

**Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Reller. Motion carried.**

**2023 MASWCD Resolutions**

Supervisors reviewed and voted on each resolution. The Program Coordinator recorded each vote on paper and was authorized by each Supervisors to record their votes via the online MASWCD voting system.

**2022 Financial Audit**

The District Administrator reviewed the auditor’s findings as presented in the 2022 financial statements audited by Peterson Company Ltd..

**2023/10-4 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison accepting the 2022 Financial audit as presented.  
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Reller. Motion carried.**

**Upcoming Meetings and Trainings:**

**BWSR Academy: October 24-26 in Brainerd**

**2023/10-6 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison authorizing the Resource Conservationist to attend BWSR Academy in Brainerd October 24-26.  
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Reller. Motion carried.**

**Permits**

None.

**General Business**

Staff discussed the current status of both District vehicles including mileage and upcoming repair and maintenance needs. The Water Resource Specialist discussed state bids and changes in availability through local dealerships. Further discussion will take place when more information has been gathered.

Staff reported that the MASWCD deadline to submit local nominees for the 2023 Community Conservationist Award was inadvertently missed and recommended the Board extend the nomination of the Rainy Lake Property Owners Association as the 2024 Community Conservationist, with application to be submitted next year prior to the deadline. Staff noted that they had done an internal review of how and why the deadline was missed and have taken action to avoid missing it in the future.

**Public Comment:**

None.

**Confirm Next Meeting Date:**

The next regular board meeting of the Koochiching SWCD will be held on **Monday, November 6, 2023, at 6:00 pm in the Koochiching County Courthouse Boardroom** with teleconference option available for guest attendance.

**Adjournment:**

**2023/10-7 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison to adjourn the meeting at 9:26 p.m.  
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Dreher, Reller. Motion carried.**

**Approved:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Chair Ralph Lewis**

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

# **Koochiching SWCD District Administrator Report**

**September 2023**

- **BWSR Conservation Delivery**
  - Board Meeting; AgBMP Loan program discussions/info
  
- **BWSR Cost Share**
  - Cost Share contract CS2023-1 and send out for signatures; Meetings/communications with landowners, Karvakko Engineering, and DNR Waters re: draft engineer plans/permits;
  
- **BWSR Cooperative Weed Management Grant**
  - Form updates; cost share payments
  
- **BWSR Local Capacity**
  - Staff oversight/assistance; Personnel/Staff meetings; IRLWWB/WLC meetings and IWI proposal review
  
- **County/District**
  - Meeting/training registrations; board meeting reports; 2022 financial audit review; draft edits for Personnel/Operational Handbooks
  
- **DNR/CPL**
  - CPL Cattail project partner/contractor updates; contract amendment to extend end date; article for Rainy Lake Gazette
  
- **Rainy River-Rainy Lake 1W1P**
  - Public Kickoff Meeting, expense tracking, website content/updates; budget updates, and Policy Committee meeting preparation
  
- **MPCA/Other Reimbursable Contracts (AIS, Wood Ash, USGS, MDA, MFRC/NLC/DNR)**
  - Partner meetings (WA); invoice prep/submit (USGS/MDA)
  
- **Natural Resource Block Grant**
  - eLINK updates; 2024 budget discussion with ESD; Visit with resident re: Shorewood Drive;

## **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

# Koochiching SWCD Resource Conservationist Report September 2023

## WCA

- Landowner inquiries,
- Joint Application reviews and TEP meetings,
- Brainerd MWPCP Basic Wetland Delineation Training (5 days),
  - In training exam
- Organizing plans for future TEP meetings,
- Restoration follow-up

## Wood Ash

- Assisting landowners with wood ash permitting process,
- Preparing landowner materials and mailing,
- Converted to ArcGIS Pro,
- GIS and wood ash permits,
- Updated mailing documents and liability forms

## Cost Share

- Sportsman's Dock Association Preliminary Plans meeting,
- Discussion on program direction
  - Landowners seeking information on native planting options

## CPL Grants

- Discussion on extending removal contract and seeding plans

## Other Business

- Staff meetings
- 1W1P Public Kickoff Meeting

## Upcoming Work/Training

- BWSR Academy (Oct 24-26)
  - Restoring & Protecting Minnesota's Natural Shorelines: Resources & Partnerships
  - Becoming a Pro at ArcGIS Pro
  - Doubling Conservation Implementation (Engaging women landowners)

Submitted by  
Marcie Peeters  
Resource Conservationist

## Water Resource Specialist Report

Sept 2023

AIS

- Inspection program management
- NSL and VNP collaboration
- Supervising inspectors, site visit
- Scheduling and collaboration with Always There Staffing
- Inspection program wrap-up
- Data review

LCCMR

- Sample collection
- Passive Sampler pull/clean
- Sample prep with USGS, LOTW SWCD
- Site prep, equipment prep
- Sample filter, syphon, analyze
- Sample drop off and equipment pickup

LF WRAPS/BF WRAPS

- Geomorph data review
- Sediment fingerprinting proceedings paper review
- Watershed document review
- Bowstring lake field day

LWM/Local Capacity

- Grant budgets
- DNR assistance for Rat Root
- Mapping, Arc Pro utilize
- Cattail site visit with VNP

WPLMN

- Sampling, rain event
- WPLMN call-in
- Hydrograph analysis

Miscellaneous

- Emails
- Staff meeting
- Cattail project site visits, landowner talks, project review
- Vacation to Alaska

Submitted by: Sam Soderman

# Koochiching SWCD Forest Resource Specialist's Report

*September 2023*

## **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...
- Conducted many forest planning discussions and coordinated plan writing.
- Continued developing a forest stewardship plan.
- Attended the MFRC meeting in Cloquet to support the proposed landscape program budget.
- Helped with new staff training.
- Went on a field visit to a black spruce Christmas tree harvest near Loman.
- Conducted fieldwork and developed a small acreage forest stewardship plan for Camp Idlewood.
- Participated in staff meetings.
- Conducted interview for district forest steward of the year, wrote application, and submitted to MASWCD.
- Participated in the 1W1P kickoff meeting in Ranier.
- Led the Ranier Tree Board meeting and discussed their EAB grant and deliverables.

## **MFRC-Northern Landscape Committee**

- Continued to identify regional stakeholders and extend invites for NLC management plan update
- Worked on coordinating NLC Planning Social Meeting with Committee and other participants
- Worked with MFRC Landscape Coordinator and various state agency folks to capture metrics to inform goals setting.
- Had a meeting to coordinate climate change planning sessions with USFS staff.

## **Cooperative Weed Management Area**

- Discussed parsnip control and other invasive plant conversations with several landowners, exploring cost-share options.

## **SWCD Tree and Native Plant Sale**

- Began 2024 tree sale inventory preorder planning and worked with a couple landowners on tree species selection.

Submitted by: James Aasen

*Forest Resource Specialist*

# **Koochiching SWCD Program Coordinator Report**

## **September 2023**

### **Local Capacity:**

- eLINK data entry
- Planning for MFRC meeting – October 6 Social Meeting
- NERSDP Board meeting-Two Harbors
- Complete CPL Pages on SWCD Website: <https://koochichingswcd.org/conservation-partners-legacy-grant-cpl-program/>
- Reviewed MASWCD write up
- Coordination of Public Buckthorn/EAB Workshop: October 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 p.m., Northome City Hall.

### **BWSR 1W1P**

- Attend Public Kickoff Meeting

### **PCA Wood Ash**

- Customer assistance
- Process hauling report items
- Hauling sheets processed
- End user letters

### **MFRC-Northern Landscape Committee**

- Planning for Social meeting happening October 5<sup>th</sup>

### **NRBG Grants**

- Customer service for walk-ins
- eLINK data entry
- Climatology data entry
- 1W1P Meeting prep and attend
- Assist landowner with Dept. of Ag. BMP loan

### **General Administration**

Board meeting prep; minutes; website maintenance; credit card tracking; eLINK reporting; board meeting follow up; Labor Day; Personnel Committee Meetings; staff meetings

Submitted by:

Jolén Simon

Program Coordinator