

**KOOCHICHING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2025**

MEMBERS PRESENT IN PERSON: Supervisors Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Reller.

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: None.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT IN PERSON: Pam Tomevi, Jolen Simon, Austin Wallin, Austin Vinar; Chad Severts (BWSR)

OTHERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: Dale Erickson (Koochiching County)

Chair Voigt called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

**2025/10-1 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Reller to approve consent agenda items as presented:
10/6/2025 Agenda, 9/8/2025 Minutes, Ratification of paid bills for August 2025
totaling \$77,186.78, Treasurer Report ending 8/30/2025, and to allow payment of
ordinary and necessary bills not to exceed budget.
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Reller. Motion carried.**

Guest Introductions:

Chad Severts, Board Conservationist of BWSR introduced himself, thanked the Board for having him, and stated that he looks forward to getting to know the new employee.

County Commissioner Dale Erickson also introduced himself online.

Supervisor Reports

Lewis reported that he attended the Area VIII tour where water diversion projects were discussed. Severts explained the history of the process it took to construct stormwater projects. Lewis commented that the tours included “No till” areas which were interesting.

Aitchison attended 1W1P meetings and felt that the process is on track.

Voigt reported on his attendance at the Area VIII business meeting. The Director and Treasurer were re-elected. A tool for sediment measurement was demonstrated. He also attended the Forestry Meeting and learned that there will be a booth at the MASWCD Convention in December to share the importance of SFIA with the theme being RIM and SFIA being compatible programs for the entire state. Mitch Brinks has made a map to show the areas where each program primarily takes place.

Committee Reports

On behalf of the Personnel Committee, Voigt welcomed newly hired staff, Austin Vinar. The District Administrator commented that she is working on revised titles for Vinar and Aasen (current Forest Resource Specialist) to best reflect the change in job duties for both positions.

NRCS District Conservationist Report

None, on furlough.

Program Coordinator

Highlights included data entry for eLINK, credit card transactions, Keep it Clean grant application, climatology reports, etc. It was noted that one of the climatology volunteers had passed away within the last week and a card will be sent to the family. It was also reported that many 1W1P meetings were attended, noting that a highlight was the MNDOT 10-year plan map is available online and that any projects that we would like to partner on must be presented 4-5 years ahead of time.

Resource Conservationist

Discussion included wild rice harvesting and planting in the cattail removal area with 1-2 more seedings planned over the next two consecutive years; a presentation will be given to the Rainy Lake Property Owners Association Board this month regarding wild rice seeding and project wrap-up; Wetland Conservation Act activities.

District Administrator Report

Discussion included the new hire and the job title for this position. This position will be doing the bulk of our forestry work as well as water monitoring and drone operation; paid leave law goes into effect early 2026; policy handbook update is ongoing; a PRAP grant application is available to the SWCD for various personnel document needs where a consultant could be utilized. There has also been quite a bit of work with the two 1W1Ps (Big Fork River and Little Fork River Watersheds) this month including Steering Committee Meetings, Advisory Committee Meetings, Policy Committee Meetings and various communications.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution to Adopt the Upper/Lower Red Lake Watershed Plan

The District Administrator described the history of the planning efforts and Koochiching SWCDs involvement. Adopting the Upper/Lower Red Lake Watershed and Rainy-Rapid Watershed Plan would ensure that no portion of the county land boundary is left uncovered by a comprehensive 1W1P.

2025/10-2 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison to adopt the following resolution:

Whereas, Upper/Lower Red Lake Partnership has sent the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources the Upper/Lower Red Lake Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan for approval according to Minnesota Statutes 103B. 101, Subdivision 14:

Now; Be it Further Resolved the Koochiching Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) hereby adopts the approved Upper/Lower Red Lake Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan for the area of the county identified within the plan, approved by the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) on January 22, 2025. This Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan replaces the Koochiching County Water Plan for SWCD purposes for the area of the county identified within the plan.

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

Resolution to Adopt the Rainy-Rapid Watershed Plan

2025/10-3 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison to adopt the following resolution:

Whereas, Rainy - Rapid Partnership has sent the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources the Rainy - Rapid Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan for approval according to Minnesota Statutes 103B. 101, Subdivision 14:

Now; Be it Further Resolved the Koochiching Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) hereby adopts the approved Rainy - Rapid Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan for the area of the county identified within the plan, approved by the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) on May 24, 2023. This Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan replaces the Koochiching County Water Plan for SWCD purposes for the area of the county identified within the plan.

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

Request for Engineering for Streambank Erosion

The Resource Conservationist reported that he performed a site visit as requested by landowners experiencing erosion along the Rat Root River near Ericksburg. He provided photos of the property and described engineering needs for this potential cost share project. The District Administrator noted that the District has access to Technical Service Area TSA Area VIII funds for engineering assistance.

2025/10-4 Motion by Reller, seconded by Lewis authorizing the District Administrator to contract for engineering services to design erosion control plans for the property near Ericksburg as presented, not to exceed \$20,000. Technical Service Area (TSA) VIII
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Reller. Abstain: Voigt. Motion carried.

Banking:

2025/10-5 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison authorizing the following signatures at Old National Bank: District Administrator, Program Coordinator, Supervisors Voigt and Lewis as the change is made from Bremer Bank to Old National Bank.
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Reller. Motion carried.

2025/10-6 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Reller authorizing the District Administrator to roll maturing CDs at the best interest rate at Border Bank.
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Reller. Motion carried.

Cost Share SHCS25-4 Payment

2025/10-7 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Reller authorizing payment for cost share contract SHCS25-4 in the amount of \$581.81.
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Reller. Motion carried.

2025 MASWCD Resolutions

All twelve resolutions were discussed and voted on. The recorded votes will be submitted online to MASWCD by the Program Coordinator.

Review Draft Cost Share Policy

The Board reviewed the draft cost share policy provided by staff. Severts offered several edits and suggestions including the addition of updated language from the Grants Administration Manual (GAM). Staff will continue revising the draft policy and bring back to the Board at a future meeting.

Upcoming Meetings:

The District Administrator reported that she, the Program Coordinator, and new staff will attend the 2025 BWSR Academy October 21-23 sessions in Brainerd, MN.

Permits:**2025-3067 Rip Rap – Rainy Lake**

The Board reviewed DNR 2025-3067 permit and had no official comments.

General Business:

Voigt inquired about the status of Shorewood Drive slumping issues. The District Administrator reported that the last official communication was the letter sent on 12-28-2021 summarizing the geotechnical assessment performed by WSB & Associates that including recommendations. The complexity of the slumping is beyond SWCD technical capabilities

Emblem/markings of District logo on truck(s):

Aitchison noted that both trucks should be outfitted with District logos.

Public Comment:

None.

Confirm Next Meeting Date:

The next regular board meeting of the Koochiching SWCD will be held on **Monday, November 3, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. at the Cobblestone Hotel & Suites.**

Adjourn Meeting:

2025/10-8 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison to adjourn the meeting at 10:32 a.m.
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Reller. Motion carried.

Approved:

Chair, Eldon Voigt

Date