

**KOOCHICHING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, JULY 6, 2026**

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

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: None.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT IN PERSON: Pam Tomevi, Jolen Simon, James Aasen, Austin Wallin,

OTHERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: Micheal Miller, Sean Bartlett, Jody Peek (NRCS)

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

2026/7-1 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Aitchison to approve consent agenda items: 7/6/2026 Agenda as presented, 6/1/2026 Minutes as presented, Ratification of paid bills for May 2026 totaling \$67,196.68, and to allow payment of ordinary and necessary bills not to exceed budget.

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

Guest Introductions:

Acknowledged those online; Sean Bartlett introduced himself as representing Arrowhead Regional Economic Committee.

Supervisor Reports

Voigt reported on his attendance at the Area VIII meeting where a resolution from Crow Wing County asked BWSR to increase annual funds to Joint Powers Boards, which passed in all state areas. The Fish and Wildlife Service reported on projects at this meeting. Discussion also included potential educational presentations for board members. The Northern Landscape Committee will be meeting soon and Voigt requested authorization to attend.

2026/7-2 Motion by Aitchison, seconded by Lewis authorizing Supervisor Voigt to attend the next Northern Landscape Committee meeting.

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

Aitchison reported on his attendance at the Big Fork River and Little Fork River 1W1P Policy Committee Meetings. Tomevi reviewed progress on the 60-day review, during which a hard copy of plans will be distributed to all Board Members. It was noted that public hearings will be held on September 24 and 25, respectively.

Committee Reports:

None.

NRCS District Conservationist Report

Discussion included increased funding for pre-approvals; There were 6 pre-approvals for CSP in Koochiching County. For EQIP, Koochiching County had 2 pre-approvals; Lance Smith has been acting Director since Steve Cole retired. This position is now posted; Upcoming activities include a Grazing Facilitation Practices and Pipeline training on August 11 in Bagley/Bemidji area, MN. RCPP funding applications are open through August. Peek will send a summary of the Local Working Group meeting which took place last month.

CCM Corpsmember

None - on leave.

Clean Water Forester Report

None - on leave.

Resource Conservationist Report

Discussion included setbacks and rip rap options for a possible cost share project on the Rat Root River spanning 300 linear feet; flew over the cattail project with drone for updated progress pictures-wild rice is now visible from the fall 2025 planting; aerial spraying project completed, requiring additional insurance and water tank; checked tree planting and treated wild parsnip on Riverside.

Watershed Coordinator Report

Discussion included coordinating destinations for leftover tree stock where Lake SWCD was able to purchase remaining seedlings for an area that recently underwent a wildfire; CWMA grant application written and submitted; CCMI crew grant application submitted. Rat Root 319 work plan editing; wrote forest stewardship plan. CCMI crew was here in early June and assisted with cattail cleanup around docks on Jackfish Bay, a shoreline planting with cage/tree tube protection, parsnip spot-spraying; organized and helped lead CWMA field training; completed feasibility field work on the Rat Root Lake Cattail project where there are many floating mats.

District Administrator Report

Discussion included wrapping up files for the 2025 financial audit, staff meetings and workload updates, general administration/HR, IJC Water Levels Committee meetings, Little Fork River 1W1P work including Steering and Advisory Committee meetings, budget updates/reporting, preparing sub-agreement template for legal review, and public/agency notices for the 60-day plan review/comment period.

Program Coordinator

Discussion included reporting, website updating, planning for well testing clinic (late August).

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

2027 County Budget Request

Tomevi reviewed the County Budget Request.

2026/7-3 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Voigt approving the draft 2027 operating budget and 2027 County budget request as presented.

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

Cost Share

Tomevi reviewed cost share payments for 319-2026-1: \$1962.00, 319-2026-2: \$620.00, RRRL-FY25-3: \$1,698.53 (contingent upon receiving payment for pending invoice).

2026/7-4 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Voigt authorizing payment for the following cost share contracts: 319-2026-1: \$1962.00, 319-2026-2: \$620.00, RRRL-FY25-3: \$1,698.53 (contingent upon receiving payment for pending invoice).

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

Engineering Services

Aasen reviewed a potential project at the mouth of the Black River to remove pilings which remain from historical work. Area VIII funding for engineering services is available to cover the \$14,500 quote for engineering in this project.

2026/7-5 Motion by Lewis, seconded by Voigt authorizing the District Administrator to enter into an engineering contract with Karvaako up to \$14,500 for engineering removal of pilings from the mouth of the Black River.
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Reller, Becker. Motion carried.

Mobile Cellular Services

Tomevi described the need for a new mobile hotspot device as the current is no longer working. Currently, staff are having to use their personal cell phone hotspot to utilize drone maps and survey equipment. Research was done for T-Mobile which has a plan of \$130/month for 2 lines with a 3rd line free. This would serve as a hotspot in the field and allow landowners to send/call a mobile work number.

2026/7-6 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lewis authorizing the District Administrator to seek out quotes for mobile cellular services and to purchase up to two phones/cell service lines.
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Reller, Becker. Motion carried.

Upcoming Meetings/Trainings:

Informational: NRCS JAA meeting will take place soon to further JAA for Koochiching SWCD. More details to come

Permits:

2026-0714 Thunderbird Marina Dock Replacement was reviewed to add more slips.
No official comments were made.

General Business:

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

Confirm Next Meeting Date:

The next regular board meeting of the Koochiching SWCD will be held on **Monday, August 3, 2026, at 8:30 a.m. at the Cobblestone Hotel & Suites.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:03 a.m.

Approved:

Chair, Jody Reller

Date