

**KOOCHICHING SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, AUGUST 3, 2026**

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

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: None.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Reller

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

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

Vice-Chair Lewis called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

**2026/8-1 Motion by Aitchison, seconded by Voigt to approve consent agenda items: 8/3/2026 Agenda with addition (forest stewardship cost share), 7/6/2026 Minutes as presented, Ratification of paid bills for May and June 2026 totaling \$124,399.54, and to allow payment of ordinary and necessary bills not to exceed budget.
Voting yes: Lewis, Aitchison, Voigt, Becker. Motion carried.**

Guest Introductions:

None.

Supervisor Reports

Voigt reported on his attendance at MN SWCD Forestry Association meeting where discussion included carbon credits and the announcement that Lindberg Ekola is now working for DNR and will be available to districts for assistance. The Area VIII fall meeting and tour will be on September 10-11th in Grand Rapids. Discussion also included possibly scheduling a meeting with the City of International Falls to follow up on erosion along Shorewood Drive and the 3/4/2021 geotechnical report prepared by WSB.

Aitchison discussed the upcoming 1W1P listening session (Envisioning the Future of One Watershed, One Plan) in Grand Rapids.

Committee Reports:

None.

NRCS District Conservationist Report

Discussion included two EQIP plans that were approved for Koochiching County: one for a wind shelter and one for a grazing system totaling roughly \$25,000. For CSP, Koochiching County had 6 applications over the summer with one being deferred, totaling approximately \$87,000. Applications for a new round of funding are due on September 11th. The Area Resource Conservationist will be in International Falls on August 10th to discuss Job Approval Authority (JAA). Upcoming training opportunities include "A Grazing Facilitating Practices" on August 11th and a pipeline training on August 12th. No CRP offers currently exist in Koochiching County. There will be a district manager meeting for NRCS on September 10th.

Resource Conservationist Report

Discussion included Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) work with 3 restoration orders in progress, water samples taken for MDA and WPLMN, well testing clinic planning, and an MDH grant application. Upcoming work will include prioritizing Little Fork River ravines using the sediment fingerprinting work. Wild parsnip was also discussed as quite a bit is being seen on Highway 71 and Highway 53. It is too late to spray at this point as the seedheads are now viable. The Resource Conservationist is working with landowners and Koochiching County to drone spray the wild parsnip.

Watershed Coordinator Report

Discussion included 319 grant reporting, outreach to City of International Falls for One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) project planning, forest stewardship coordination, cost share technical assistance, and Northern Landscape Committee coordination.

District Administrator Report

Tomevi reported that final job description updates have been submitted to DDA as well as the employee handbook for review and revision; job descriptions will be provided to the Personnel Committee for review and approval; 2nd quarter invoicing was completed in July for reimbursable grants/contracts; a 60-Day review period is in progress for the Littlefork River Watershed and the Big Fork River Watershed 1W1Ps; County budget request was submitted; an MDH grant was applied for to cover well testing costs. A CCMI field visit took place to review mid-term progress for Individual Placement which went well.

Clean Water Forester Report

Just returning from leave for the month of July and will catch up on forest stewardship cost share contracts, forest plan writing, and forestry cost share outreach.

CCM Corpsmember

CCMI Mid-Year event in the Twin Cities area, CCMI site visit July 14th, assisted with the RR-RL 1W1P sub-agreement, reviewed Itasca's Shoreline Guide and adapt to Koochiching County, prepared physical copies of 1W1P drafts and annual activity reports for LGUs, entering climatology, clean and prepare bingo daubers for invasive species treatment, completed 700 of 900 service hours.

Program Coordinator

Well testing clinic planning (proposed dates are September 16th for a workshop and September 30 for collection; new email addresses; new wood ash 5-year rolling average is 880 LBS ENP/ton; MDH Private Well Protection Grant applied for; all remaining 2019 Koochiching Plat Books have been liquidated.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Updated IRS Mileage Rate effective 7-1-2026

Tomevi reported that the new IRS mileage rate is now 76 cents per mile, effective 7-1-2026.

2026/8-2 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Becker accepting the updated IRS mileage rate of 76 cents per mile, effective July 1, 2026.

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

New Grant Applications

Tomevi reviewed the following new grant applications:

(1) 2026 Private Well Protection Grant Application through MDH; (2) 2026 Strengthening Forest Economies Through Forestry Services, Wood Products, and Seedling Markets (SFE)

2026/8-3 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Becker to approve the submittal of the 2026 Private Well Protection grant application through MDH and the submittal of the 2026 Strengthening Forest Economies Through Forestry Services, Wood Products, and Seedling Markets (SFE) grant application through The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and to approve the District Administrator's signature on the contracts if approved.

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

2026 MASWCD Awards

Tomevi invited Supervisors to think about possible nominations for the 2026 MASWCD Awards.

Rainy River-Rainy Lake WBIF

Tomevi reviewed the draft sub-agreement for Rainy River-Rainy Lake WBIF funding which has been reviewed by the County Attorney.

2026/8-4 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison accepting the Rainy River-Rainy Lake WBIF sub-agreement as presented.

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

Forestry Cost Share

2026/8-5 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison authorizing payment in the amount of \$670 for contract FY25 RR-RL WBIF_2026-5.

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

Upcoming Meetings/Trainings:

Area VIII Tour September 10-11 in Grand Rapids.

2026/8-6 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Becker approving all staff and Supervisors to attend the Area VIII Fall Meeting and Tour.

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

Permits:

None.

General Business:

315 Herbaceous Weed Treatment will need to be added to TAA for the Resource Conservationist and the Clean Water Forester. Motion 2026/5-6 will need to be amended.

2026/8-7 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison to amend Motion 2026/5-6 to include 315 Herbaceous Weed Treatment in TAA for the Resource Conservationist and the Clean Water Forester.

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

Aitchison requested that Environmental Services come to the next SWCD board meeting to give an update on AIS. Staff will reach out to schedule an update at the September meeting.

2026/8-8 Motion by Aitchison, seconded by Voigt for the staff to invite Koochiching County Environmental Services to attend the September 14th Board Meeting to provide an AIS program update to the Board.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

Confirm Next Meeting Date:

The next regular board meeting of the Koochiching SWCD will be held on **Monday, September 14, 2026, at 8:30 a.m. at the Cobblestone Hotel & Suites.**

2026/8-9 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Aitchison to adjourn the meeting at 10:09 a.m.

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

Approved:

Vice-Chair, Ralph Lewis

Date