



North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District
505 3rd St N, Ste A
Virginia MN 55792

Regular Meeting Minutes
August 13, 2025

The meeting was held in person at the District office. A virtual link was available.

Supervisors Present at Roll Call: Chuck Bainter, Jerry Hovi, Frank Modich, Peggy Pearson, and Mark Peterson were present in person.

Staff Present: Anita Provinzino, District Administrator, was present in person. Corey Denning; Resource Conservationist; Miranda Frenning, Accounting & Human Resources Specialist; Ben Kielar, Program Technician; Phil Norvitch, Conservation Manager; and Jon Utecht, Aquatic Invasive Species Program Coordinator were present online.

Others Present: Blake Bartz, Natural Resources Conservation Service

The meeting was called to order at 10:33 a.m. by Chair, Peggy Pearson.

1. Agenda - Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.
2. Minutes of Last Meeting – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Jerry Hovi to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Financial Reports & Program Summary – Moved by Jerry Hovi/Chuck Bainter to accept the financial reports and program summary. Motion carried unanimously.
4. Accounts Receivable and Payable – Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to approve the accounts payable and accounts receivable as updated 08/13/25. Motion carried unanimously.
5. Guest Introductions and Comments – None

NEW BUSINESS:

6. Billable Rates effective 06/22/25 – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to approve the billable rates as presented effective 6/22/25. Motion carried unanimously.
7. Board of Supervisors Bylaws & Handbook – Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to approve the Board of Supervisors Bylaws & Handbook as presented. Motion carried unanimously. Peggy thanked Miranda and Anita for their work on this intensive project.
8. BWSR
 - a. Cooperative Weed Management Contract with Landowner A handout – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to approve a 75%/25% cost share contract 24CWMA-03 for up to \$1,315.71 with Dean Graber for brush management. Motion carried unanimously.
 - b. Cooperative Weed Management Contract with Landowner B handout – Moved by Jerry Hovi/Mark Peterson to approve a 75%/25% cost share contract 24CWMA-04 for up to \$1,692.93 with Timothy Wallace for brush management. Motion carried unanimously.
 - c. Little Fork River Planning Partner Agreement with Koochiching SWCD & Board Resolution 2025-10 – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve Board Resolution 2025-10 contracting for up to \$12,000 for planning efforts to create a

watershed-based plan for the Little Fork River watershed. Motion carried unanimously.

- d. Soil Health Cost Share Contract with Landowner – Moved by Jerry Hovi/Frank Modich to approve a 75%/25% cost share contract SH25-1 for up to \$3,089.63 with Kayla McFarland for critical area planting. Motion carried unanimously.
 - e. Stream & Shore Protection Cost Share Contract with Landowner (SLR) - Moved by Mark Peterson/Frank Modich to approve a 75%/25% cost share contract SLR25WBIF-SL-03 for up to \$5,664.90 with Sue Malevich for shoreline protection. Motion carried unanimously.
- 9. DNR Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Application & Board Resolution 2025-11 – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve Board Resolution 2025-11 authorizing an application for invasive species removal in the City of Ely. Motion carried unanimously.
 - 10. Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Habitat Restoration Grant Application & Board Resolution 2025-12 - Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to approve Board Resolution 2025-12 authorizing application for funding to replace 2 culverts and re-meander previously ditched sections of Berry Creek in the Cloquet River watershed. Motion carried unanimously.
 - 11. Open Meeting Law Changes Allowing Supervisors To Participate Remotely - After discussion, it was moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter that board supervisors make genuine efforts to have in person meetings. Motion carried unanimously.
 - 12. MN Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts Awards – The board was informed that staff have nominees for 4 of 5 award categories and will submit them by September 5, 2025.
 - 13. Upcoming Supervisor Meetings and/or Trainings
 - a. Area 3 Fall Meeting – September 8 in Mora – Mark will attend but go down a day early so as not to have to drive there and back in the same day, as no staff are attending. Moved by Chuck Bainter to approve a stipend for two days. Motion was withdrawn by Chuck before a second was received. Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to approve payment of mileage, hotel and Monday stipend with no stipend for travel day on Sunday. Motion carried unanimously.
 - b. SWCD Governance & Leadership Essentials – Sept 10 & 11 in St. Cloud – No one will attend.
 - c. 75th Anniversary Celebration – September 22 from 2-6 p.m. – All are welcome.
 - d. Other
 - 14. Other

REPORTS:

- 15. Monthly Progress Report –
 - a. AIS Prevention Season Update as of July 30
 - b. AIS Inspector Compliment from DNR staff person
 - c. Technical Service Area 3 2Q25 ContributionsPeggy commended Jon Utecht on the Aquatic Invasive Species magazine developed by partners for use in the arrowhead region, that was shared last month.
- 16. Natural Resources Conservation Service Report – Blake distributed conservation plans for board signatures. He indicated that another staff member left. They now have 4 plan-

ners in 4 counties. NRCS is down 72 employees statewide. They are grateful for the Arrowhead Forest Partnership. The most recent sign-up deadline passed, they are now assessing and ranking applications.

17. Supervisor & Committee Reports

- a. Laurentian Resource Conservation & Development – July 28 in Duluth – Peggy attended this virtually. Handouts were emailed to board members previously.
- b. Little Fork River Watershed Planning Public Kickoff Meetings – There were about 12 and 6 members of the public present for the two kickoff meetings, respectively.
 - i. Tuesday, July 22 at Cook Community Center 5-7 p.m.
 - ii. Thursday, July 24 at Littlefork Community Building 5-7 p.m.
- c. MN Assn of RC&D's Annual Summer Meeting "Forest Management and Wildfire Risk Reduction" – August 7 in Eveleth – Chuck reported there were 35 people at this meeting and he found the information useful.
- d. SWCD Forestry Association – July 17 in McGregor – Mark reported on presentations by DNR staff on plant health and moose. He indicated John McCormick gave an update on his work during the discussion on SWCD staff forestry work. This may become a regular part of these meetings.

CLOSING:

18. Confirm Next Meeting – August 13, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.
19. Potential Meeting Date Change from October 8 to 15 – Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to change the October meeting to October 15. Motion carried unanimously.
20. Adjourn – Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Certification of Recording Officer

I, the undersigned, hereby certify, that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the meeting minutes approved by the North St Louis SWCD Board and that I am duly authorized to make this certification.



Mark Peterson, Secretary
September 10, 2025



**North St. Louis
Soil and Water Conservation District**

505 3rd St N, Ste A
Virginia MN 55792
(218) 288-6144

WHEREAS, the Koochiching County Soil & Water Conservation District received a One Watershed, One Plan planning grant from the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources to develop a comprehensive watershed management plan for the Little Fork River watershed; and

WHEREAS, the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board supported this grant in their Board Resolution 2024-07; and

WHEREAS, the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board signed a Memorandum of Agreement to collaborate on this planning effort with various local government units within the Little Fork River Watershed, and

WHEREAS, a partnership agreement between the Koochiching County Soil & Water Conservation District and the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District will allow the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District to bill time and expenses up to a maximum of \$12,000; and

WHEREAS, the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board desires to accept this funding and provide these services related to its mission.

NOW THERE BE IT RESOLVED, the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors accepts said funding and hereby authorizes the District Administrator or Board Chair to sign all documents related to said funding.

Motion Made by: *Baister*

Seconded by: *Peterson*

Affirmative: *Baister, Hovi, Modich, Peterson, Pearson*

Opposed: *none*

Certification of Recording Officer

I, the undersigned, hereby certify, that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted by the North St Louis SWCD Board on the 13th day of August 2025; and that I am duly authorized to execute this certificate.


Board Secretary



Resolution 2025-11

North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District

505 3rd St N, Ste A
Virginia MN 55792
(218) 288-6144
www.nslswcd.org

Resolution Authorizing Application to and Acceptance of Conservation Partners Legacy Grant for Invasive Species Removal in the City of Ely

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is requesting applications for expedited conservation projects of up to \$75,000 that restore or enhance forests, wetlands, prairies, or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife on public lands/waters in Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, the District staff may develop and submit a proposal for terrestrial invasive species removal on roughly 1.5 acres and restoration of native habitat along the Trezona trail within the city of Ely; and

WHEREAS, this supports the District's goals to 1) Improve and strengthen community partnerships and 2) Prioritize targeted programming; and

WHEREAS, a 10% non-state match is required. It is anticipated the match could come from volunteer hours, city labor or equipment, and/or SWCD staff time.

WHEREAS, the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board authorizes application to and desires to accept this funding, if awarded.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors authorizes the staff to apply for and the District Administrator or Board Chair to secure and sign all documents related to any such award.

Motion Made by: *Bainter*

Seconded by: *Peterson*

Affirmative: *Bainter, Hvi, McDich, Pearson, Peterson*

Opposed: *none*

Certification of Recording Officer

I, the undersigned, hereby certify, that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted by the North St Louis SWCD Board on the 13th day of August 2025, and that I am duly authorized to execute this certificate.


Mark Peterson, Board Secretary



Resolution 2025-12

North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District

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www.nslswcd.org

WHEREAS, the US Environmental Protection Agency announced that applications would be accepted for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative's Habitat and Species Focus Area grant program, and

WHEREAS, the District staff submitted a grant application that would meet the habitat and species requirements by restoring fish and invertebrate passage and reconnecting 35 miles of quality habitat on designated trout streams; and

WHEREAS, two culvert crossings would be replaced with fish friendly culverts and re-meandering previously ditched sections on Berry Creek in the Cloquet River Watershed;

WHEREAS, this work is in a priority watershed identified in the St. Louis River Watershed Comprehensive Management Plan; and

WHEREAS, the owners of the property, the U.S. Forest Service and St. Louis County support the projects but have not identified funding for the projects; and

WHEREAS, North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board desires to accept this funding, if awarded, to complete the project that relates to the mission of the District.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors authorizes the District Administrator or Board Chair to secure and sign all documents related to any such award.

Motion Made by: *Modich*
Seconded by: *Peterson*
Affirmative: *Bainter, Modich, Hovi, Pearson, Peterson*
Opposed: *none*

Certification of Recording Officer

I, the undersigned, hereby certify, that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted by the North St Louis SWCD Board on the 13th day of August 2025 and that I am duly authorized to execute this resolution.

Mary Peterson
Board Secretary