



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

Special Meeting Minutes  
October 15, 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; Miranda Frenning, Accounting & Human Resources Specialist; and Rachel Poppe, District Forester were present in person. Ben Kielar; Program Technician; Corey Denning; Resource Conservationist; Jake Bendel, Watershed Conservationist; Kaela Veihman, Watershed Conservationist; John McCormick, Regional Farm Bill Forester Jon Utecht, AIS Program Coordinator; and Phil Norvitch, Conservation Manager were present online.

**Others Present:** Melanie Bomier, Board of Water and Soil Conservation was present in person. Michael Peterson, Peterson Company Ltd, and Stefan Nelson, Ruffed Grouse & American Woodcock Society were present online during their presentations.

The meeting was called to order at 10:32 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 Jerry Hovi/Mark Peterson to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Financial Reports & Program Summary – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to accept the financial reports and program summary. Motion carried unanimously.
4. Accounts Receivable and Payable – Moved by Jerry Hovi/Frank Modich to approve the accounts payable and accounts receivable as updated 10/15/25. Motion carried unanimously.
5. Guest Introductions and Comments –
  - a. Stefan Nelson, Ruffed Grouse & American Woodcock Society presented on the Arrowhead Collaborative which covers 545,000 acres in the northeastern part of the state. There are two 10,000-acre Dynamic Forest Restoration Blocks: Ash Lake and Crane/Echo Lake. The Collaborative helps to coordinate planned treatments from USFS, MN DNR, and St. Louis County because of the varied land ownership. Treatments may include regeneration harvest, clearcut/coppice with reserves, thinning, single tree selection, release, fuels reduction/ timber stand improvement and/or prescribed burns.
  - b. Rachel Poppe was welcomed to the District by the Board. She started as District Forester on September 15.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

6. Audit for 2024 – presented by Peterson Company, Ltd. - Michael Peterson of Peterson Company, Ltd. Reviewed the 2024 audit with the board. He indicated the district is in a good position, having experienced significant growth in the last five years with a fund balance of \$500,000 and a profit of over \$100,000 in 2024. Anita and Miranda were

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thanked by the board. Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve the 2024 audit. Motion carried unanimously.

7. BWSR

- a. 26 BWSR Buffer Funding & Board Resolution 2025-14 – Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to approve Board Resolution 2025-14 accepting 26 BWSR Buffer funding and authorizing signers. Motion carried unanimously.
- b. Shoreline Restoration Contract with Landowner (RHV-WBIF) – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Jerry Hovi to approve Contract RHV 25 WBIF SL 01 for shoreline protection not to exceed 75% of the total cost estimate of \$3140 for an obligated amount of \$2,355. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Certificate of Deposit 10 maturing on October 24 – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to redeposit the principal and interest of Certificate of Deposit 10 into the checking account. Motion carried unanimously.

9. County AIS – Lease Agreement with Super Cub Flyers for heated storage – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve the 8 month lease agreement for heated storage for 8 decontamination units in the amount of \$5,600. Motion carried unanimously.

10. Funding Opportunities

- a. County AIS Application & Board Resolution 2025-15 – Moved by Jerry Hovi/Mark Peterson to approve Board Resolution 2025-15 authorizing application and signers for 2026 county aquatic invasive species prevention funding. Motion carried unanimously.
- b. DNR Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP) Grant Agreement & Board Resolution 2025-16 – Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to approve Board Resolution 2025-16 accepting funding and authorizing funding for DNR Emergency Forest Restoration program funding serving landowners whose property sustained at least \$1,000 of damage in the June 2025 wildfires. Motion carried unanimously.

11. Human Resources

- a. Paid Family Leave Decisions –
  - i. Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to pay 100% of the premium for paid family medical leave insurance.
  - ii. Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to allow employees to use PTO to “top off” payments from insurance to earn their full salary.
  - iii. Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to allow employees to take up to 20 weeks of leave intermittently. Motion carried unanimously.
- b. Updated Organizational Chart – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve the new organization chart. Motion carried unanimously.

12. MASWCD Resolutions – Supervisor Voting – There being no discussion, supervisors will vote on their own or let Anita know their votes for her to submit.

13. Tree Sale Initial Spending Limit for 2026 (\$15,000) – Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to approve \$15,000 for the initial tree order spending limit, exclusive of shipping, bundling and chemicals. Motion carried unanimously.

14. Upcoming Supervisor Meetings and/or Trainings

- a. Rainy Headwaters Vermilion Policy Committee – November 7 – Chuck attended and sent out notes.
- b. Appoint ad-hoc budget committee (2 members) – Chuck Bainter and Frank Modich will serve as the ad-hoc budget committee to review the 2026 draft budget with staff.

- c. Other – None known
- 15. Website Refresh and ADA Compliance Update – Authorize Expense – Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to approve a contract with WA Fisher for \$7,900 to refresh the website and bring it into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act provisions, anticipated by the end of the year. Motion carried unanimously.
- 16. Other – Moved by Frank Modich/Jerry Hovi to approve Board Resolution 2025-17 authorizing application to and signers for BWSR's Keep It Clean program for up to \$40,000 to reduce garbage left on the ice and thereby reduce pollution. Motion carried unanimously.

#### REPORTS:

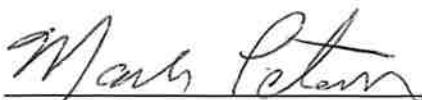
- 17. Monthly Update from Staff – See Report on File
- 18. Natural Resources Conservation Service Report – No report available due to federal government shutdown.
- 19. Supervisor & Committee Reports
  - a. Laurentian Resource Conservation & Development – September 22 – Due to their technology issues, Peggy was unable to attend.
  - b. Little Fork River Watershed Planning Policy Committee – September 25 - Chuck and Peggy attended. They reported that the city of Cook is interested in joining the partnership to develop the plan. A resolution will be forthcoming. The public meeting input was reviewed. Destry Hell, Koochiching County Commissioner was elected vice-chair. Peggy encouraged supervisors to review the packet that Anita will send out, as it has 1) the land and waters narrative 2) summary of the public meetings, and 3) the forest & wetlands topic meeting summary.
  - c. MN SWCD Forestry Association – September 12 – Mark referred supervisors to the minutes that were sent out. There is a new forestry resolution to be voted on. The next meeting is November 20.
  - d. Technical Services Area 3 – September 24 - Chuck indicated the TSA has about \$315,000 in assets. They have another \$370,000 coming from the state. Matias Valero gave a report on projects that have led to ecoli reductions in Lake Superior.

#### CLOSING:

- 20. Confirm Next Meeting – November 12, at 10:30 a.m.
- 21. Adjourn – Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to adjourn the meeting at 12:08 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

#### *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  
November 12, 2025



## Resolution 2025-14

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

505 3<sup>rd</sup> St N, Ste A  
Virginia MN 55792  
(218) 288-6144  
[www.nslswcd.org](http://www.nslswcd.org)

**WHEREAS**, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) authorized funding for grant agreements for the following grant(s) and amounts:

FY26 Buffer Law \$2,500

**AND WHEREAS**, this grant provides funding for technical assistance and reviews parcels for buffer compliance; and

**WHEREAS**, the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board desires to accept this funding to continue conservation practices and delivery in northern St. Louis County.

**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 the above grants and sign all documents related to such funding.

Motion Made by: *Modich*

Seconded by: *Peterson*

Affirmative: *Bainter, Hovi, Modich, 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 15<sup>th</sup> day of October 2025 and that I am duly authorized to execute this certificate.*

*Mark Peterson*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Peterson, Board Secretary



## Resolution 2025-15

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

505 3<sup>rd</sup> St N, Ste A  
Virginia MN 55792  
(218) 749-2000  
[www.nslswcd.org](http://www.nslswcd.org)

### Resolution to Approve Aquatic Invasive Species Funding Application

**WHEREAS**, the St. Louis County Board of Commissioners has approved an Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention Plan and authorized St. Louis County Planning and Zoning to seek proposals to prevent or limit AIS; and


**WHEREAS**, beginning in 2016, the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District has operated watercraft inspection and decontamination services in conjunction with the Burntside Lake Association, Fayal Township, Koochiching County Environmental Services, Lake County SWCD, Pelican Lakeshore Owners Association, Sturgeon Chain Lake Association, Vermilion Lake Association, Voyageurs National Park and White Iron Chain of Lakes Association and at various resorts, and

**WHEREAS**, the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District's Board of Supervisors supports these partnerships and the efforts to prevent aquatic invasive species; and

**WHEREAS**, the AIS prevention program is consistent with the District's Strategic Planning Goal to "strengthen existing and grow new partnerships with local governmental units, tribal bands and other organizations".

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors supports this funding request and authorizes its staff to submit an application for watercraft inspection and decontamination program to the St. Louis County Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Program.

Motion on October 15, 2025 by: Hovi / Peterson  
Affirmative: Bainter, Hovi, Modrich, Pearson, Peterson  
Opposed: none  
Motion Carried

  
Anita Provinzino, District Administrator

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Mark Peterson, Secretary

The mission of the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District is to encourage sustainable use of our natural resources by engaging people in soil and water conservation in northern St. Louis County.





## Resolution 2025-16

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

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[www.nslswcd.org](http://www.nslswcd.org)

### Resolution Accepting Emergency Forest Restoration Program Funding and Authorizing Signers

**WHEREAS**, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in collaboration with the USDA Farm Services Agency has \$2 million of Emergency Forest Restoration Program Funding for distribution to landowners whose property was affected by the 2025 Camp House, Jenkins Creek or Munger Shaw fires; and

**WHEREAS**, qualifying landowners are eligible to receive 75% of the cost to restore land damaged by fire; and

**WHEREAS**, the Minnesota DNR expects to contract with the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District to complete practice plans for forestry practices to restore the land; and

**WHEREAS**, the compensation is expected to cover all staff costs and expenses for each practice plan written; and

**WHEREAS**, the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board desires their staff to provide these services allowing landowners to access cost-share funding to restore their previously forested lands.

**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 contract.

Motion Made by: *Modich*

Seconded by: *Peterson*

Affirmative: *Baird, Hovi, Modich, Peterson, 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 15<sup>th</sup> day of October 2025, and that I am duly authorized to execute this certificate.*

  
Mark Peterson, Board Secretary

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**North St. Louis  
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(218) 749-2000  
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## **Resolution to Approve Application for Keep It Clean Grant Funds**

**WHEREAS**, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) is requesting applications to protect Minnesota's lakes by preventing pollution from garbage and human waste left on the ice of the waters during winter use activities; and

**WHEREAS**, a maximum of \$40,000 is available from BWSR for a Keep It Clean grant; and

**WHEREAS**, a 10% non-state match is required; and

**WHEREAS**, if awarded, the funding would be used to develop an education and outreach program that could be implemented to prevent water pollution from waste left on the ice; and

**WHEREAS**, it is anticipated the 10% match would be contributed by lake association volunteers or possibly, funding from St. Louis County;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors supports an application to BWSR and would enter into an agreement if selected for funding.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board of Supervisors authorizes the District Administrator or Board Chair to sign all documents related to such funding, if awarded.

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

*Certification of Recording Officer*

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Mark Peterson, Board Secretary