

Board of Supervisors:

2 – Norma Heggernes, Chair
(Term. 12.2026)
1 – Kevin Belkholm,
Vice-Chair (Term. 12.2028)
5 – Kim Johnson, Treasurer
(Term. 12.2028)
3 – Marv Stutz
(Term. 12.2028)
4 – Jon Sanford
(Term. 12.2026)

Staff:

Jaren Peplinski
District Manager
(502) 517-SWCD

Jerah Mattson
Administrative Assistant
(320) 679-1391

Mary Poelman
Watershed Coordinator

Emily Larsen
Conservation Technician

Nick Foss
Conservation Forester

Cooperators:

NRCS - USDA

Stephanie Paulsen,
Soil Conservationist
(320) 674-3005

**Kanabec County Environmental
Services**

Ryan Carda,
Environmental Services
Supervisor
(320) 679-6456

Minnesota DNR - Hydrology

Craig Wills,
Area Hydrologist
(763) 689-7100 ext. 225

Minnesota DNR - Forestry

(Vacant)
(320) 679-3683

Kanabec SWCD
2008 Mahogany Street, Ste. 3
Mora, MN 55051
Office: (320) 679-1391



KANABEC SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

Kanabec SWCD Board Room
2008 Mahogany Street, Suite 3
Mora, MN 55051

Remote Google Meet joining info:

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/wqm-npaf-xnc>

Or dial: (US) +1 636-498-4352 PIN: 977 678 251#

More phone numbers: <https://tel.meet/wqm-npaf-xnc?pin=6649306027834>

January 21, 2026

Draft Meeting Agenda

1. **Call to Order** **1:00 PM**
 - a. Roll call: Norma Heggernes, Kevin Belkholm, Jon Sanford, Kim Johnson, Marv Stutz
 - b. Others Present: Jaren Peplinski, Jerah Mattson, Mary Poelman, Emily Larsen, Nick Foss, Stephanie Paulsen, Melissa McCann

**Remote attendee. One or more members may attend remotely pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 13D.02 as amended.*
2. **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**
3. **Election of Officers (Action Item)**
 - a. Chair
 - b. Vice Chair
 - c. Treasurer
 - d. Subcommittees
 - i. Personnel Committee
 - ii. Finance Committee
 - iii. Coalition of Lake Associations
 - iv. Kettle/Upper St. Croix Watershed Partnership
 - v. Rum River Watershed Partnership
 - vi. Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership
 - vii. Area III Forestry Association
 - viii. TSA Area III Board
 - ix. District Land
 - x. MASWCD Area III Annual Meetings Committee
4. **Review and Approval of Agenda (Action Item)**
5. **Review and Approval of Minutes (Action Item)**
 - a. [Regular Board Meeting Minutes](#) – 12/17/2025 [Exhibit A]

6. Reports of Partners

- a. NRCS (*Stephanie Paulsen or Melissa McCann*)
- b. BWSR (*Zach Guttormson*)
- c. Kanabec County (*Commissioner Peter Ripka*)

7. Public Comment (*None scheduled*)

8. Financial Report

- a. December 2025 [Treasurer's Report and Financial Report](#) [Exhibit B]

9. Action Items [Exhibit C]

- a. *Resolution to update staff billable rates.* Adopt a resolution to update billable rates for staff.
- b. *Manure pit closure – Contract # SR_WBIF_01-KSWCD-2024.* Authorize increased project cost-share payment to \$53,120.40 (approximately 63% of total actual project costs, \$84,736.00), with final authorization contingent on Snake River Watershed Partnership JPE board action, **or** authorize partial payment of \$25,420.80 (original approved cost-share amount based on original project cost estimate of \$38,582.79).
- c. *Approve update to mileage reimbursement rate.* Consider approval of update to mileage reimbursement rate - \$0.725 per mile (mirroring the 2026 IRS rate).
- d. *Approve updates to Non-Structural Practice Policy and Flat-Rate Cost-Share Payments Policy.* Approve updates to cost-share policies as presented.
- e. *Authorize statement of work – Low-income septic system upgrade (Contract # FY25KanabecSSTS1).* Authorize execution of agreement with Pine County for a \$21,500 project in the Kettle/Upper St. Croix Watershed with 100 percent WBIF funding.
- f. *Authorize payment of MASWCD dues.* Authorize payment of annual dues totaling \$7,231.73.
- g. *Authorize professional services agreement with Kevin Belkholm – management of agricultural fields on District-owned land.* Authorize PSA for agricultural field management services.
- h. *Authorize professional services agreement with Kevin Belkholm – winter storage of no-till drill.* Authorize PSA for winter equipment storage.
- i. *Authorize professional services agreement with Kevin Belkholm – winter storage of tree planter.* Authorize PSA for winter equipment storage.
- j. *Authorize payment to MCIT for 2026 coverage renewal.* Authorize payment of \$4,777.00 for property, casualty, and workers' compensation coverage.

10. Other Reports

- a. Subcommittee reports
 - i. Personnel Committee (*Belkholm, Johnson*)
 - ii. Finance Committee (*Belkholm, Johnson*)
 - iii. Coalition of Lake Associations (*Sanford*)
 - iv. Kettle/Upper St. Croix Watershed Partnership (*Johnson*)

- v. Rum River Watershed Partnership (*Johnson*)
- vi. Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership (*Belholm*)
- vii. Area III Forestry Association (*Sanford*)
- viii. TSA Area III Board (*Heggernes*)
- ix. District Land (*Heggernes, Sanford*)
- x. MASWCD Area III Annual Meetings Committee (*Heggernes, Johnson*)

- b. Meeting and Event Announcements, pg. 4 (*Peplinski*).
- c. Funding opportunities, pg. 4 (*Peplinski*).
- d. *MAWQCP December Report*. (*Peplinski*).
- e. *TNC grant update*. Staff update on potential grant activities with The Nature Conservancy (*Foss*).
- f. *Emerald Ash Borer workshop update*. Staff update on upcoming EAB workshops (*Foss*).
- g. *2025 Forest Health Annual Report - DNR*.
- h. *2025 Year-End Report and 2026 Budget* (*Peplinski*).

11. Other Business and Possible Action Items [Exhibit D]

- a. *Annual open meeting policy review*. Review open meeting policy and consider updates if needed (*Peplinski*).
- b. *Returned Buffer Law grant funds and 2026 grant agreement*. Acknowledge the returned 2023 funds and consider authorization of 2026 Buffer Law grant agreement (*Peplinski*).
- c. *Annual renewal of supervisor oaths of office and appointment requirements*. Complete annual oath of office renewals; issue reminder to board supervisors to review and recertify Statements of Economic Interest by the last Monday in January (*Peplinski*).
- d. *Annual review of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between NRCS and SWCD board*.
- e. *Healthcare coverage memorandum*. Receive an informational memo on employee healthcare coverage (*Peplinski*).

12. Consent Agenda Items

- a. *SWCD elections – overview of process and options*. Discussion item.
- b. *Annual subcommittee organization*. Discuss current committee assignments with the possibility of a more in-depth organizational strategy at a board–staff retreat with a professional facilitator.
- c. *Supervisor per diems*. Discuss annual per diem rates (\$125 per meeting per day maximum).
- d. *Presentation – Conservation Investment in Context*. Receive an informational presentation on conservation funding and investments, including state-funded

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| | <p>County programs such as County Water Plan Implementation, Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention, and the Wetland Conservation Act (<i>Peplinski</i>).</p> <p>e. 2025 Q4 TSA3 hours report.</p> <p>Adjourn 3:30 PM</p> <p>The next Regular Monthly Meeting is Wednesday, February 18, 1:00 PM</p> |
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Meeting and Event Announcements

- Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership JPE Meeting | Mora, MN | **February 23, 2026** | **9:30 AM**
- Conservation Conversations: Livestock & Conservation | Little Mermaid Cafe, Askov, MN | **January 23, 2026** | **4:30 PM** | Register at z.umn.edu/conservationconversations
- 2026 Stearns County Shoreland Workshop | St. Joseph, MN | **February 5, 2026** | **8 AM - 4 PM** | Register at <https://bit.ly/4iXiOgD> | \$35.00
- Conservation Conversations: Small Farms & Land Stewardship | Doc's Sports Bar & Grill, Sturgeon Lake, MN | **February 11, 2026** | **4:30 PM** | Register at z.umn.edu/conservationconversations
- Conservation Conversations: Row Crops & Soil Health | Rock Creek City Center, Rock Creek, MN | **March 13, 2026** | **12:30 PM** | Register at z.umn.edu/conservationconversations

Funding Opportunities

- **AGRI Urban Agriculture Grants (Minnesota Department of Agriculture)** – Up to \$1.93 million available through two grant opportunities supporting urban agriculture projects across Minnesota. Funding supports youth education, workforce skills, economic development, and community partnerships through agriculture-based programming. Eligible uses include equipment, site improvements, curriculum development, and transportation for youth field trips. Grants range from \$5,000 to \$75,000 with a 25% cash match required.
Administered by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.
Deadline: February 26, 2026, by 4:00 p.m.
- **Northeast SARE Farming Community Grant Program** – Approximately \$3.3 million available to support projects that strengthen farming communities in the Northeast through farmer-led education, collaboration, and innovation. Projects focus on addressing social, economic, workforce, and structural challenges in agriculture, with an emphasis on farmer leadership, community partnerships, and meaningful, region-wide impact. Typical awards range from \$50,000 to \$250,000, with no matching funds required. Projects are reimbursement-based and generally run for up to two years, with all projects concluding by November 30, 2028.
Administered by Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (hosted by the University of Vermont).
Deadline: February 23, 2026, by 5:00 p.m. ET.

Applications Submitted in FY25/FY265

- 2026 Clean Water Funds RFP - 2026 conservation IP intern (denied)
- MDA Soil Health Equipment Grant (application in review)
- NDAWN/MDA Weather Station (denied)
- Keep It Clean Grant - Kanabec COLA (denied)
- 2026/2027 Conservation Delivery Grant (awarded)
- 2026/2027 Conservation Contracts Grant (awarded)
- MOSH Soil Health Education Grant (awarded)

Annual or Ongoing Funding to Consider Applying For

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