



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

Annual Meeting Minutes January 9, 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; and Miranda Frenning, Accounting & Human Resources Specialist were present in-person. Corey Denning, Resource Conservationist; Joe Murphy, Community Conservationist; John McCormick, Regional Farm Bill Forester; Jon Utecht, Aquatic Invasive Species Program Coordinator; Kaela Viehman, Watershed Conservationist; Phil Norvitch, Conservation Manager; and Tristan Nelson, Forester; and Zach Evans, Regional Farm Bill Forester were present online.

Others Present: Melanie Bomier, Board of Water & Soil Resources was present. Allison Praet, Natural Resources Conservation Service; and Caryn Dawson, Pheasants Forever, were present online.

After Frank Modich, Supervisor administered the oath of office to recent electees: Chuck Bainter, Jerry Hovi, and Mark Peterson, the meeting was called to order at 10:38 a.m. by Chair, Peggy Pearson.

1. Agenda - Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.
2. Election of Officers –
 - a. Chair – Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich nominated Peggy Pearson for the position of Chair. No other nominations were received. Motion carried unanimously.
 - b. Vice Chair – Mark Peterson/Chuck Bainter nominated Frank Modich for the position of Vice Chair. No other nominations were received. Motion carried unanimously.
 - c. Secretary –Chuck Bainter/Jerry Hovi nominated Mark Peterson for the position of Secretary. No other nominations were received. Motion carried unanimously.
 - d. Treasurer – Mark Peterson/Frank Modich nominated Chuck Bainter for the position of Treasurer. No other nominations were received. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Minutes of Last Meeting – Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.
4. Financial Reports & Program Summary – Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to accept the financial reports and program summary. Motion carried unanimously.
5. Accounts Receivable and Payable – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve the accounts payable and accounts receivable as updated 01/08/254. Motion carried unanimously.
6. Guest Introductions and Comments –
 - a. Caryn Dawson was introduced. She began a new position today as a Pheasants Forever Wildlife Biologist based out of the Virginia NRCS office.
 - b. Melanie Bomier advised the board and staff that all BWSR grants require an annual report in eLink on/by February 1st.

OLD BUSINESS

7. DNR No Child Left Inside Grant Update – Kaela Viehman relayed that we will partner with Mesabi East Schools Community Education to offer the former Resource Rangers after school program with Kayla Owens instructing beginning in late January/early February. The DNR okayed this move as this school district also meets the guidelines. The program will be called Nature Rangers.
8. Credit Card for Kayla Owens with \$500 limit – Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to approve a \$500 credit card for Kayla Owens. Motion carried unanimously.

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.

NEW BUSINESS:

9. Annual Business – See Attachment - Motion to approve all annual business by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson. Motion carried unanimously.
10. BWSR Funds
 - a. SLR Cancellation of Forestry Plan Cost Share Contract at Landowner's Request – Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to cancel the cost share contract with Duane Niska (C24-WSP-2 RHV) at his request. Motion carried unanimously.
 - b. SLR Forestry Plan Renewal Cost Share Contract with Landowner – Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to approve a cost share contract renewal at 50% of the DNR Standard Rate for \$950 with Robyn Lindseth & Mark Peterson.
Affirmative: Bainter, Hovi, Modich, Pearson
Opposed: None
Abstained: Peterson
Motion Carried
11. County General, NRBG & WCA Funding & Board Resolution 2025-01 – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to approve Board Resolution 2025-01 accepting county funding. Motion carried unanimously.
12. DNR Delegation Agreement for AIS Prevention Inspections 2025-2027 – Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to approve the 2025-2027 Delegation Agreement with the DNR. Motion carried unanimously.
13. Human Resources
 - a. Job Descriptions, if available
 - i. Program Technician – Moved by Mark Peterson/Frank Modich to approve the job description as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
 - ii. Supervisory Regional Farm Bill Forester - Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to approve the job description as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
 - b. Add 2 Program Technicians Contingent on NRCS Funding - Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to add two program technicians at \$23.50 per hour, contingent upon NRCS funding. Motion carried unanimously.
 - c. Fill Supervisory RFB Forester Position, Increase Wage – Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to fill the supervisory RFB forester position and increase wage by 5% for added responsibilities, contingent on NRCS funding. Motion carried unanimously.
 - d. Add seasonal Watercraft Inspector Supervisor – Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to hire a seasonal watercraft inspector supervisor, contingent on St. Louis County AIS funding. Motion carried unanimously.
 - e. Credit Card for Jake Bendel with \$1,500 Limit – Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to approve a \$1,500 credit card for Jake Bendel. Motion carried unanimously.
 - f. Pay Equity Report – Approval to Submit on Behalf of Board Chair- Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to authorize the District Administrator to submit the pay equity report on behalf of the Board Chair. Motion carried unanimously.
 - g. Salary Adjustment for Anita Provinzino Effective 2/2/25 Pending Evaluation – Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to approve a 5% increase to salary effective 2/2/25, pending a performance evaluation. Motion carried unanimously. The board thanked Anita for 10 years of service and bringing the District from zero to one million dollars in that time.
14. MPCA 319 Pelican Lake Watershed Grant Agreement & Board Resolution 2025-02 – Anita stated she has spoken with two MPCA staff people and each confirmed: 1) this funding is from federal fiscal year 2022, if an extension is granted a maximum of 8 months (8/31/27) is available 2) given there has been a two year delay getting the delay, it is not expected that we will be able to complete 4 years of work in two years and 3) a budget revision/time extension will be considered after about 18 months at which time it is acceptable to reduce the amount. The MPCA would then redistribute the funds within Minnesota. Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to approve Board Resolution 2025-02 accepting MPCA 319 funding for the Pelican Lake Watershed. Motion carried unanimously.

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15. Upcoming Supervisor Meetings and/or Trainings
 - a. Laurentian Resource Conservation & Development – January 27
 - b. Policy Committee Rainy/Vermilion – February 7
 - c. SWCD Forestry Association – January 16
 - d. Supervisor Statement of Economic Interest – by January 27
 - e. Technical Service Area III – January 28
 - f. Other
16. Other – Moved by Mark Peterson/Jerry Hovi to approve Board Resolution 2025-03 authorizing application to the Sustain Our Great Lakes grant program for a culvert replacement on Berry Creek in the Cloquet River Watershed. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS: See packet for reports on file

17. District Administrator Report – Anita Provinzino
18. Conservation Manager Report – Phil Norvitch – Phil reported that he was out of the office for a couple of weeks. He is completing pollution reduction measures for the recent project on Lake Vermilion, conducting check-ins with staff and coordinating the Rainy Headwaters Vermilion steering team in preparation for a policy committee meeting.
19. Accounting & Human Resources Specialist – Miranda Frenning
20. Aquatic Invasive Species Program Coordinator Report – Jon Utecht
21. Community Conservationist Report- Joe Murphy
22. District Forester Report – Tristan Nelson
23. Regional Farm Bill Forester Report – John McCormick
24. Regional Farm Bill Forester Report – Zach Evans
25. Resource Conservationist Report – Corey Denning
26. St. Louis River Watershed Conservationist Report – Kaela Veihman
27. Natural Resources Conservation Service Report – Allison Praet indicated that they have been ranking applications with many requests for high tunnels. NRCS expects two new staff in the Virginia office this week: a district conservationist and a forester. NRCS staff will be participating in a variety of local events including a pow wow (which John M. will attend) and an ag festival. Caryn Dawson gave a brief background on herself.
28. Supervisor & Committee Reports – None
29. CLOSING:
30. Set Next Meeting Date Based on Regular Meeting Schedule set in Item 9 – The meeting was set for February 12, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.
31. Adjourn – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to adjourn the meeting at 12:27 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.



Mark Peterson, Secretary
February 12, 2025

North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors Annual Business

Officers	2025
Chair	Peggy Pearson
Vice Chair	Frank Modich
Secretary	Mark Peterson
Treasurer	Chuck Bainter

Committee Appointments 2025

Education	Frank Modich Jerry Hovi
Laurentian Resource Conservation & Development Board	Peggy Pearson Chuck Bainter, alt.
Legislative	Chuck Bainter Mark Peterson
MN SWCD Forestry Association	Mark Peterson Jerry Hovi, alt.
Personnel	Chuck Bainter Frank Modich
St. Louis & Rainy/Vermillion River WBIF Policy Committees	Chuck Bainter Frank Modich, alt.
Little Fork River Planning 1W1P Policy Committee	Chuck Bainter Peggy Pearson, alt.
Technical Service Area 3 Board	Chuck Bainter Mark Peterson, alt.
USDA NRCS EQIP Local Work Group	Peggy Pearson Chuck Bainter
Water Advisory (County)	Mark Peterson Chuck Bainter

ITEM	2025
Authorization to Complete Payroll	Accounting & Human Resources Specialist or District Administrator
Authorized Credit Card Holders and Card Limits District credit limit is \$36,700.	Mark Peterson \$36,700 Anita Provinzino \$5,000 Corey Denning \$1,500 Joe Murphy \$1,500 Jon Utecht \$5,000 John McCormick \$1,500 Kaela Veihman \$1,500 Kayla Owens, \$500 Miranda Frenning \$1,500 Phil Norvitch \$1,500 Tristan Nelson \$1,500 Zach Evans \$1,500
Bank Signatory/Money Transfer Authority	Chuck Bainter Frank Modich Anita Provinzino
Canoe/Kayak Use Rate	MPCA SWAG rate (\$35/day)
Designated Depository Agency	Frandsen Bank & Trust
District Administrator Spending Limit without Board Approval	\$5,000

Board of Supervisors Annual Business

ITEM	2025
Meal Allowances	GSA rates
Meeting Date and Time (Monthly)	2 nd Wednesday at 10:30 a.m.
Mileage Rate	IRS allowable (\$0.70)
Mileage Rate for personal vehicle taken when company vehicle is available	\$.25/mile
Motorized Watercraft Use Rate	MPCA SWAG rate (\$59.40/day)
Official Newspaper for Public Notices	Hometown Focus
Official Source for Postings	www.nslswcd.org
Supervisor Per Diem (Max \$125)	\$125
Woodland Stewardship New Plan Rate	Up to DNR Standard Rate (\$300 plus \$10/acre)
Woodland Stewardship Plan Rate for Renewals	½ of DNR Standard Rate (50% of (\$300 plus \$10/acre))

Amounts in parentheses are the rates as of January 2025. If rates change mid-year, the SWCD rates automatically change.



**North St. Louis
Soil and Water Conservation District**
505 3rd St N, Ste A
Virginia MN 55792
(218) 749-2000

WHEREAS, the St. Louis County awarded the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District the estimated funding amounts for 2025:

\$80,000.00	General Services
\$7,746.50	Wetland Conservation Act (pass-thru)
<u>\$9,000.00</u>	Natural Resources Block Grant (pass-thru)
\$96,746.50	TOTAL

AND WHEREAS, the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board desires to accept this funding to provide 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: *Bainter*
Seconded by: *Modich*

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 8th day of January 2025; and that I am duly authorized to execute this certificate.



Board Secretary



Resolution 2025-02

North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District

505 3rd St N, Ste A
Virginia MN 55792
(218) 749-2000
www.nslswcd.org

RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT A 319 SMALL WATERSHEDS GRANT FOR THE PELICAN LAKE WATERSHED FROM THE MPCA

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency offers a federal Section 319 Small Watersheds Focus Programs grant used to implement a series of projects outlined in a nine-element plan, provide a steady source of funding, focus implementation efforts, and achieve measurable water quality improvements on a specific waterbody, and

WHEREAS, the Pelican Lake watershed is nearly impaired for some water quality impairments and is barely meeting other standards; and

WHEREAS, Section 319 funding is expected provide four rounds of federal funding that is matched with 40% state, county or local funding to do work aimed at preventing the lake from becoming impaired.

WHEREAS, the District staff have worked with MPCA staff to develop a Nine Key Elements plan for the Pelican Lake Watershed, which is now approved; and

WHEREAS, staff have identified work to be accomplished in the first cycle totaling \$486,522; and

WHEREAS, the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board desires to accept the first round of funding in the amount of \$291,965 and will contribute \$195,000 as match.

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 such funding.

Motion Made by: *Bainter*
Seconded by: *Modich*
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 8th day of January, 2025 and that I am duly authorized to execute this certificate.

Mark Pearson
Board Secretary



Resolution 2025-03

North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District

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WHEREAS, the US Environmental Protection Agency announced that pre-proposals will be accepted for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Sustain Our Great Lakes grant program to sustain, restore, and protect fish and wildlife habitat, and improve water quality throughout the Great Lakes basin, and

WHEREAS, the District staff plan to develop and submit a pre-proposal that would meet those requirements by replacing one culvert crossing on Berry Creek in the Cloquet River Watershed on a US Forest Service Road; and

WHEREAS, if invited to submit a full proposal, the District staff would complete a grant application with the intent to restore fish passage and improve water quality by replacing a culvert in a priority watershed, but that are not a funding priority of St. Louis County nor the US Forest Service; and

WHEREAS, if the project is completed nearly 29 miles on Berry Creek would be reconnected for fish and invertebrate passage on designated trout streams; and

WHEREAS, this funding relates to the mission of the District; and

WHEREAS, North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board 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: Peterson
Seconded by: Hovi
Affirmative: Bainter, Hovi, Modica, 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 8th day of January 2025 and that I am duly authorized to execute this resolution.


Board 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.