



Who we are as an organization – Mille Lacs SWCD is applying a civic governance approach to SWCD actions and activities. The work of the SWCD and the outcomes of its activities will produce a base of active citizens with common interest in sustainable soil & water conservation. All stakeholders are committed to organize, educate, and apply policy according to principles and standards instituted in democracy.

Frequently Used Acronyms:

(1W1P) One Watershed, One Plan (BWSR program)
(BMP) Best Management Practice
(BWSR) Board of Water & Soil Resources
(CWF) Clean Water Fund
(FSP) Forest Stewardship Plan
(JAA) Job Approval Authority
(JPA, E or C) Joint Powers Agreement, Entity or Collaborative
(RRWP) Rum River Watershed Partnership
(MRSC) Mississippi River St. Cloud
(SRWPP) Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership
(LGU) Local Government Unit
(MASWCD) MN Assn. of Soil & Water Cons. Districts

(MLBO) Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
(MLLWG) Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group
(MLSWCD) Mille Lacs Soil & Water Conservation District
(NACD) National Association of Conservation Districts
(NRCS) Natural Resources Conservation Service
(PFM) Private Forest Management
(TSA 3) Technical Service Area 3 – SWCD Engineering
(MAWQCP) MN Ag. Water Quality Certification Program
(WBIF) Watershed Based Implementation Funds
(WCA) Wetland Conservation Act
(WSP) Woodland Stewardship Plan

Mille Lacs SWCD Board Meeting – MINUTES
Wednesday, March 12, 2025

Mille Lacs County Historic Courthouse, Conference Room D with remote option for the public.

Members Present:

Chair, Jake Janski, District 3
Treasurer, Andre LaSalle, District 4
Secretary, Tim Braun, District 2
Member, Robert Hoefert, District 5

Members Absent:

Vice-Chair, Dan Campbell, Dist. 1 (remote/non-voting)

Staff Present:

District Administrator, Susan Shaw
Financial Specialist, Pam Kuhn
Resource Conservationist, Siena Storm

Participating Guests:

Commissioner Liaison, Jay Munson
NRCS District Conservationist, Barb Zeroth

Supervisor Dan Campbell (District 1) planned to attend remotely from a public location at 191 Mattie Avenue, Hillsboro, NM 88042. However, the audio was not working so he observed as a non-voting member.

Call To Order & Pledge of Allegiance – Janski called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM

1. Conflict of Interest Declaration

Policy 2025-01: A conflict of interest whether actual or perceived occurs when someone in a position of trust has competing professional or personal interests and these competing interests make it difficult to fulfill professional duties impartially.

Supervisors were requested to identify any real or perceived conflicts of interest they may have regarding meeting business. The conflict-of-interest declaration form was provided to each for signature.

2. Approval of Agenda – (additions and deletions of new business or committee reports)

Additions

- 7.B.2.b U of M facility use agreement – authorize signature
- 7.B.2.c Area 3 Resolutions discussion

Motion by Hoefert to approve the agenda as amended. Second by Braun. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

3. Open Public Forum

Policy 2025-02: Board policy limits public forum time for board meeting topics not scheduled within the agenda to 2 minutes per person but allows time extension by board vote.

Barb Zeroth provided NRCS updates.

4. Consent Agenda

- A. Approve February 12, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes
- B. Information Only: Partner Reports

Motion by LaSalle to approve the consent agenda. Second by Braun. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Braun.
Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

5. Organizational Business

- A. NRCS/SWCD Memorandum of Understanding: Freedom of Information Act/Civil Rights (tabled)
- B. Strategic Plan Guiding Documents

6. Strategic Implementation

A. Rum River Watershed

- 1. Partnership (RRWP) Board - Janski (Braun)/staff..... board rep/staff report
 - a. Implementation Planning Committee (IPC)..... liaison/staff report
Janski reported that partner staff reviewed the budget, more than 50% FY23 funds remain to be spent this year. There is pressure to get that spent. Mille Lacs & Isanti SWCD have the most significant amount of those encumbered funds. The year-end report was completed in time for legislative day at the capitol.
- 2. Conservation/Public Outreach (LaSalle/Campbell)..... committee report
- 3. **Watershed-wide Community Conversations (Molly Clyne – lead)**
 - a. BWSR WBIF Rum River Watershed Partnership (SOW EI-4)..... see staff report
 - b. NWTF superfund grant see staff report
 - c. Soil Health Education grant see staff report
- 4. **Private lands protection/easement creation (Molly Clyne/Doug Page – leads)**..... see staff report
- 5. **Mille Lacs Lake protection efforts (Lynn Gallice – lead)**
 - a. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group – (Janski/LaSalle)..... committee report
No meeting since the last SWCD Board meeting.
 - b. BWSR WBIF Rum River Watershed Partnership projects
 - i. Mille Lacs Lake project development (SOW PD-1)
 - ii. BWSR WBIF RRWP (SOW UBMP-3) (action)
 - 1. **Motion by Hoefert to approve contract WBIFC23-3256-3 with Jane Gonzales** for a shoreline restoration in an amount not to exceed \$10,140.75 based on 75% of the eligible cost of \$13,521.00 **pending Rum partnership amendment to the SOW if needed.** Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
- 6. **Groundwater/drinking water safety (Lynn Gallice – lead)**
 - a. Central ML Co Targeted Well Sealing FY23 grant (C23-6045)
 - b. MDH Well water testing grant FY23
 - c. MDH Well water testing grant FY25 application see project summary
- 7. **Agriculture/Soil Health (Siena Storm – lead)**
 - a. No-till equipment
 - b. Equipment liaison (Braun) liaison report
 - c. BWSR WBIF Rum River Watershed Partnership projects
 - i. Bogus Brook feedlot management (SOW PASS) see staff report
 - ii. West Branch & Bogus Brook landowner interest survey (SOW PD-1)
 - iii. Bogus Brook drainage management (SOW PD-1) see staff report
 - iv. Soil Health promotion (SOW PD-1) **presentation by Siena Storm**

- d. MDA MAWQCP
- e. Soil Health cost share FY23
- f. Soil Health Staffing grant FY24
- g. Soil Health Delivery FY25

8. Forestry (Molly Clyne – lead)

- a. MN SWCD Forestry Association (Hoefert)
- b. BWSR WBIF Rum River Watershed Partnership
 - i. Forestry Stewardship Coordination (SOW EI-4) see staff report
- c. LCCMR Tree Planting Grant (ID 2022-260) see staff report
 - i. **Motion by LaSalle to approve contract P23-2942-WSP-10 with Michael Jorgensen** for cost assistance to have a Woodland Stewardship Plan written that would be reimbursed at a flat rate of \$300, based on a not to exceed rate of \$300 for an eligible plan. Second by Hoefert. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
- d. Tree planter equipment rental program see staff report
- e. US FWS NOFO 3 grant (under federal hold) see staff report

B. Snake River Watershed

- 1. **Plan Partnership (SRWPP) Board - Hoefert (Braun)/staff** board rep/staff report
Hoefert and Shaw attended. The partnership elected officers and reviewed finances.
 - a. Steering Committee report (Shaw).....Shaw update
Shaw reported discussion among SWCD and County staff partners regarding projects. Pine SWCD had proposed a buckthorn control forestry BMP project that resulted in a split vote by partners in attendance at the meeting. Shaw had raised the question regarding successful management of buckthorn. BWSR questioned the water quality impact of buckthorn management as a forest practice. Snake policy allows a chance for members not in attendance to vote. If one additional vote is made in favor of the project, it can move forward.
- 2. Conservation/Public Outreach Committee (LaSalle/Campbell)
- 3. Stream/shoreland protection (Lynn Gallice – lead)
- 4. Groundwater/drinking water safety (Lynn Gallice – lead)
- 5. **Agriculture/Soil Health (Siena Storm – lead)**
 - a. Outreach/project development (SRWPP WBIF FY24) see staff report
- 6. Forestry (Molly Clyne – lead)

C. Miss/St. Cloud Watershed (MRSC)

- 1. **Partnership Board - being formed - Campbell (Hoefert)/staff**
 - a. Steering Committee report (Siena Storm – lead)Shaw update
MLSWCD staff have requested funds be budgeted for project development regarding the feasibility of stream restoration targeting Battle Brook, as well as non-structural project funding for soil health practices.
- 2. Conservation/Public Outreach Committee (LaSalle/Campbell)
- 3. Stream/shoreland protection
- 4. Groundwater/drinking water safety (Lynn Gallice – lead)
- 5. Agriculture/Soil Health (Siena Storm – lead)
- 6. **Forestry (Molly Clyne – lead)**
 - a. BWSR WBIF MRSC FY25 see staff report

D. Miss/Sartell (MR-Sartell) 1W1P Planning Partnership no planning role

- 1. Forestry (Molly Clyne – lead)

E. Other Programs and Grants

- 1. **Promotional Efforts/Information/Outreach**
 - a. Conservation/Public Outreach Committee - LaSalle & Campbell (Janski)

- b. Conservation tree sale (Pam Kuhn – lead).....report
Ms. Kuhn reported that 5,050 trees have been sold, leaving 1,950 yet to sell. Primarily evergreens.
The sale continues until May 1st.
- 2. Area 3 Envirothon program
- 3. BWSR Reinvest in MN (RIM) Easement Stewardship (Siena Storm – lead)
- 4. BWSR Buffer Law Implementation (Siena Storm – lead)
- 5. DNR Observation Well Monitoring (Siena Storm – lead)
- 6. Mille Lacs County Ag Inspector (Lynn Gallice – lead)
- 7. **Irrigation Practices to Protect GW Quality & Quantity RCPP (Gallice – lead)**see project summary
 - a. P23-1461 RCPPCWF Pooling agreement amendment 2025.03.06
Eligible cost increases to the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe irrigation system project have been approved by the Irrigation Resource Conservation Partnership (IRCP), resulting in an amendment to the pooling agreement with the MLSWCD. MLSWCD is passing the funds for the project through to the MLBO. East Otter Tail SWCD employee Mitchell Janson is providing the JAA for practices 442 and 449 of the project. Central Lake College is engineering the system. MLSWCD employee Lynn Gallice is playing an administrative role overseeing the contract documents.

Motion by Hoefert to approve the P23-1461_RCPPCWF Pooling agreement amendment dated 2025.03.06, amending the amount from 30,000 to \$52,727.58. Second by Braun. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
 - b. MLBO contract #P23-1461-MLSWCD-1 amendment
Updated cost estimates from the contractors and the need to trench in electric lines has increased the cost of the project to \$52,727.58.

Motion by LaSalle to approve amendment #1 to contract #P23-1461-MLSWCD-1 with the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, amending the amount of the flat rate contract from \$30,000 to a not to exceed rate of \$52,727.58 for an eligible irrigation system. Second by Braun. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
- 8. **Wetlands Conservation Act**
 - a. TEP and Restoration Orders (Shaw/Storm – leads).....Shaw update
Ms. Storm and Ms. Shaw will split 2025 WCA duties. Shaw and other TEP members will provide on the job training to Ms. Storm.
 - b. Outreach/Community Conversations (Clyne – lead)..... see staff report
- 9. Agricultural BMP Loan Program (Gallice – lead)

7. District Capacity & Leadership Development

A. Personnel

- 1. Personnel Committee (Janski/LaSalle)..... committee report
 - i. Ms. Storm has successfully completed her probationary period. The Administrator has reported good work by Ms. Storm to the personnel committee, and the board relayed their congratulations to Ms. Storm.
- 2. Employee handbook policy changes (tabled)
- 3. MASWCD District Manager Leadership Development Cohort
Janski reported that the MASWCD Board discussed priorities for the next year and is taking action to support staff and the SWCD District Manager role. The MASWCD wants to identify how the manager’s role is changing, acknowledge the different skill sets across the state, and varying needs. Three District Managers attended an MASWCD discussion and were there to advocate for statewide training. The board approved developing a cohort driven by District Managers, not by the MASWCD board. The goal is to create a curriculum for District Managers to meet a need that is not met through existing opportunities. Shaw was selected as one of 5 managers statewide.

B. SWCD Board

1. SWCD Engineering Technical Service Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert)
2. MASWCD/NE Area 3 Business (Janski-A3 Director)report
 - a. MASWCD Legislative Day at the Capitol
Government Relations Committee (Janski/Braun)..... committee report
Braun reported that he and Janski went to St. Paul and met with legislators. They organized some joint meetings with Isanti and Sherburne SWCDs and reported it was a good experience. The committee can evaluate whether it should be an every year, or every other year effort. Janski feels it was a good first step and suggested the district invite legislators to other events versus relying on Legislative Day alone to build relationships and understanding. The event was very well attended.

The State Aid bill for SWCD funding has broad bipartisan support. Janski encouraged the entire board, as we get closer to the end of session, to hit up legislators for their support of SWCD funding. Legislators Lawrence and Schultz were favorable of the bill.
The State has been funding 15M for the last biennium, but it is scheduled to go down to 12M this biennium. MASWCD is asking for 22M, hoping it will stay at 15M. Braun noted one figure to remember that for every \$1 of funding SWCDs put toward landowner BMPs, \$1.80 gets invested in the community.
 - b. UofM facility use agreement – authorize signature
The Area 3 June Resolutions meeting will be held at the Cloquet forestry center. A facility use agreement needs to be signed to reserve the venue. Area 3 will pay the reservation fee. Janski asked if the MLSWCD Board would authorize signing the use agreement.
Motion by Braun to approve signature of the use agreement. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
 - c. Area 3 Resolutions discussion
As Area 3 Director, Janski sent requests to all SWCD managers to start the MASWCD Resolutions process. The MLSWCD board would need to discuss resolutions at the April meeting in order to be able to approve resolutions by May 10th. Currently MASWCD has 47 active resolutions. Janski reminded the board to consider that each new resolution submitted to MASWCD adds to the expectation of limited staff and potentially dilutes the existing work.
3. One on One meetings with the Administrator
4. General Supervisor updates

C. Civic Partnership Development (Molly Clyne – lead)

8. Fiscal Capacity

- A. Financial update..... (Financial Specialist)
 1. Ms. Kuhn reviewed the transaction and treasurer’s report. Much of the money that came in was reimbursement for the 4th quarter of 2024 staff time expenditure under grants.

Motion by Braun to approve the treasurer’s report and monthly transactions report which include electronic transfer’s # E25-29 through E25-50, credit card fees and checks written #8165-8174, totaling \$40,681.79 and subject to audit. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

Kuhn requested supervisors turn in expense reports by March 17th but by March 20th at the latest. Meetings afterwards that happen after that date can be reported in the 2nd quarter expense report.
 2. Reconciliation of Bank Statements (Treasurer)report
LaSalle reported that the bank statements looked good.
 3. Finance Committee (LaSalle/Hoefert)..... committee report
 4. 2025 Budget update
Shaw requested the board approve an updated 2025 budget that reflects updated revenue and expenditures anticipated. Additions include rent, anticipated FY26 SWCD aid funding, irrigation grant

passthrough funds, MDH FY25 well water testing grant. Updated expenditures include corrected tree planter purchase expense, vehicle insurance estimate and unemployment claim. The budget will be very tight. Shaw will continue to work on projecting expenditures and revenues to anticipate cash flow needs as most MLSWCD grants are reimbursement based.

Motion by LaSalle to approve the updated 2025 budget. Second by Hoefert. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

9. Approved SWCD Meetings & Events

Motion by Hoefert to approve supervisor attendance/reimbursement for the following meetings. Second by Braun. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

Internal Operational Committees

- A. Finance Committee (Hoefert/LaSalle)
 - 1. Statement reconciliation w/QuickBooks (**LaSalle**)..... monthly
- B. Personnel Committee (Janski/LaSalle)
- C. Conservation/Public Outreach (LaSalle/Campbell)
- D. Equipment liaison (Braun) as needed
- E. Government Relations (Janski/Braun)
- F. One on One Meetings with Administrator please schedule monthly as needed

Partnership Boards

- G. Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP) Board (Janski/Braun).....Mar 27 @ 4:30
 - 1. Implementation Planning Committee (IPC) liaison (**Janski**).....Mar 10 @ 12:30
- H. Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership (SRWPP) Board (Hoefert/Braun).....Mar 24 canceled
- I. Mississippi-St. Cloud Watershed Policy Committee (**Campbell/Hoefert**).....Apr 3 @ 11:00
- J. TSA Area 3 (**LaSalle/Hoefert**).....Mar 26 @ 10:00

Voluntary Membership Boards

- K. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group (**Janski/LaSalle**)Mar 17 @ 10:00
 - 1. Healthy Land, Healthy Lake event..... May 3, 2025
- L. MN SWCD Forestry Association (**Hoefert**).....Mar 20 @ 10:00
Janski will attend on behalf of MASWCD. Bob may attend on behalf of the SWCD.

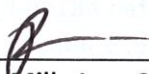
State and Regional Association Meetings

- M. MASWCD/NE Area 3 Meetings
 - 1. NE Area 3 Resolutions Meeting, Cloquet Forestry CtrJune 6, 2025
 - 2. NE Area 3 Fall Meeting, Kanabec SWCD HostsSept 8, 2025

10. Evaluate the Meeting

11. Next Regular Meeting – April 9, 2025, at 6PM, Historic Courthouse, Conference Rm D w/public remote option.
During Historic Courthouse construction February 3 ~ May 2025 the building will be accessible but disrupted.

12. Adjourn – Chair Janski adjourned the meeting at 7:51PM



Tim Braun, Mille Lacs SWCD Board Secretary

4/14/25

Date

Our specific purpose or vision is to organize more sustainable partnership between government and community, by developing and supporting an active role for all citizens in managing soil & water resources, that will ensure soil and water resources can meet the needs and the common good of all citizens.