

Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership

JPE Board Meeting

Meeting Minutes (Approved 8.25.2025)



July 28, 2025 9:30 am-11:00 am

IN-PERSON

Kanabec County Courthouse
Basement Rm 3 and 4
317 Maple Avenue East, Mora, MN 55051

VIRTUAL

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/ybi-uzdv-yhz>
Or dial: (US) +1 937-696-9474 PIN: 149 734 749#
More phone numbers: <https://tel.meet/ybi-uzdv-yhz?pin=4021771821790>

Board Members

Aitkin County Board of Commissioners	Travis Leiviska
Aitkin County Soil and Water Conservation District	Dan Gravley (Vice Chair)
Kanabec County Board of Commissioners	Tom Roeschlein
Kanabec County Soil and Water Conservation District	Kevin Belkholm
Mille Lacs County Soil and Water Conservation District	Robert Hoefert
Pine County Board of Commissioners	Joshua Mohr (Chair)
Pine County Soil and Water Conservation District	Michael Cummins
Board Secretary/Watershed Coordinator	Mary Poelman, Kanabec SWCD
Board Treasurer	Erin Hoxsie, Pine County

Attendance:

Dan Gravley (Aitkin SWCD), Tom Roeschlein (Kanabec County), Bob Hoefert (Mille Lacs SWCD), Joshua Mohr (Pine County), Michael Cummins (Pine SWCD), Kevin Belkholm (Kanabec SWCD), Mary Poelman (Kanabec SWCD), Jaren Peplinski (Kanabec SWCD), Emily Larsen (Kanabec SWCD), Jon Sanford (Kanabec SWCD), Zach Guttormson (BWSR), Susan

Shaw (Mille Lacs SWCD), Kathy Nielsen (Pokegama Lake Association), Don Deutch (Cross Lake Association), Craig Mattson, Paul Swanson (Pine SWCD)

Online: Travis Leiviska (Aitkin County), Erin Hoxsie (Pine County), Barb Peichel(BWSR), Krista Arne (Pine SWCD), Chase Murphy (Mille Lacs County - Wetlands)

Purpose:

Review Q2 Budget

Vote on 2 Proposals: Staff time for Agricultural and Water Resources Technicians

Public forum guidelines

Mid-Year Projects Review and Project Updates

	Topics	Assigned	Time
A1	Call to order/Pledge of Allegiance	Joshua Mohr, Chair	
A2	Introductions/attendance - Chair gave verbal update on Pokegama Lake Association nanobubbles media day	Joshua Mohr, Chair	
A3	Approve Meeting Agenda 7.28.2025 Agenda Motion to approve: Hoefert; Second: Gravley *Approved by unanimous vote: Leiviska, Gravley, Roeschlein, Belkholm, Hoefert, Mohr, Cummins Approve Minutes from previous meeting 6.23.2025 Meeting Minutes: Motion to approve: Hoefert; Second: Cummins *Approved by unanimous vote: Leiviska, Gravley, Roeschlein, Belkholm, Hoefert, Mohr, Cummins	Joshua Mohr, Chair <u>Purpose</u> Vote to Approve Agenda: Vote to Approve Minutes:	10 min
Agenda			
1	Budget Review: 1. Q2 2025 Gravley: Questions on admin time- resolved	Erin Hoxsie, Fiscal Agent <u>Purpose</u> Informational Financial Oversight	15 min
2	Public Comment: 1. Discuss and approve public forum guidelines Public Forum Guidelines With the addition of “name, county, and township,” guidelines were approved for a 30-day review period (ending 8.27.2025) Motion to approve: Cummins; Second: Roeschlein *Approved by unanimous vote: Leiviska, Gravley, Roeschlein, Belkholm, Hoefert, Mohr, Cummins	Joshua Mohr, Chair <u>Purpose</u> 1. Discuss and vote on approving public forum guidelines 2. Invite the public to provide comment	Up to 30 min

	2. Public Forum		
3	<p>New Projects:</p> <p>1. Staff Time- Agricultural Technician Requesting: \$20,000 Statement of Work Contract ID: SR-WBIF-16 STAFF-PSWCD-2025 Contract Name:PSWCD_Ag Tech Staff_WBIF 2025</p> <p>With the note that these funds are approved by the board retroactively to the Steering Committee approval date of 7.7.2025</p> <p>Motion to approve: Cummins Second: Hoefert *Approved by Yes vote: Leiviska, Gravley, Roeschlein, Belkholm, Hoefert, Mohr, Cummins</p> <p>Discussion: Leiviska: Can these staff work in other counties with this funding? Paul Swanson: Yes. Leiviska: Are these staff already on staff and full-time? Paul Swanson: Yes</p> <p>2. Staff Time- Water Resources Technician Requesting: \$20,000 Statement of Work Contract ID: SR-WBIF-17 STAFF-PSWCD-2025 Contract Name: PSWCD_Water Resource Tech Staff_WBIF 2025</p> <p>With the note that these funds are approved by the board retroactively to the Steering Committee approval date of 7.7.2025</p> <p>Motion to approve: Cummins; Second: Belkholm *Approved by unanimous vote: Leiviska, Gravley, Roeschlein, Belkholm, Hoefert, Mohr, Cummins</p> <p>Discussion: Discussed the previous motion</p>	<p>Paul Swanson PSWCD</p> <p><u>Purpose</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vote to Approve funding for Ag Technician 2. Vote to Approve funding for Water Resources Technician 	20 min
4	<p>Current Work Plan Status 2025 Mid-Year Work Plan Progress Report</p> <p>Discussion</p>	<p>Mary Poelman, Watershed Coordinator</p> <p><u>Purpose</u> Informational opportunity to share accomplishments</p>	20 min
5	New Projects (Approved by Steering Committee since last meeting)	<p><u>Purpose</u> Informational to share with Board projects scheduled under</p>	5 min

	- TBD No discussion	\$20,000	
6	Project List Review: - Handout at Meeting Updates from SWCDs on active projects	<u>Purpose:</u> Informational progress status of currently funded projects	20 min
7	Next Meeting Time August 25, 2025 Kanabec County Courthouse Basement conference room 3 317 Maple Ave E, Mora MN 55051 Following time: Sept 22, 2025	Mary Poelman, Watershed Coordinator	5 min

Motion to Adjourn: Cummins; Second: Hoefert

*Approved by unanimous vote: Leiviska, Gravley, Roeschlein, Belkholm, Hoefert, Mohr, Cummins

Immediately Following Meeting:

8	Speaker Presentation (Screening) : Snake River Main Stem Geology-Screening - Presentation on the Geology of the Snake River and how it impacts Erosion and bank stabilization projects.	Recording by Carrie Jennings, Freshwater Society <u>Purpose</u> Presentation on the Geology of the Snake River and how it impacts Erosion and bank stabilization projects.	35 min
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1. Gravley initiated a review of the budget, highlighting concerns about spending more than what remains. Erin Hoxsie explained the allocation of administrative costs and the necessity to reallocate unspent project funds. The discussion also touched on the challenges of budgeting for livestock waste practices and the anticipated match funding from agricultural projects.

2. Mohr discussed the potential implementation of a public comment period in meetings, highlighting a conversation with Mary Poelman about the need for such a feature. Mohr suggested a straightforward guideline that includes a three-minute speaking limit and a requirement for speakers to identify themselves by name and location. Additionally, he noted a modification to prevent speakers from sharing their time with others.

Mohr highlighted the challenges of public comment periods, particularly the expectation from the public for interaction that is not typically allowed. He suggested that board members should set clear expectations for attendees regarding the nature of public comments. Mohr also mentioned that while public comments can serve to voice concerns, they may not always lead to actionable agenda items.

3. Paul Swanson presented a proposal for \$20,000 each for a water resource technician and an agricultural technician to address the growing workload in the Snake River Watershed. The funding would allow these technicians to work on projects across multiple counties, enhancing collaboration and efficiency. Swanson emphasized the importance of these roles in implementing water quality improvement projects and managing agricultural practices. He highlighted the need to prioritize projects based on their significance to the watershed

and noted that the funding is reimbursable. Swanson also encouraged other counties to consider similar funding in their budgets. Swanson noted that job descriptions for the two positions were available to the board by request.

4. Mary Poelman provided an update on the 2024-2025 work plan. She noted that 50% of the established goals (2024-2025) have been met, while 70% of the WBIF grant funds (2024-2026) have been allocated. Poelman also indicated that the current grant will cover part of the upcoming 2026-2027 work plan. She provided a handout to the board highlighting the progress on the 2024-2025 work plan goals.
Discussion from the public on the handout inquired about the percentage reduction in overall goals that the goals of the workplan covered, as well as how the pollution reduction numbers were calculated. It was discussed that calculators are used to estimate pollution reduction numbers for specific practices. Also discussed was how a map of project locations or a summary of projects implemented after a Sub-watershed assessment would be useful for outreach.
5. Mary Poelman noted that a livestock pipeline project was still pending final approval and would not be discussed.
6. SWCDs provide updates on their individual active projects.
7. Next meeting times were discussed, and the Meeting was adjourned
8. A recording of the Snake River Main Stem Geology ppt presentation narrated by Carrie Jennings (Freshwater Society) was screened for in-person attendees.