

Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership

Steering Committee

Meeting [MINUTES approved 1.5.2026](#)

December 5, 2025 9:00am-11:00am

Moved from Dec 1 2:00pm-4:00pm due to meeting conflicts



Steering Committee

Voting Members:

Pending Hiring, Aitkin County

Janet Smude, Aitkin County SWCD-[present](#)

Ryan Carda, Kanabec County

Jaren Peplinski, Kanabec SWCD-[present](#)

Siena Storm, Mille Lacs SWCD-[present](#)

[Aaron Gustafson](#), Pine County-[present](#)

Paul Swanson, Pine County SWCD-[present](#)

Partners and Staff:

Barb Peichel, BWSR

Zach Guttormson, BWSR-[present](#)

Emily Larsen, Kanabec SWCD-[present](#)

Susan Shaw, Mille Lacs SWCD

Heather Donoho, Pine County SWCD

Krista Arne, Pine County SWCD-[present](#)

Nick Foss, Pine County SWCD/Kanabec SWCD-[present](#)

Fiscal:

Erin Hoxsie, Pine County SWCD-[present](#)

Coordinator:

Mary Poelman, Kanabec SWCD-[present](#)

Others Present

[Kelly Condiff](#) DNR

Location:

In-person meeting at Kanabec SWCD office: 2008 Mahogany St, Ste 3, Mora, MN 55051

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/bam-qgik-hjw>

Or dial: (US) +1 502-667-4238 PIN: 479 537 515#

More phone numbers: <https://meet.google.com/tel/bam-qgik-hjw?pin=2761399208395&hs=1>

Purpose:

Finalize FY26 Workplan, Finalize Work Plan Amendment proposal, Projects, Discussions of strategic direction and upcoming policy suggestions

Topics	Assigned	Attachments	Time
Approve Agenda/Minutes	Mary Coordinator	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12.05.2025 Agenda Minutes (DRAFT) 11.03.2025 	DECIDE 5 min
<p>-Brief Introductions to welcome the new Pine County Environmental Services Manager Aaron Gustafson</p> <p>-Agenda Approved: 5 Yes, 2 Absent</p> <p>-Minutes Approved: 5 Yes, 2 Absent</p>			
Budget Review <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Funding Categories Work Plan Revision 	Mary Coordinator Erin Fiscal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Link to proposal At Meeting 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> DECIDE DECIDE 15 min
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Funding Categories <p>-Discussion on update of recommendation with Coordination split 20/60 into Admin/Proj Dev.</p> <p>Motion to approve the proposal as written as a recommendation to the board. Approved: 5 Yes, 2 Absent</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Work Plan Revision <p>-Previously shared work plan revision was shared with the Steering Committee with minor adjustments, adjustments were discussed.</p> <p>Motion to approve the recommended work plan revision to the board. Approved: 5 Yes, 2 Absent</p>			
Projects <ol style="list-style-type: none"> SR-WBIF-2-A1-KSWCD-2025 Total Project Cost: \$18,607.00 Requesting: \$13,955.25 Non-State Match: \$4,651.75 Forestry Project- Discussion of Cost Share for containerized tree plantings and priority area expansions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Emily KSWCD Nick PSWCD 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> SOW-AMENDMENT Forestry Project Details 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> DECIDE DISCUSSION 20 min

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<p>1. SR-WBIF-2-A1-KSWCD-2025 Project ID: SR-WBIF-2-A1-KSWCD-2025 Project Name: KSWCD_Shoreline_Arthur33_WBIF-2025_Amendment 1</p> <p>Motion to approve the Amendment to provide additional \$400 cost of permitting not previously included in the total project cost estimate. Approved: 5 Yes, 2 Absent</p> <p>2. Forestry Project- Discussion of Cost Share for containerized tree plantings and priority area expansions</p> <p>The conversation considered whether a policy should be adopted for containerized trees. Kelly suggested that it depends on the size and context, citing the use of five-gallon potted shrubs in shoreline restoration. Zach Guttormson mentioned that larger trees are sometimes used on a small scale in shoreline projects to incentivize property owners to replace mature trees lost during project work. Zach Guttormson emphasized that the cost must be <u>justifiable</u> and <u>reasonable</u> according to state funds criteria and should align with resource concerns and grant work plan outcomes. The consensus, supported by Paul Swanson, was to approach the issue on a case-by-case basis to avoid limiting available tools for resource concerns. The group agreed to discuss setting a flat rate payment for trees and coordinator would follow up with partners on individual policies.</p>			
<p>Implementation Work Plan FY26 (2026-2027)</p> <p>1. Finalize Draft for JPE Board</p> <p>Approved for recommendation to the board.</p>	<p>Mary Coordinator</p>	<p>DRAFT WORK PLAN</p> <p>Added Elink-Descriptions for WBIF- Workplan please review</p> <p>Cheat Sheet Table</p> <p>Questions to finalize</p>	<p>DECIDE 45 min</p>

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<p>Decisions for 12/1/2025 SC Meeting: (12/5/2025-voting record)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forestry: proposal to decrease Tree acres to 130, keep continuous cover at 141-approved 2. Groundwater: proposal to increase funding by \$3,000 in order to keep the same goal-approved 3. Livestock: proposal to keep funding the same and reduce goal to 4 practices-approved 4. Non-Structural -proposal to reduce goal to 150 T TSS/ year -approved 5. Proposal to keep goal at 1 Plan Completed (justification- better to have in the workplan if we want to move in that direction than have to add in.-approved 6. WSP - No changes requested-N/A 7. NMP's - Proposal to increase funding by \$15,000-approved 8. Septics: Proposal to decrease goal to 2 septic -approved 9. Shoreland: Proposal to decrease practices to 9-approved 10. Shoreland: Proposal to decrease ft (100ft/practice) (e.g. 900ft)-approved 11. Shoreland: Proposal to decrease P/ TSS proportionally to practices-approved 12. Tech/Engineering: Proposal to include 1-report study (funding for Snake Main Stem -\$10,000)-approved 13. Wetlands-No changes requested-N/A 14. AgPractices: Proposal to decrease lbs TP reduced to 225lbs (people requested 80-300)-approved 15. Proposal to increase funding in Administration for Meeting Attendance and Invoicing \$15,000 approved 16. Education / Outreach: Funds proposal to increase by \$6,000-approved 17. Project Development: extra funds into this category-\$9000 approved <p>The coordinator will provide draft with updated information to the SC in the next week to make any final technical edits.</p> <p>Motion to approve the draft work plan for Board Approval: 1 Paul Swanson 2nd-Jaren Peplinski Approved: 5 Yes, 2 Absent</p>			
Policy 1. Adjusting Cost share Rates 2026- request to match Lower Saint Croix rates	Mary Coordinator	Discussion of Criteria to consider for draft Current Cost Share Rates	DISCUSSION 10 min
Discussion about getting the team to think about potentially adjusting cost share rates for the next year, noting that this is a conversation to be continued at the next meeting. Paul explained that PSWCD are suggesting aligning the rates with the lower St. Croix watershed, which recently completed a comprehensive review and updated their rates. Janet raised a concern about varying costs between Pine County and Aitkin County and suggested the committee consider a broader perspective as the committee moves forward with consideration of adjustments.			
Strategic Direction 1. Newsletter 2. Citizens Advisory Committee 3. Improvement of Project Invoicing and Reporting Documentation	Mary Coordinator	Discussion of strategic direction and ideas for improvement	DISCUSSION 15 min

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<p>Mary provided updates on several initiatives, including increasing outreach through a regular communication channel, not necessarily a newsletter, to watershed stakeholders and board members. A key focus is establishing the Citizens Advisory Committee, which is required by the current plan but is not currently active, and Mary plans to reach out to individuals for input on its implementation. Janet suggested reaching out to people involved in drafting the plan to reconnect with potential committee members . The third initiative involves potentially improving the reporting process straightforward checklist for partners regarding providing necessary documents/documentation for project invoicing.</p>			
<p>Future Meeting Times JPE Dec 22 (move to Dec 15?) SC Jan 5 (proposed meeting times?) TAC Last: Oct 6 2025 , Next May 2026</p>	<p>Mary Coordinator</p>	<p>Should we move the Dec JPE meeting? Should we change SC meeting times?</p>	<p>DECIDE 10 min</p>
<p>SC would like to keep the meeting on Dec 22 so long as a quorum is able to attend.</p>			