



Sauk River Watershed Collaborative Implementation Team Meeting

Date, Time, and Location: Wednesday, May 27th 2026, 9:00am-Noon, Sauk River Watershed District Office 642 Lincoln Rd Sauk Centre Mn 56378

Attendance:

In Person: Steve Zeece (SRWD), Jerry Rapp (Douglas Co, PC Ex Officio), Jon Roeschlein (SRWD), Stephanie Hatzenbihler (Stearns CD), Kory Klebe (SRWD), Abi Borgerding (SRWD), Emily Forbord (Stearns County), Becky Schlorf (Stearns County)

Virtually Via Teams: Danielle Anderson (Douglas SWCD), Holly Kovarik (Pope Co. SWCD) Kyle Weimann (Stearns CD), Ben Ruley (Stearns CD), Brad Wozney (BWSR), Annie Felix (MNDH).

Review of Previous Meeting Minutes, Agenda Additions, Introductions:

The April 2026 meeting minutes were reviewed. One correction was brought forth from Stearns County, correcting that the amount to be reimbursed to the SRWD for the City of St. Cloud expenses, which is **\$1,667.05**. The [April Meeting minutes on Sharepoint](#) have been edited with this correction.

Plan Tracking Tool & Dashboard Updates

Ben Ruley provided a demonstration and update on the collaborative's tracking dashboard.

- All tracking functions are now consolidated into a [single dashboard link](#).
- Approximately 273 completed projects have been entered.
- Progress toward sediment reduction goals appears strong, while phosphorus reduction progress remains lower relative to planning goals.
- Shoreland restoration and native vegetation planting metrics currently exceed some plan targets at the watershed scale.

The dashboard now includes:

- Watershed-wide implementation summaries
- Management unit summaries
- Filtering by organization, funding source, project type, and management unit
- Export functions for spreadsheets and GIS layers
- Outreach and education tracking tools
- "Other Plan Activities" tracking tied directly to CWMP action items



Discussion occurred regarding:

- Whether youth education and WaterFest type events should be entered into the dashboard.
- Tracking both WBIF and non-WBIF outreach efforts.
- Potential future value of this data during future CWMP updates and plan rewrites.

The group agreed:

- Additional outreach metrics likely should be entered into the system.
- Ben Ruley and the E&O Committee will review plan language and provide additional clarification regarding what outreach efforts should be tracked.

Discussion occurred regarding eventually creating a public-facing version of the dashboard. Topics discussed included:

- Aggregating project data by management unit rather than displaying exact project locations.
- Potential “featured projects” where willing landowners or municipalities may allow broader public visibility.
- Using the dashboard to communicate watershed accomplishments and implementation progress to the public.

Fiscal Agent Updates

FY22 & Supplemental

The fiscal agent reviewed FY22 balances and expenditures.

- Remaining budget balance: approximately \$184,741.27
- Paid expenditures to date: approximately \$676,188.94
- Interest accrued through May 13, 2026: approximately \$39,977.89

SRWD Obj. 3 Monitoring Reallocation to Todd SWCD’s Padua Prairie Project

Todd SWCD need about \$30k in TEA for the Padua Prairie Project. They currently have secured near \$5500 in TEA.

SRWD staff agreed to reallocate **\$8000** of their unspent objective 3 funding to support Todd SWCD Technical Engineering Assistance (TEA) Padua Prairie related expenses.



Consensus approval for the proposed reallocation, with final administrative processing to occur following fiscal review.

FY24 WBIF

The FY24 WBIF balance remains substantial.

- Approximately \$894,024.56 remains budgeted but unencumbered
- Interest earned: \$45,046.19
- Workplan re-write projects are now eligible for reimbursement.

Extension eligibility for FY24 was reviewed, and because execution occurred June 3, 2024, an extension request remains possible if needed.

FY27 WBIF

Discussion occurred around:

- Timing for FY27 workplan development
- Project prioritization
- Need for collaborative members to begin populating the wish list over summer and fall 2026

The group generally agreed the goal should be to substantially develop the FY27 request by fall 2026. Discussion around not requesting the full amount due to prior FY spending rates.

CRP Incentives

FY24 CRP has been closed out.

FY25 CRP remains active.

- Approximately \$17,000 remains unencumbered
- Roughly \$19,000 has been paid out
- Approximately \$3,200 in interest has been earned

The CRP incentive remains a one-time local payment layered on top of annual federal Farm Service Agency CRP payments.



Pope SWCD may have additional eligible CRP enrollments pending confirmation.

Round 2 for Continuous CRP enrollment is now open.

Partners were encouraged to identify eligible projects and submit requests as soon as possible.

SharePoint Transition

SRWD continues working with its IT consultant and Stearns County to transition SharePoint hosting to the watershed district as part of the Plan Coordinator role.

The transition is expected to be relatively smooth, though users may need to be reauthorized or issued new access permissions.

Current file redundancy includes:

- SharePoint hosting
- SRWD server backups
- daily offsite backup systems

Discussion also occurred regarding cybersecurity concerns following recent local government cyberattacks in Minnesota. Staff emphasized that both Stearns County and SRWD maintain regular security updates and backup protections.

Fiscal Agent Transition Updates

Updates were provided regarding the transition of fiscal agent responsibilities from Stearns County to Stearns Conservation District.

Three agreements are being developed:

1. Assignment Agreement (BWSR, SCD, Stearns County)
2. Transfer Agreement (Stearns Co & SCD)
3. Fiscal Agent Agreement Amendment (all collaborative members) by 7/17/26

The Fiscal Agent Agreement Amendment will be shared with partners prior to the May 21 Policy Committee meeting for review.

Key Dates:



- May 21, 2026 — Policy Committee review
- July 17, 2026 — deadline for partner signatures
- July 30, 2026 — final day for Stearns County as fiscal agent
- July 31, 2026 — Stearns CD begins fiscal agent role

Invoice Deadlines:

- Quarter 1 invoices due to Stearns County by April 30th (within 30 days of the quarter ending)
- Additional project/engineering invoices due by May 29. Invoices submitted after May 29 will go to Stearns CD and may not be processed until August, potentially creating a 3–4-month reimbursement delay.

SWCD Cost-Shared Projects Review

- 1. Todd SWCD Mayer Overage \$556.10**
 - a. **Approved** by consensus.
- 2. Todd SWCD Host**
 - a. **Approved** by consensus. The SRWC has encumbered **\$15,285.19** to Todd SWCD for project **SR-FY2022-029 Host** from Objective 11
- 3. Todd SWCD Peters**
 - a. **Approved** by consensus. The Sauk River Watershed Collaborative has encumbered **\$17,779.50** to Todd SWCD for project **SR-FY2022-031 Peters** from **Objective 11**.
- 4. Todd SWCD Don John**
 - a. **Approved** by consensus. The Sauk River Watershed Collaborative has encumbered **\$22,196.25** to Todd SWCD for project **SR-FY2022-030 John** from **Objective 11**.
- 5. Stearns CD NierenHausen**
 - a. **Approved** by consensus. The SRWC will encumbered **\$3,975.10** to the Stearns Conservation District for project **SR-FY2022-025 Nierenhausen** from Objective 11.
- 6. Stearns CD Rockville Pleasant Lk**
 - a. **Approved** by consensus. The Sauk River Watershed Collaborative, has encumbered **\$55,000.00** to the Stearns Conservation District for project **SR-FY2024-010 Rockville** from Objective 13.
- 7. Stearns CD Schmitz**
 - a. **Approved** by consensus. The Sauk River Watershed Collaborative, has encumbered **\$8,580.00** to the Stearns Conservation District for project **SR-FY2024-012 Schmitz** from Objective 10
- 8. Stearns CD Stueve**
 - a. **Approved** by consensus. The Sauk River Watershed Collaborative has encumbered **\$6,750.00** to the Stearns Conservation District for project **SR-FY2024-011 Stueve** from Objective 10.
- 9. Stearns CD Theisen**



- a. **Approved** by consensus. SRWC encumbered **\$30,362.62** to the Stearns Conservation District for project **SR-FY2022-026 Theisen** from Objective 11.
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General Updates

Cost-share Project Status Updates

No updates or problems were reported at this meeting

CWMP Minor Amendment for Cold Spring Dam Feasibility

Policy Committee Approved, Record or public hearing complete and approved by BWSR via letter.

SRWD staff will work to edit necessary CWMP pages with amendment information

Getchell CIP Updates

Updates were provided regarding continued efforts to secure permanent easements necessary for the Outdoor Heritage Fund-funded project.

- Easement participation barriers
- Easement footprint concerns
- Potential use of BWSR Multipurpose Drainage Management funding
- Need for additional landowner coordination
- Permanent protection remains necessary before OHF construction funding can proceed.

JD2 PT & USACE PAS Alternatives Analysis

Updates were provided regarding the JD2 PAS Alternatives Analysis.

- The initial draft plan from the Corps of Engineers has been received for internal review.
- Internal review deadline: May 15, 2026
- Final draft target: July 17, 2026
- Most remaining expenses are expected to consist of staff review and final engineering review.

Discussion also occurred regarding:



- Modeling assumptions
 - Future presentation timelines- tentatively July of 2026, after the Osakis USACE Comprehensive Plan is published.
 - Long-term implementation planning- Top projects identified will be brought forth into a feasibility study and projects will be targeted for implementation over the next decade.
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Education & Outreach Committee

The group discussed ongoing outreach efforts, including:

- Shoreline stewardship outreach campaigns
- Smart TV and local media advertisements
- Coordination with Minnesota Lakes and Rivers
- Continued promotion of shoreline stewardship programming
- Potential future billboard outreach opportunities

The Planning Commission / Board of Adjustment presentation remains on hold pending further discussion regarding the most useful format and audience needs.

SRWD's Roeschlein inquired with Stearns CD's Hatzenbihler on presenting on the EO program at a future SRWD Board Workshop, possibly June or July of 2026.

Upcoming Policy Committee Agenda Items

The next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for **August 20th 2026**

Proposed agenda items include:

- a. Previous meeting minutes
 - b. Fiscal Agent Report & grantee discretion, details
 - c. Fiscal Agent Transition
 - d. Plan Tracking Tool Dashboard
 - e. E&O Committee – Shoreline Watershed Norms
 - f. Project Highlight – Todd SWCD- Earth Program
 - g. Fy24 extension*placeholder*
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Closeout & Next Meetings



Upcoming Implementation Team meetings:

- Wednesday June 24th, 2026 9-noon.

The collaborative 2026 regular meetings occur on the 4th Wednesday of each month from 9:00a – noon.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.