



642 Lincoln Road
Sauk Centre MN 56378
Phone: (320)-352-2231
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Web: www.srwdmn.org

JD2 AND MILLER BAY PROJECT TEAM MEETING NOTES

03/16/2026 | 9:00 to noon

SRWD Office 642 Lincoln Rd Sauk Centre Mn 56378

Attendees:

In Person: Steve Zeece III (SRWD Water Resource Manager), Noah Jensen (SRWD Seasonal Technician), Jon Roeschlein (SRWD District Administrator), Abi Borgerding – (SRWD Environmental Monitoring Manager), Allison Schugel (SRWD Environmental Technician), Susan Capitola (Miller Bay of Osakis Landowner), David Zerr – (SRWD Board Manager), Bruce Magnus (Osakis Lake Association President), Ken Rutten (Douglas SWCD Supervisor), Randy Neumann (Todd County Commissioner), Emily Siira (DNR Area Hydrologist), Janice Hauri (Osakis Lake Association), Jerry Rapp (Douglas County Commissioner)

Online: Drew Kessler (Houston Engineering), Bret Zimmerman (Houston Engineering) Troy Bednarz (Landowner), Garrett Munson (Moore Engineering), Natalie McGlinch (US Army Corps of Engineers)

Call to Order

SRWD staff Steve Zeece III called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees. No additions were made to the proposed agenda. General discussion occurred regarding current lake conditions, recent water clarity improvements, and maintenance of the Miller Bay public access. Participants noted improved water clarity over portions of Lake Osakis and discussed ongoing coordination with the Sauk Rapids Office' DNR Parks and Trails Division regarding the need for periodic removal of accumulated vegetation and debris at the Miller Bay access. It was reported the Sauk Rapids Office DNR Parks and Trails lead staff person has retired and it is unknown when the position will be re-staffed. It was briefly mentioned Lake Osakis lost its title for producing the State record Bluegill to Big Stone Lake with a fish of 11.75" & 2.2 lbs. The Osakis landowners were encouraged to reclaim to record.

BOARD OF MANAGERS

Bill Becker, David Zerr,, Paul Hartmann, Kevin Lahr, Donovan McKigney, Scott Klatt, Eugene Mensen, and Russel Miller

STAFF

Melissa Roelike, Jon Roeschlein, Scott Wittkop, Kory Klebe, Steve Zeece III, Abigail Parker Allison Schugel, Noah Jensen

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Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The previous Project Team meeting minutes were reviewed and approved by consensus.

Project Status Updates

1. Osakis Outlet Rock Arch Rapids Modification

Bret Zimmerman (Houston Engineering) provided an update on the Osakis outlet modification project.

Design Progress

- Field survey work has been completed. Houston Engineering is incorporating updated survey information into the final design.
 - Coordination meeting with the Minnesota DNR River Ecology Unit is being scheduled to review the revised design before final plans are completed. Following DNR review, final engineering plans and permitting will proceed.
 - Construction remains tentatively scheduled for Fall 2026. The awarded CPL grant is available for 3 years if circumstances do not allow for construction during fall of 2026
 - Houston Engineering reported the project can be kept within the existing 16.5-foot drainage authority right-of-way, eliminating the need for additional land rights.
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2. Crooked Lake Wetland Restoration

Steve Zeece III provided an update on the Crooked Lake Wetland Restoration Project. SRWD continues coordinating with the JD2 Drainage Authority Inspector public noticing and meeting requirement. The SRWD's Outdoor Heritage Fund grant remains active through **June 30, 2027**. Houston Engineering reported construction activities are expected to be relatively straightforward. The SRWD will additionally monitor up and downstream from the site with transparency tubes (T-Tubes) and requested volunteers from the group. Extra erosion control precautions will occur during construction.

3. Osakis Wastewater Scoping Study

Bret Zimmerman (Houston Engineering) reported that the wastewater scoping study has been completed and the final report is available for stakeholder review. The study evaluated potential wastewater collection and treatment alternatives intended to improve long-term water quality within the Lake Osakis watershed.

Discussion focused on the importance of continued public education, voluntary participation, and identifying future funding opportunities should the project advance into a formal feasibility study. Members acknowledged that aging and non-compliant septic systems remain a concern and that additional evaluation may be warranted before determining future implementation strategies. A reduction in lake bounce is expected to reduce the negative affects of these aging systems.



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4. SRWD Sediment Pond Efficacy Analysis

Garrett Munson (Moore Engineering) provided an update on the ongoing sediment pond efficacy analysis. Moore Engineering & SRWD staff have completed the sedimentation survey and report. The final report will be presented at the August 17th JD2 PT meeting and will summarize:

- Sediment accumulation rates
- Phosphorus storage and loading estimates
- Anoxia induced anaerobic bacterial phosphorous release (internal Loading) potential
- Long-term pond performance
- Recommendations regarding future maintenance and cleanout needs

USACE Lake Osakis Sediment Analysis & Comprehensive Plan Presentation

Representative from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Natalie McGlinch presented the completed **Lake Osakis Sediment Analysis and Comprehensive Plan**, prepared in partnership with the Sauk River Watershed District under the Army Corps Planning Assistance to States (PAS) Program. The presentation summarized the final report and the technical evaluation completed during the study.

Purpose of the Study

The study evaluated watershed conditions affecting Lake Osakis and developed a comprehensive management strategy intended to:

- Improve long-term water quality.
- Reduce sediment delivery to the lake.
- Improve aquatic habitat.
- Maintain more stable lake elevations.
- Enhance recreational opportunities.
- Identify practical implementation projects over the coming decades.

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Major Findings

USACE staff summarized several key findings from the study.

Sediment Accumulation

Sediment core analyses confirm that sediment accumulation within Lake Osakis has increased substantially over time, particularly within Miller Bay where watershed runoff enters the lake. Historic drainage modifications and continued watershed erosion were identified as significant contributors to sediment loading entering Lake Osakis.

Watershed Modeling

Hydrologic and water quality modeling was used to evaluate numerous management alternatives. Although no single project will fully resolve existing water quality concerns, modeling indicates that combining multiple projects will produce measurable improvements over time. The model indicates the modified dam alone will reduce the bounce range by approximately 7 inches

Recommended Comprehensive Plan

USACE recommended implementing a combination of watershed and in-lake management strategies, including:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Osakis Outlet Rock Arch Rapids Modification Crooked Lake Wetland Restoration Targeted sediment removal where appropriate Agricultural conservation practices Septic system improvements | Water Quality Improvement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-Lake Treatment Sed Ponds Future State Feasibility Study Channel Stabilization |
| | Aquatic Life and Invasive Species Control | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invasive Species Management (DNR/County) Fisheries Habitat Pencil Reeds (Schoenoplectus) |
| | Public | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public engagement Ag/Capital equipment Ag Incentives Lake Owners |
| | <p>*Additional information or modeling required</p> <p>** Dependent on another measure</p> | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued shoreline stabilization Ongoing monitoring and adaptive management | | |

Table 1. Measures and Alternatives Developed

Objective Focus	Measure	Alternatives				
		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5
Lake Elevation/Water Storage	Shoreline Stabilization	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Outlet Modification	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Wetlands restoration*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Focused dredging	N	N	N	N	Y
Water Quality Improvement	Septic compliance/monitoring	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
	In-Lake Treatment**	N	N	Y	Y	Y
	Sed Ponds (Stabilization, Expansion) **	N	N	Y	Y	Y
	Future State	N	N	N	N	Y
	Feasibility Study	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Channel Stabilization**	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Aquatic Life and Invasive Species Control	Invasive Species Management (DNR/County weed treatment)	N	N	N	Y	Y
	Fisheries Habitat enhancement	N	N	N	N	Y
	Pencil Reed/Hard-stem Bulrush (Schoenoplectus acutus) Restoration	N	N	N	N	Y
Public	Public engagement	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Ag/Capital engagement	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Ag Incentivization*	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Lake Ownership Education	N	N	Y	Y	Y

*Additional information or modeling needed
 ** Dependent on another measure



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Comprehensive Plan Next Steps

- JD2 Project Team members were advised to thoroughly review the completed USACE Comprehensive Plan to discuss in August which measures to move forth into a feasibility study.

Next Meeting & Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled JD2 and Miller Bay Project Team meeting will be held on:

August 17, 2026

Additional scheduled meeting dates include:

- September 21, 2026
- October 19, 2026

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 am

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