



Dakota County

Physical Development Committee of the Whole Agenda

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

9:30 AM

Conference Room 3A, Administration
Center, Hastings

(or following **General Government and Policy**)

If you wish to speak to an agenda item or an item not on the agenda, please notify the Clerk to the Board via email at CountyAdmin@co.dakota.mn.us
Commissioners may participate in the meeting by interactive technology.

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**

Note: Any action taken by this Committee of the Whole constitutes a recommendation to the County Board.

2. **Audience**

Anyone in the audience wishing to address the Committee on an item not on the Agenda or an item on the Consent Agenda may send comments to CountyAdmin@co.dakota.mn.us and instructions will be given to participate during the meeting. Verbal comments are limited to five minutes.

3. **Approval of Agenda (Additions/Corrections/Deletions)**

4. **Consent Agenda**

4.1 Approval Of Minutes Of Meeting Held On April 14, 2026

5. **Regular Agenda**

5.1 *Physical Development Administration* - Presentation Of Dakota County Soil And Water Conservation District Annual Report

6. **Assistant County Managers' Report**

7. **Future Agenda Items**

8. **Adjournment**

For more information please call 952-891-7000.
Physical Development agendas are available online at
<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/BoardMeetings/Pages/default.aspx>
Public Comment can be sent to CountyAdmin@co.dakota.mn.us



Physical Development Committee of the Whole

Request for Board Action

Item Number: DC-5652

Agenda #: 4.1

Meeting Date: 5/12/2026

Approval Of Minutes Of Meeting Held On April 14, 2026



Dakota County

Physical Development Committee of the Whole

Minutes

Tuesday, April 14, 2026

9:30 AM

Conference Room 3A, Administration
Center, Hastings

(or following General Government and Policy)

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m. by Commissioner Holberg.

Present

- Commissioner Mike Slavik
- Commissioner Joe Atkins
- Commissioner Laurie Halverson
- Commissioner William Droste
- Commissioner Liz Workman
- Chairperson Mary Liz Holberg
- Commissioner Mary Hamann-Roland

Also in attendance were Heidi Welsch, County Manager; Tom Donely, First Assistant County Attorney; Georg Fischer, Physical Development Division Director; Liz Hansen, Administrative Coordinator.

The audio recording of this meeting is available upon request.

2. Audience

Commissioner Holberg asked if there was anyone in the audience that wished to address the Physical Development Committee of the Whole on an item not on the agenda or an item on the consent agenda. No one came forward and no comments were submitted to CountyAdmin@co.dakota.mn.us.

3. Approval of Agenda (Additions/Corrections/Deletions)

3.1 Approval of Agenda (Additions/Corrections/Deletions)

Motion: Mary Hamann-Roland

Second: Mike Slavik

Ayes: 7

4. Consent Agenda

4.1 Approval Of Minutes Of Meeting Held On March 10, 2026

Motion: Joe Atkins

Second: Liz Workman

Ayes: 7

5. Regular Agenda

5.1 Authorization To Add Six Full Time Equivalents For Operations At New Recycling Zone Plus And Amend Environmental Resources Operating Budget

Motion: Laurie Halverson

Second: Liz Workman

Waste Regulation Supervisor Dave Magnuson presented an update on the new Recycling Zone Plus project. The project began planning in 2019, and construction started in April 2026. The facility is anticipated to increase participation in the County's Household Hazardous Waste program by about 44,000 residents and process an additional 1.7 million pounds of waste annually.

The proposed staffing plan is a hybrid model, with some county staff as well as contractors for the more technical tasks. Staff requested approval of six full time county staff that would be on boarded prior to the grand opening for the public. Commissioners raised concerns about the timing of the request. Staff responded that the new staff would be responsible for finalizing contracts, creating standard operating procedures, training and operational planning leading up to the opening of the facility in Spring 2027.

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 25-456 (September 23, 2025), the Dakota County Solid Waste Master Plan (Plan) was adopted; and

WHEREAS, the Plan supports the Dakota County Board of Commissioners' desire to remove household hazardous waste (HHW) from the solid waste stream because of health, safety, and environmental concerns; and

WHEREAS, Dakota and Scott Counties have partnered to build the Dakota-Scott Regional HHW and Recycling Facility, known as the Recycling Zone Plus, that will accept HHW and traditional and non-traditional recyclables and therefore increase proper management of solid waste and increase recycling in both counties and prolong the life of the two current facilities by stabilizing growth at those sites with the addition of a second facility; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 26-070 (February 17, 2026), the Dakota County Board approved the first amendment to the joint powers agreement (JPA) with Scott County for design and construction of the Dakota-Scott Regional HHW and Recycling Facility, which Dakota County and Scott County executed on February 18, 2026; and

WHEREAS, in preparation for the Recycling Zone Plus operations to begin in 2027, it is estimated that the following 6.0 additional full-time equivalents are needed to set up operations and programming:

- One FTE Environmental Resources Supervisor

- Two FTE Environmental Specialists
- Three FTE Environmental Technicians

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the creation of the requested 6.0 full time equivalents in the Environmental Resources Department; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby amends the 2026 Environmental Resources Department budget as follows:

Full Time Equivalents (FTE): 6.0

Expenses

1.0 FTE - Environmental Resources Supervisor (assumes 8 months)
\$125,517
2.0 FTE - Environmental Specialist (assumes 8 months) \$214,362
3.0 FTE - Environmental Technician (assumes 1 month) \$ 78,802
Total Expenses \$418,681

Revenue

Use of Environmental Legacy Fund \$418,681
Total Revenue \$418,681

This item was approved and recommended for action by the Board of Commissioners on 4/21/2026.

Ayes: 5

Commissioner Atkins, Commissioner Halverson, Commissioner Droste, Commissioner Workman, and Commissioner Hamann-Roland

Nay: 2

Commissioner Slavik, and Chairperson Holberg

5.2 Discussion And Direction On Accepting Mattresses Or Appliances At Recycling Zone Plus

Waste Regulation Supervisor Dave Magnuson and the committee discussed logistics and costs related to the proposed recycling of appliances and mattresses at the Recycling Zone Plus facility, scheduled to open Spring 2027. Initial estimates include the recycling of 5,200 appliances and 2,700 mattresses annually. Staff issued a Request for Proposals and discussed the proposal with all county licensed haulers and facilities. None of the facilities expressed any concerns with the proposal.

The costs associated with the proposal would be covered by a new fee established for appliances and mattresses during the 2027 budget process. The fee would cover all recycling and staffing costs associated with providing the services.

The board unanimously directed staff to move forward with the planning efforts to collect these materials and to propose new fees for these items during the 2027 budget process.

Information only; no action requested.

5.3 Authorization To Execute Contract With McKinstry Essention, LLC, For Energy Improvements Project Phase Two

Motion: Mary Hamann-Roland

Second: Laurie Halverson

Facilities Director Mike Lexvold updated the committee on a four-year energy-saving partnership that began in 2022. Phase one (completed in 2023) added solar panels, HVAC commissioning, and LED lighting, cutting costs by 35%. Phase Two will add solar at five sites, water conservation measures in 16 buildings, building sealing and mechanical upgrades. The proposed Phase Two improvements will result in an anticipated 10-12% reduction in utility costs annually. They will reduce the county's electrical use by 893,940 KWH per year as well as reduce annual gas use by 24,478 therms and water use by 1,726,000 gallons. The plan includes an initial \$250,000 levy investment, nearly \$1M in federal incentives, and a tax-exempt loan where the debt service is fully financed with annual energy savings. The return on the initial \$250K county investment is expected to be \$1.46M over twenty-five years.

WHEREAS, Dakota County operates over 1.6 million square feet of buildings consuming \$2,250,000 in annual energy expenses in 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Phase One Energy Improvements project converted over 14,000 lights to LED, added approximately one megawatt of solar across four sites, and completed HVAC retrocommissioning work at the Northern and Western Service Centers; and

WHEREAS, the lighting and HVAC work was completed over the course of 2024 with the solar coming online in February and March 2025; and

WHEREAS, countywide facilities energy costs decreased due to the Phase One project, and to a smaller extent, lower energy market prices; and

WHEREAS, countywide costs were \$2.25 million in 2023, \$1.99 million in 2024, and \$1.76 million in 2025; and

WHEREAS, countywide cost reductions were 11.6 percent from 2023 to 2024; and

WHEREAS, countywide costs were reduced another 11.4 percent from 2024 to 2025; and

WHEREAS, building on the success of Phase One, staff has continued the partnership with McKinstry to explore options to maximize the County's return on

investment in additional energy projects; and

WHEREAS, McKinstry reassessed all County facilities and the Phase Two project will save an additional 10 to 12 percent on top of Phase One savings; and

WHEREAS, this project includes rooftop solar at five sites, mechanical upgrades at three buildings, water conservation measures at 16 buildings, and building envelope sealing at 19 buildings; and

WHEREAS, this scope represents the best value to the County for the work to be performed; and

WHEREAS, the County will pay \$250,000 for this project up-front and is guaranteed savings of \$104,000 per year in energy and water costs; and

WHEREAS, those savings will be used to pay the Tax-Exempt Lease Purchase (TELP) loan used to finance the remainder of the project costs; and

WHEREAS, after factoring in the cost of filing for a federal tax credit available through the Inflation Reduction Act, the net present value of the savings that the County will realize are estimated to come to \$280,000 - more than the initial investment in the project; and

WHEREAS, the total project cost and contract with McKinstry is \$3,081,374 which is funded by \$250,000 of levy in the 2026 Adopted Facilities Capital Improvement Program and \$2,831,374 from a Tax-Exempt Lease Purchase loan coordinated by Finance and a third-party financial institution; and

WHEREAS, staff is recommending approval of the Energy Improvements Project Phase Two; and

WHEREAS, this project represents the best value to the County for the work to be performed and meets the expectations of staff and the County Board for capital expenditures on energy improvements; and

WHEREAS, the completion of the Energy Improvements Project Phase Two will position the County to seek utility rebates and state and federal funding sources, which will shorten the project return on investment and increase the net present value.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Facilities Management Director to execute a contract with McKinstry Essention, LLC, in an amount of \$3,081,374, to perform the Energy Improvement Project Phase Two subject to approval by the County Attorney's Office as to form.

This item was approved and recommended for action by the Board of

Commissioners on 4/21/2026.

Ayes: 7

5.4 Authorization To Submit Applications For 2026 Regional Solicitation Grant Funding Opportunity And Approve Letters Of Support For City-Led Project Applications

Motion: Joe Atkins

Second: Mike Slavik

Transportation Director Erin Laberee outlined potential applications for the 2026 regional solicitation grant, which offers \$250 million for 2030-2031 projects and \$50 million for active transportation projects from 2027-2031. The proposed submittals include projects in numerous funding categories, including three in congestion management and roadway modernization, two in safety, and 11 in regional and active transportation. Commissioner Slavik requested that the active transportation project related to trails along CSAH 54 from Hastings to CSAH 68 be removed at this time to allow for further board discussion on the need for a trail. That issue will be brought back to the May 2026 Physical Development Meeting of the Whole for further discussion. This will allow sufficient time to submit that project individually, should the board elect to do so after discussion, by the June 18th deadline.

Commissioners discussed removing CP 54-011: Trails along CSAH 54 (Ravenna Trl.) from Hastings city limits to CSAH 68 (200th St.) (County-led application) and renumbering the list.

Based on this change the resolution was amended to remove the CSAH 54 project.

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council's Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) is requesting project submittals for funding through the Regional Solicitation process; and

WHEREAS, the Solicitation programs fund between 80 and 95 percent of project construction costs; and

WHEREAS, funding of projects reduces the burden on local taxpayers for regional improvements; and

WHEREAS, project submittals are due on June 18, 2026; and

WHEREAS, all projects proposed are consistent with the adopted Dakota County 2040 Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, subject to funding award for the projects identified hereto, the Dakota County Board of Commissioners would be asked to consider authorization to execute a grant agreement at a future meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the submittal of the following County project applications to the Regional Solicitation application process for funding:

Congestion Management and Roadway Modernization

- 1.1 County Project (CP) 50-033: County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 50 (Kenwood Trail) and Interstate (I)-35 interchange in Lakeville (County-led application)
- 2.1 CP 38-061: CSAH 38 (McAndrews Rd.) from CSAH 5 (Kenwood Trail) to Burnhaven Drive (Potential city-led application)
- 2.2 CP 09-065: CSAH 9 (Dodd Ave.) from CSAH 50 (Kenwood Trail) to 208th Street (Potential city-led application)

Regional Solicitation Safety/Highway Safety Improvement Program -
Reactive Safety and Proactive Safety

- 3.1 CP 09-068: CSAH 9 (Dodd Ave.) and Indiana Ave/194th Street intersection and CSAH 9 (Dodd Ave.) and 190th Street intersection (County-led application)
- 4.1 CSAH 46 from US 52 to 400' west of General Sieben Drive (County-led application)

Regional and Active Transportation Local Bike Facilities

- 5.1 CP 98-020: Veteran's Memorial Greenway, grade separation at US 52 (County-led application)
- 5.2 CP 28-078: Lebanon Hills Greenway, Underpass of CSAH 28 (Yankee Doodle Dr.)(County-led application)
- 5.3 Lebanon Hills Greenway, overpass of TH 55 (County-led application)
- 5.4 Vermillion Highlands Greenway, Whitetails Woods to Vermillion River (near CSAH 66) (County-led application)
- 6.1 CP 31-111: Trails along CSAH 31 (Pilot Knob Rd.) from CSAH 64 (195th St) to CSAH 50 (220th Street) (Potential city-led application)
- 6.2 CP 42-180: Trails along CSAH 42 (150th St.) from TH 3 (Roberts Trail) to CR 73 (Akron Ave) (Potential city-led application)
- 6.3 North Creek Greenway from CSAH 42 (150th St.) to 140th St (Potential city-led application)
- 6.4 North Creek Greenway through Rambling River Park (Potential city-led application)
- 6.5 CP 31-115: Trails along CSAH 31 (Denmark Ave.) from CSAH 50 (220th Street) to CSAH 74 (County-led application)
- 6.6 Lake Marion Greenway through industrial park in Lakeville from Holyoke Ave to CSAH 23 (Cedar Ave.) (Potential city-led application)

; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby approves letters of support for the aforementioned city-led project applications to be signed by the Board Chair.

This item was approved as amended and recommended for action by the Board of Commissioners on 4/21/2026.

Ayes: 7

6. Assistant County Managers' Report

Georg Fischer, Assistant County Manager, provided the Committee with a written Division update.

7. Future Agenda Items

Chair, Commissioner Mary Liz Holberg, asked the Committee if anyone had a topic they would like to hear more about at an upcoming Physical Development Committee of the Whole. No Commissioners requested topics for future meetings at this time.

8. Adjournment

8.1 Adjournment

Motion: Mike Slavik

Second: Mary Hamann-Roland

On a motion by Commissioner Mike Slavik, seconded by Commissioner Mary Hamann-Roland, the meeting was adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

Ayes: 7

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Hansen
Administrative Coordinator



Physical Development Committee of the Whole

Request for Board Action

Item Number: DC-5641

Agenda #: 5.1

Meeting Date: 5/12/2026

DEPARTMENT: Physical Development Administration

FILE TYPE: Regular Information

TITLE

Presentation Of Dakota County Soil And Water Conservation District Annual Report

PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

Present an annual report from the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).

SUMMARY

Description of SWCD: Soil and Water Conservation Districts are local units of government that manage and direct conservation programs. Districts receive their authority from Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103C, and their function is to assist landowners and authorized agents in protecting soil and water resources. A board of five elected supervisors governs the SWCD (Attachment: SWCD Supervisors 2026). The SWCD has a long-standing relationship with local, state, and federal partners, including Dakota County, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Funding: The primary sources for SWCD operational funding are County funding, joint powers agreement charges for services, state aid, and grant revenues. County funding allocations were \$388,928 in 2025 and \$368,719 in 2026. The SWCD currently manages 23 state grants and 18 local agreements for services. Through partnerships, the SWCD leverages nearly \$4.16 for each County dollar received to implement land conservation and water quality improvement projects.

Joint Powers Agreements Between Dakota County and SWCD: Some form of joint powers agreement has been in place between the County and SWCD since 2004. The current agreement was executed in 2024 and goes through 2028. The agreement outlines both the services the County provides to the SWCD (e.g., legal services, human resources assistance, and office facilities) and the services that the SWCD provides for the County (e.g., Wetland Banking, Land Conservation Program, Wetland Conservation Act, and Ag Inspector services), as well as the general outcomes, roles, responsibilities, and financial terms.

2025 Accomplishments and 2026 Workplan: The SWCD District Manager, Ashley Gallagher, will provide a presentation on accomplishments (Attachment: 2025 Annual Report) and 2026 activities. Topics will include:

- Technical assistance to private landowners, residents, cities, schools, and businesses
- Conservation project contracts, benefits, and trends
- Education and outreach programs

- Assisting the County with plans, goals, and regulatory programs

RECOMMENDATION

Information only; no action requested.

EXPLANATION OF FISCAL/FTE IMPACTS

- None Current budget Other
 Amendment Requested New FTE(s) requested

RESOLUTION

Information only; no action requested.

PREVIOUS BOARD ACTION

None.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment: 2025 Annual Report
Attachment: SWCD Supervisors 2026
Attachment: Presentation Slides

BOARD GOALS

- Thriving People A Healthy Environment with Quality Natural Resources
 A Successful Place for Business and Jobs Excellence in Public Service

CONTACT

Department Head: Erin Stwora
Author: Robb Finnigsmier

2025

DAKOTA COUNTY SWCD

ANNUAL REPORT

THE DAKOTA COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT PRIORITIZED HEALTHY SOILS AND CLEAN WATER IN 2025!

The Dakota County Soil & Water Conservation District (Dakota SWCD)'s focus is to reduce soil and nutrient loss, improve water quality in lakes and streams, protect groundwater resources, and enhance wildlife habitat. This work is done in partnership with federal, state and local governments, nonprofit organizations, and most importantly, the people that live and work in Dakota County.

Thank you for partnering with us on land and water conservation projects. We look forward to continued partnerships in 2026!

HIGHLIGHTS

- Assisted landowners with land and water issues at over 260 sites around the county.
- Provided technical assistance and cost share funds to install 160 conservation projects resulting in the removal of 5,079 lbs of phosphorous, 4,211 tons of total suspended solids (sediment) and 55,000 lbs of nitrogen from reaching our lakes, streams or groundwater resources annually lakes, streams or groundwater resources annually.
- Engaged over 2,000 individuals through education and outreach programs regarding ways to benefit water quality, improve soil health, and enhance wildlife habitat including the use of pollinators and plants.
- Collected 291 water quality samples in 25 water bodies across 4 watersheds. Monitored water quantity at 45 sites. Performed 6 habitat and biological assessments.
- Dakota County buffers were 99.59% compliant with only minor seeding to perennial cover needed.



STREAMBANK RESTORATION



DAKOTA COUNTY



— SOIL & WATER —
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

CONSERVATION IN ACTION ACROSS DAKOTA COUNTY

In 2025, Dakota SWCD worked with landowners, residents, cities, schools, churches, and businesses to reduce and control erosion, limit the impact of floods through stormwater management, ensure soil health and productivity, protect water quality, and create and preserve pollinator and wildlife habitat.



Dakota SWCD staff provided technical assistance on projects that included evaluating the appropriate conservation practice, topographic surveys, feasibility studies, design, and construction oversight.



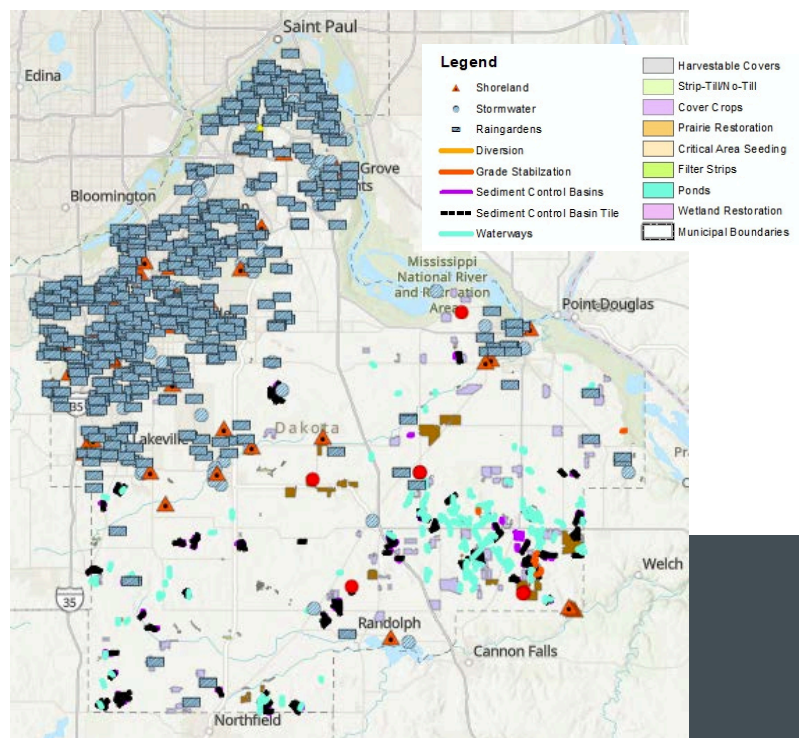
Conservation projects only happen because of partnerships big and small! The Dakota SWCD worked with partners on several projects this year, including:

- Eagan Places of Worship Stormwater Assessments
- Interstate Valley Creek Streambank Stabilization and Sediment Reduction Projects
- McCarthy Estate Grade Stabilization and Grassed Waterway
- Naves Prairie Restoration
- Braun Wetland Restoration
- Two Rivers High School Bioretention
- Spring Lake Park Ravine Stabilization
- Mississippi River Greenway Slope Stabilizations
- D. Lake Prairie Restoration
- Meyers Sprinkler System Renovation
- Sorg Farms Soil Health Practices
- Strofus Stock Farms Harvestable Cover
- Nelson Grassed Waterway

COST SHARE FUNDING

Along with providing technical assistance throughout the planning and installation process, over \$518,000 of funding was provided through Dakota SWCD cost-share programs that:

- Restored 7.9 acres of native prairie
- Constructed 650 linear feet of grassed waterways
- Established cover crops on 8,225 acres of cultivated land
- Maintained harvestable cover of perennial crops of 179 acres
- Developed restoration plans for native plant communities
- Increased water storage capacity by restoring wetlands and installing 4 water control basins



DAKOTA SWCD PROJECTS MAP

OUTSTANDING CONSERVATIONIST

The Dakota SWCD Board proudly selected James “Jim” and Jeannine Naves as the 2025 Outstanding Conservationist. Jim and Jeannine were nominated for this year’s award as they have worked closely with the SWCD over the last decade plus to implement several conservation projects on their property near Sunfish Lake, Minnesota. From installing a residential raingarden and stabilizing an eroding shoreline to more recently undertaking a 0.5-acre native prairie restoration, Jim and Jeannine have continued to demonstrate their commitment to protecting natural resources whenever the opportunity arises.



LANDSCAPING FOR CLEAN WATER & LAWNS RE-IMAGINED

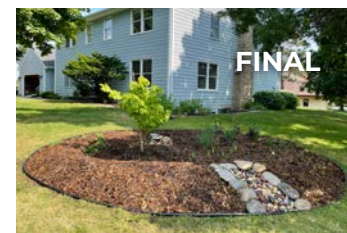
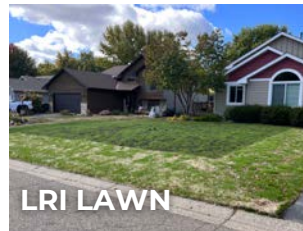
2025 was the 19th year of the Landscaping for Clean Water (LCW) program and the second year of the Lawns Re-Imagined (LRI) program. Both programs provide landowners with the skills and resources needed to protect local water quality, provide habitat for pollinators, and reduce lawn maintenance through the installation of raingardens, native gardens and shoreline plantings, and low input turfgrass.

LANDSCAPING FOR CLEAN WATER

SWCD staff provided 7 Introduction, Shoreline, and Maintenance Class presentations at locations around the county to over to 250 participants. 114 individuals took part in the LCW Design Course. Dakota SWCD staff provided on-site project layout and installation guidance for participants installing a project on their property, resulting in 43 completed LCW projects.

LAWNS RE-IMAGINED

Over 200 Dakota County residents attend 2 LRI Classes. 11 households installed LRI projects, converting their lawns to more resilient and pollinator friendly species over the summer.



These programs continue to be successful thanks to partnerships with local watershed management organizations and cities that contribute through public outreach and their own garden grant initiatives.

2025 TREE SALE

The Dakota SWCD held the annual Tree Sale offering high-quality deciduous shrub, tree, and conifer bareroot seedlings at a low cost for conservation purposes. In total, nearly 14,000 seedlings representing 25 Minnesota native species were sold through the Tree Sale and were distributed in late April for early spring planting.



MINNESOTA BUFFER LAW AND THE WETLAND CONSERVATION ACT

Vegetated buffers filter out pollutants and prevent soil erosion. The Dakota SWCD assists Dakota County in monitoring compliance of the Minnesota Buffer Law and providing landowner technical assistance. In 2025, over 5,000 buffer parcels adjacent to lakes and streams were digitally reviewed and eight site visits were conducted.

The Dakota SWCD also assists cities, townships, and individual landowners determine if an area is a wetland and administer the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA). In 2025, 119 wetland-related inquiries were made, 54 site visits were conducted, and 48 decisions were approved relating to wetland boundaries, no-loss determinations, exemptions, and wetland replacements..

CONSERVATION CONNECTION

Got conservation on your mind? Stop by our office, give us a call, or send us an email with your questions and we can discuss potential partnerships and cost share opportunities!

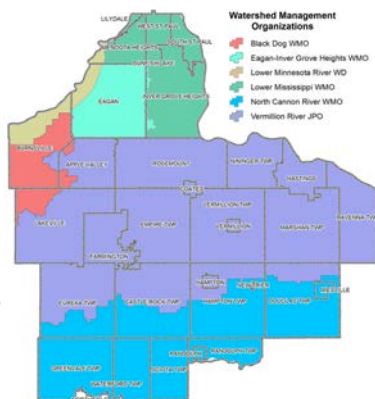
Need some information about the many different programs we offer? Head over to our website - www.dakotaswcd.org - to learn more! Connect with us on—Facebook or Instagram!

LOCAL WATERSHEDS

Dakota SWCD staff serve as either the Administrator or the Technical Lead for four watersheds in Dakota County. The Dakota SWCD also helped facilitate the implementation of watershed plan projects and programs with all six watersheds in Dakota County. This includes implementing projects and programs, as well as providing water monitoring, education and outreach programming, project management, technical assistance for a variety of different project types, and grant management.



SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WATERSHEDS AND FIND OUT WHICH WATERSHED YOU LIVE IN!



PROGRAM PARTNERS

This is a partial list of partners the Dakota SWCD worked with in 2025 (alphabetically):

- Black Dog WMO
- Cities and Townships of Dakota County
- Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Board
- Clean River Partners
- Dakota County
- Egan-Inver Grove Heights WMO
- Lower Minnesota River Watershed District
- Lower Mississippi River WMP
- Metropolitan Council
- Metro Conservation Districts Joint Powers Board
- North Cannon River WMO
- State of MN: Board of Water & Soil Resources; Department of Agriculture; Department of Health; Department of Natural Resources; Pollution Control Agency
- USDA: Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization

DAKOTA SWCD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS & STAFF

Board

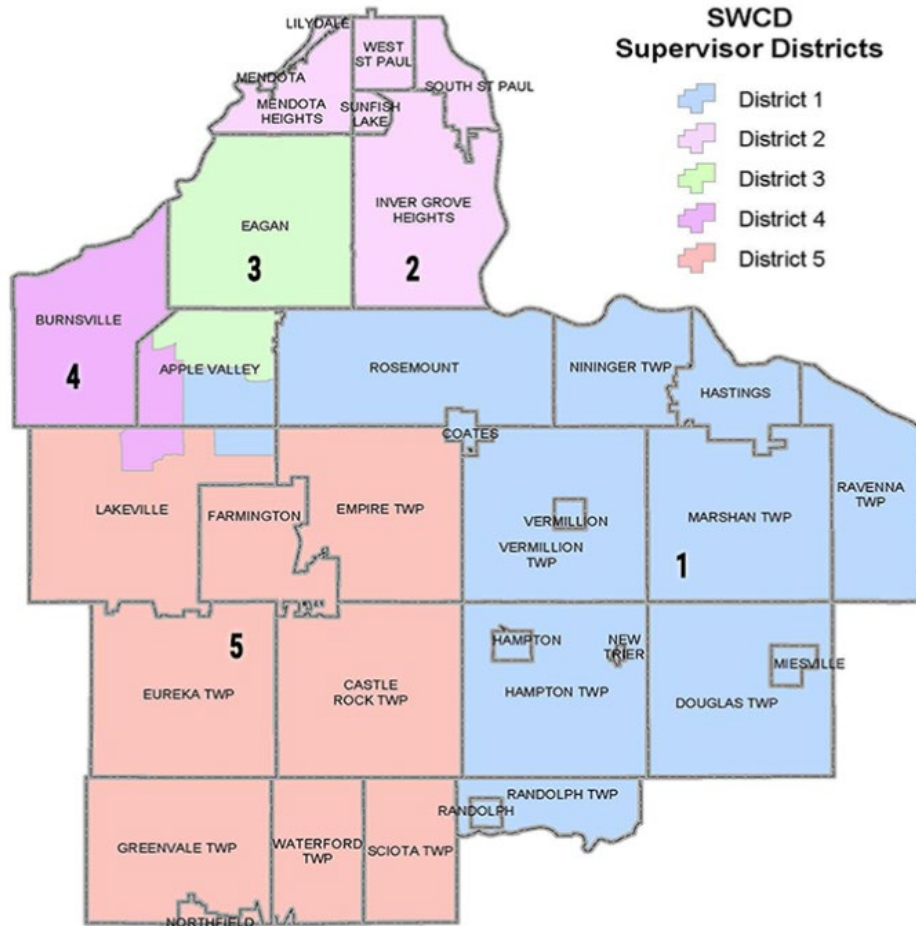
District 1: Kevin Chamberlain, Chair
 District 2: Laura Zanmiller, Vice Chair
 District 3: Brian Raney, Public Relations & Information Officer
 District 4: Bruce Johnson, Secretary
 District 5: Jayne Hager Dee, Treasurer

Staff

Ashley Gallagher, District Manager
 Joe Barten, Program Management Supervisor
 Curt Coudron, Project Management Supervisor
 Elizabeth Asendorf, Resource Conservationist
 Todd Matzke, Resource Conservationist
 Alex Scurto, Resource Conservationist
 Dru Larson, Conservation Technician
 Lindsey Albright, Monitoring & Outreach Coordinator
 Dave Holmen, Sr. Wetland & GIS Coordinator
 Victoria Ranua, Watershed Coordinator
 Pam LaValle, Finance & Grants Coordinator
 Chris Houston, Administrative Specialist



Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors



	<p>District 1 Kevin Chamberlain 651-437-9135 Term expires 12/31/2028</p>
	<p>District 2 Laura Zanmiller 651-270-2856 Term expires 12/31/2028</p>
	<p>District 3 Brian Raney 612-999-5828 Term expires 12/31/2028</p>
	<p>District 4 Bruce Johnson 952-994-6755 Term expires 12/31/2026</p>
	<p>District 5 Jayne Hager Dee 507-663-1568 Term expires 12/31/2026</p>



Soil and Water Conservation District Updates

Physical Development Committee

May 12, 2026

Ashley Gallagher

District Manager

DAKOTA COUNTY



SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

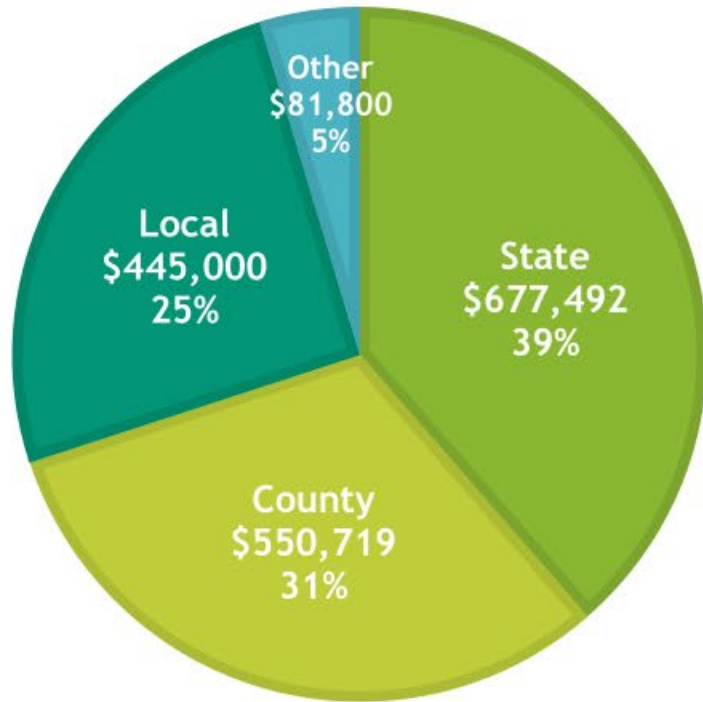
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Overview

- ▶ Background
- ▶ Funding
- ▶ 2025 Summary and Looking ahead!
 - ▶ Technical Assistance
 - ▶ Conservation Projects
 - ▶ Education and Outreach
 - ▶ Assisting County



2026 OPERATING REVENUES (DOES NOT INCLUDE PASS THRU)



Funding

- ▶ 2026 Balanced Budget
 - ▶ \$2.5 million
 - ▶ ~1/3 pass thru
- ▶ 2026 County Funding
 - ▶ General/ELF - \$368,719
 - ▶ Fee for Services Budget - \$182,000
 - ▶ CIP Project Funds - \$350,000
- ▶ For every dollar, \$1.81 goes back into the local economy (*statewide study*)
- ▶ Managing 23 grants and 18 local agreements

Funding Outlook

- ▶ 2026 Budget Cuts
 - ▶ County Funding - \$20,000
 - ▶ State Aid - \$40,000
 - ▶ Wetland Conservation Act - \$20,000
- ▶ Forecasting
 - ▶ Funding Decreasing, Costs Rising
 - ▶ Federal funding decreasing
 - ▶ State funding decreasing
 - ▶ Required work remains



Technical Assistance - Snapshot

2025

- ▶ Assisted landowners - 260 sites
- ▶ Water monitoring - 25 water bodies
- ▶ Noxious weeds - Average 24 inspections
- ▶ And more

2026

- ▶ Increase in requested assistance
- ▶ Increase in monitoring agreements
- ▶ As requested
- ▶ And more



Conservation Projects

- ▶ **Contracts**
 - ▶ 264 active contracts - Urban and Rural projects
- ▶ **Benefits**
 - ▶ Pollutant reductions - TMDLs
 - ▶ Protection of lakes, streams, and drinking water
 - ▶ Quality of life - Thriving People
- ▶ **Trends**
 - ▶ Increase in Soil Health Practices
 - ▶ Increase in Native Prairie Restorations



“If you’re interested,
just go talk to them.
It’s simple, they’re not
pushing anything...it’s
what works for your
farm.”

- ▶ Luke Dubbels,
Randolph Area Farmer

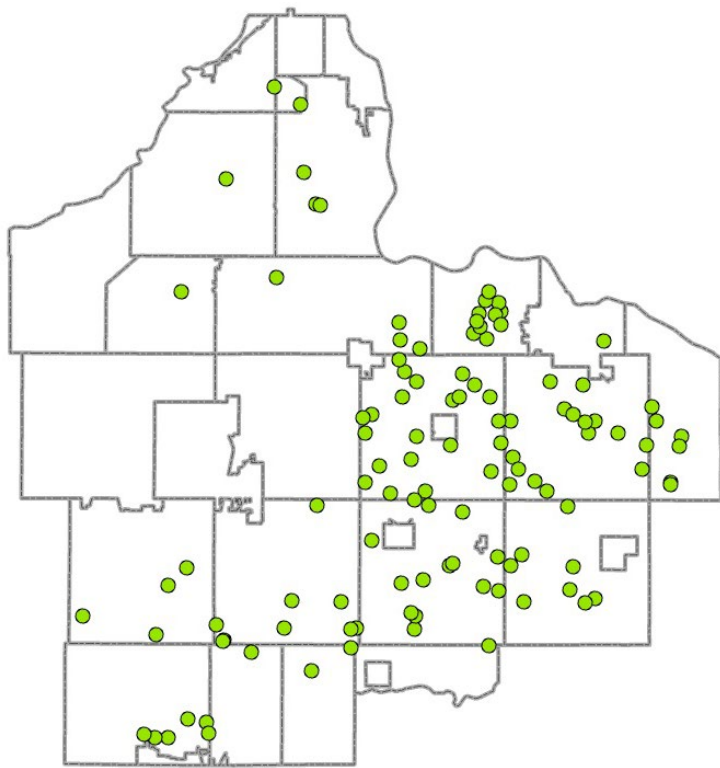




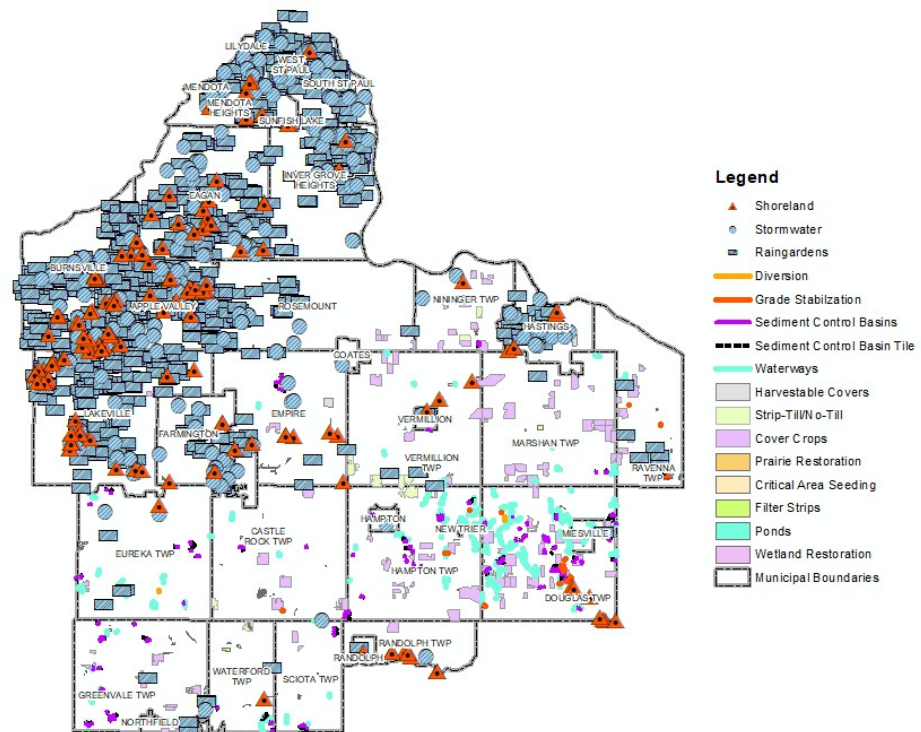
Bioretention
Basin under
construction at
Two Rivers High
School in
Mendota Heights



Irrigation system
conversion to
lower pressure
nozzles and
irrigation water
management



2025 CIP Funds



All Projects 10 years



Education and Outreach Programs

- ▶ Landscaping for Clean Water
 - ▶ Rain gardens, Native gardens, Shorelines
 - ▶ 43 projects in 2025 - Total is over 1,000
- ▶ Lawns Reimagined
 - ▶ Turf conversion
 - ▶ 2025 - 12 projects
 - ▶ Multiple County partners
- ▶ Shoreline Restoration Workshops
 - ▶ Added more in 2026



“I really want to emphasize that we had such a wonderful experience with the LCW program and working with the SWCD....I don't think we would have completed the project without the SWCD.”

- ▶ Hanna Warmka,
Eagan Resident

Assisting County

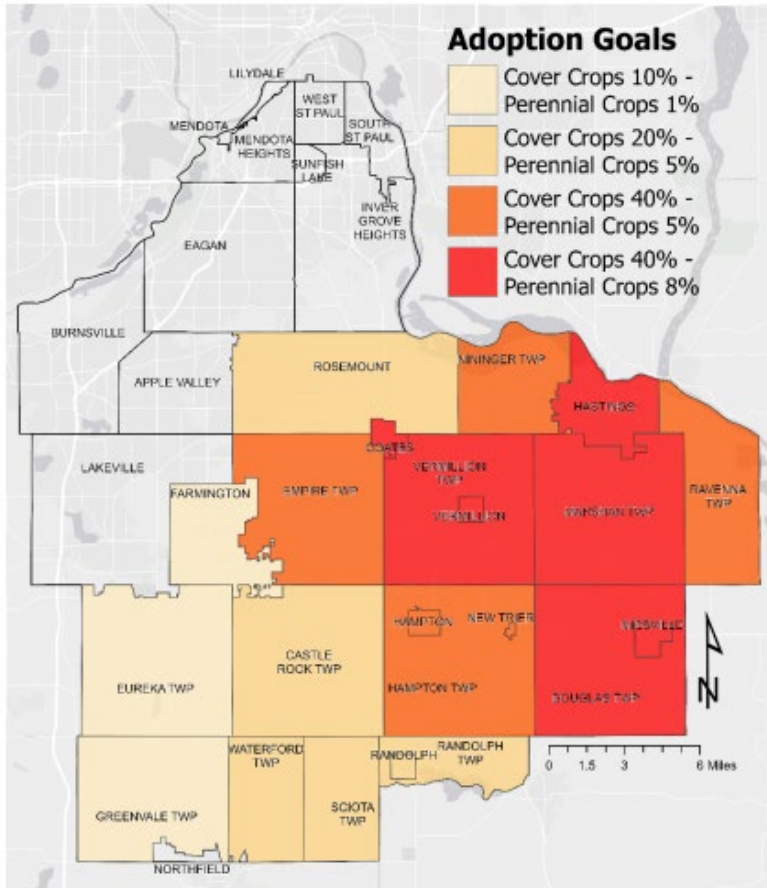
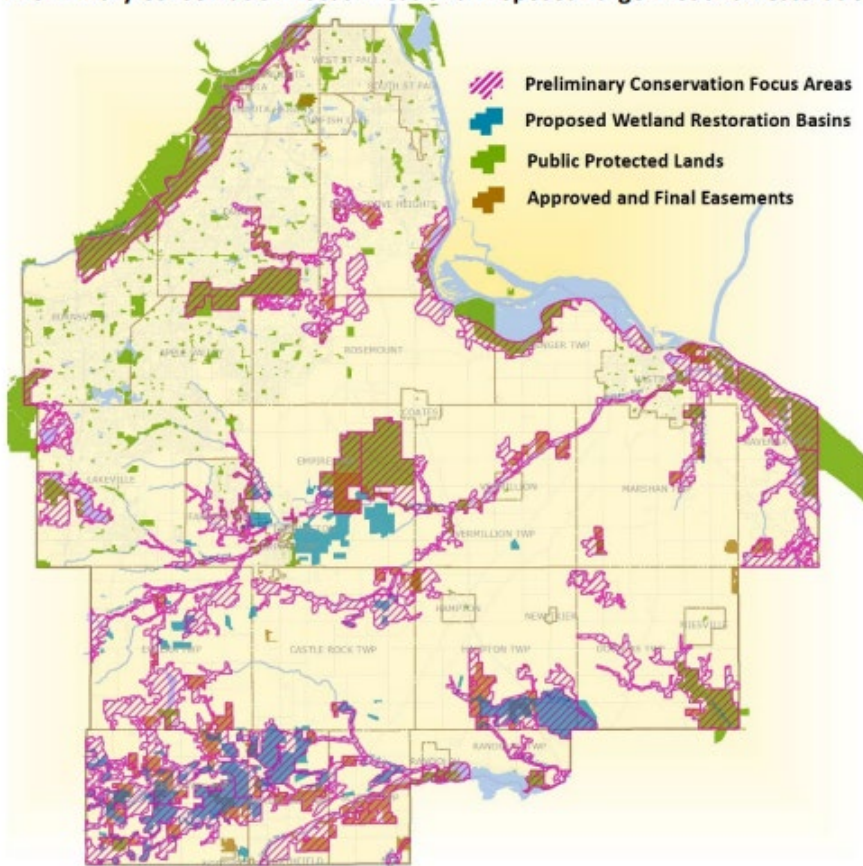


Figure 6: Interim Cover Crop and Perennial Adoption Rate Goals

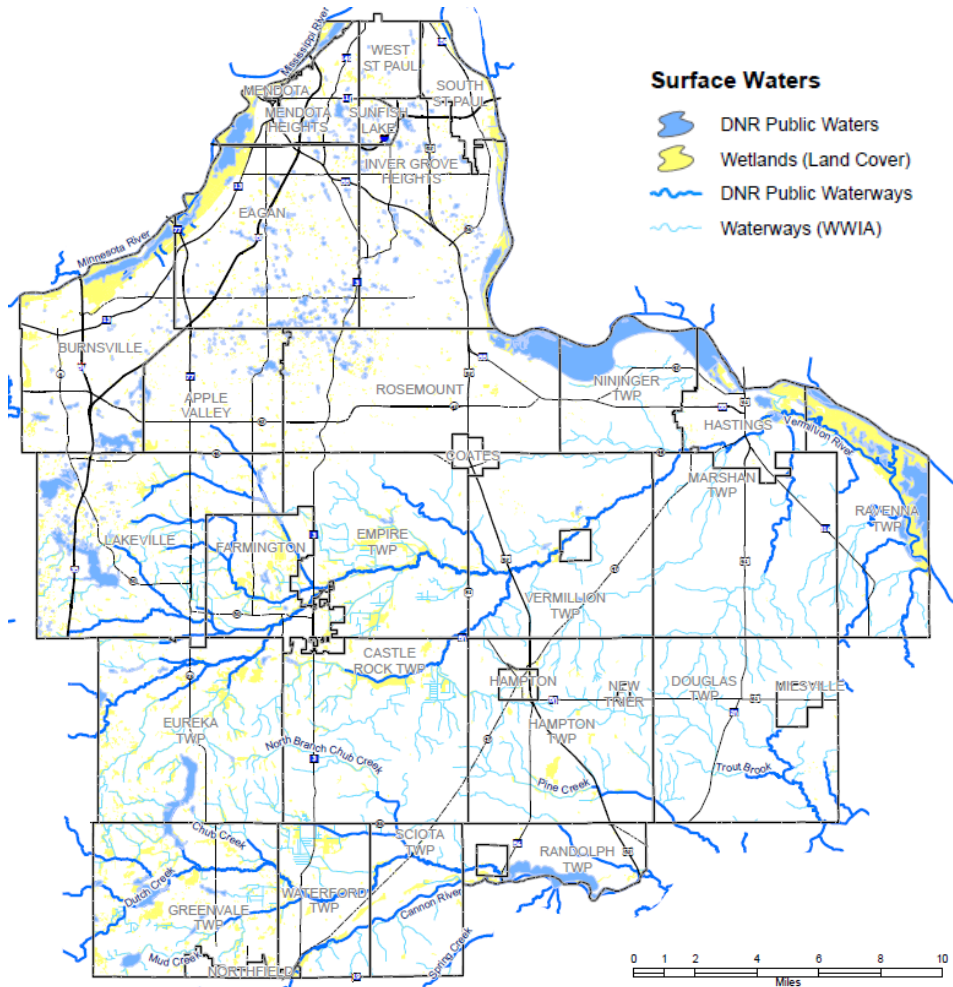
- ▶ Plans
 - ▶ Groundwater - ACRE
 - ▶ Land Conservation
- ▶ Goals
 - ▶ Cover crops/perennials
 - ▶ “Water quality and quantity is enhanced and protected”
- ▶ Regulatory
 - ▶ Wetland Conservation Act
 - ▶ Buffer Law - Ordinance 50
 - ▶ Public Drainage Ditches

Preliminary Conservation Focus Areas and Proposed Large Wetland Restoration Basins



Assisting County

- ▶ Plans
 - ▶ Groundwater - ACRE
 - ▶ Land Conservation
- ▶ Goals
 - ▶ Cover crops/perennials
 - ▶ “Water quality and quantity is enhanced and protected”
- ▶ Regulatory
 - ▶ Wetland Conservation Act
 - ▶ Buffer Law - Ordinance 50
 - ▶ Public Drainage Ditches



Assisting County

- ▶ Plans
 - ▶ Groundwater - ACRE
 - ▶ Land Conservation
- ▶ Goals
 - ▶ Cover crops/perennials
 - ▶ “Water quality and quantity is enhanced and protected”
- ▶ Regulatory
 - ▶ Wetland Conservation Act
 - ▶ Buffer Law - Ordinance 50
 - ▶ Public Drainage Ditches



Regulatory

- ▶ Wetland Conservation Act
 - ▶ 119 activity contacts
 - ▶ 54 site visits
 - ▶ 84 Technical Evaluation Panel meetings
 - ▶ 10 violation investigations
 - ▶ 6 wetland banking applications
- ▶ Buffer Law - Ordinance 50
 - ▶ Reviewed 5,374 Parcels
 - ▶ 8 site visits
- ▶ Public Drainage Ditches
 - ▶ Inventory every 5 years (2026)

Behind the Scenes

- ▶ Trusted for Technical Review
 - ▶ Greenway projects
 - ▶ Trout Unlimited
 - ▶ MS4 maintenance
- ▶ City Agreements
 - ▶ Erosion Projects
 - ▶ Stormwater Projects
- ▶ Watershed Management Organizations
 - ▶ E-IGHWMO, LMRWMO, NCRWMO, CRWJPO
- ▶ “most valuable consultant”





DAKOTA COUNTY



— SOIL & WATER —
CONSERVATION DISTRICT



Partners in
Land and Water
Conservation