



Rice Soil and Water Conservation District

2211 2nd Ave NW Suite 200 Faribault, MN 55021

Phone: (507) 332-5408 www.riceswcd.org

RICE S.W.C.D.

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY – June 17, 2026 – 8:00 am

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Peterson, Al Malecha, Roger Bongers, Gene Kuntz, John Larson

Others in attendance: Steve Pahs, Alan Kraus, Teresa DeMars, Emmie Scheffler, Al Henderson, Jenny Simek FSA, Commissioner Charlie Peters

Meeting called to order at 8:00 am by Chairman John Larson.

May board minutes – action:

A motion Gene Kuntz, seconded by Roger Bongers to approve the May minutes as written.

All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

May financial statement and bills payable – action:

The May financial statement was reviewed by the District Manager.

A motion by Richard Peterson, seconded by Gene Kuntz to approve the May financial statement and bills payable, subject to audit. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Project encumbrance report – information: this report was reviewed.

CONSENT AGENDA: (payment approval):

- A. Joe Hollinger SHD 25-02, payment 2 - \$1,950.00
- B. Sommers Farms, LLC SHD 25-11 - \$5,250.00
- C. #066-01-09 – 1 yr cover crops - \$7,488.00
- D. #066-06-21 – res. mgmt., and no-till pymt 1 - \$5,297.50
- E. #066-03-22 – res.mgmt and no-till pymt 1 - \$10,937.50
- F. Ryan Carroll SHD 26-04, res. mgmt. and no-till pymt 1 - \$3,377.50
- G. Charles Peters 26-RC-02, WASCOB - \$6,009.07
- H. #066-03-16 – res. mgmt. and no-till - \$7,312.50
- I. #066-02-18 – res. mgmt. and no-till - \$1,750.00
- J. Delores Dierking – 2026-RC-01, well sealing – Zumbro 1W1P - \$2,032.50
- K. Unity Properties LLC – 26-RC-01 well decommissioning – CRWJPB - \$3,000.00
- L. Jack Schwab SHD 25-06 – no-till and strip-till pymt 2 - \$1,480.00
- M. Anthony Kuchinka SHD 26-02, pymt 1 of no-till - \$262.50

A motion by Roger Bongers, seconded by Richard Peterson to approve the consent agenda items as listed. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. 2025 Buffer Law grant closeout – action:

A motion by Gene Kuntz, seconded by Roger Bongers to close out the 2025 Buffer Law Grant. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

B. Delta Dental Insurance renewal – action:

A motion by Richard Peterson, seconded by Al Malecha to renew the Delta Dental insurance policy as presented. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

C. Ed Jone CD – 6 mth - \$140,000.00 – up for renewal in June – action

A motion by Roger Bongers, seconded by Richard Peterson to roll the \$140,000.00 into another CD for \$142,000.00 with the flexibility to go 6 month or 12 month pending rates. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

D. Outstanding Conservationist – action:

A motion by Richard Peterson, seconded by Roger Bongers to select Wild Ones of SE Minnesota as the Rice SWCD Outstanding Conservationist for 2026. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

E. Letter of Support – Southeast MN Groundwater Protection & Soil health Initiative – action:

A motion by Gene Kuntz, seconded by Richard Peterson to approve the letter of support for the Southeast MN Groundwater Protection & Soil health initiative. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

F. Donna Eschleman et al – 26-RC-CRP-001, CRP incentive contract - \$3,500.00 – action:

A motion by Richard Peterson, seconded by Al Malecha to approve the Donna Eschleman et al #26-RC-CRP-001 CRP incentive contract for \$3,500.00. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

G. Donna Eschleman et al – 26-RC-CRP-001, CRP incentive payment - \$3,500.00 – action:

A motion by Gene Kuntz, seconded by Roger Bongers to approve the Donna Eschleman et al #26-RC-CRP-001 CRP incentive payment for \$3,500.00. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

H. Mark Sommers 2026WAGZ RC CRP 1, CRP incentive contract - \$250.00 – action:

A motion by Roger Bongers, seconded by Richard Peterson to approve the Mark Sommers 2026WAGZ_RC_CRP_1 CRP incentive contract for \$250.00. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

I. Mark Sommers 2026WAGZ RC CRP 1, CRP incentive payment - \$250.00 – action:

A motion by Roger Bongers, seconded by Al Malecha to approve the Mark Sommers 2026WAGZ_RC_CRP_1 CRP incentive payment for \$250.00. All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

J. Walter and Elaine Krenz #26-RC-003 grassed waterway - \$14,775.00 – action:

A motion by Gene Kuntz, seconded by Roger Bongers to approve the Walter and Elaine Krenz #25-RC-003

contract for \$14,775.00 for a grassed waterway.
All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

K. Strategic Planning Proposal:

A motion by Gene Kuntz, seconded by Richard Peterson to approve the recommended Kanati proposal, pending reviews from Districts that have employed them.
All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

L. #066-03-19 – amendment to change contract #066-02-19 to 066-03-19, change contract amount – action

No action taken as amendment not signed in time for meeting. Will be on the next meeting.

M. #066-03-19 – res. mgmt. and no-till, pymt 1 - \$1,855.00 - action

No action taken as payment not ready. Will be on the next meeting.

N. 2027 Preliminary Budget – action:

A motion by Gene Kuntz, seconded by Richard Peterson to approve the 2027 preliminary budget as presented.
All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

NRCS REPORT: written by Taylor O'Bryan

June 17th, 2026

NRCS Report for the Rice SWCD Board Meeting

General:

- ⇒ Elenor and Lucas are working out of the Faribault Office
- ⇒ Taylor is working out of the Faribault office 3 days a week and the Farmington Office 2 days a week
- ⇒ Taylor is covering Farmington office with counties of Washington, Ramsey, and Dakota
- ⇒ Chris is working out of the office a few days a week, will be in other offices in our team the rest of the time.

Farm Bill Updates:

CSP:

- ⇒ 4 CSP contracts in Rice County selected
- ⇒ Sign up 2 is open for CSP

EQIP:

- ⇒ 3 selected in Rice County
- ⇒ Sign up 2 is open for EQIP

CRP:

- ⇒ Continuous Sign up: 45 Selected in Rice County
- ⇒ General Sign Up: 4 Selected in Rice County

WETLAND/HEL:

- ⇒ Rice County has 50 requests awaiting HEL determination for new land from the compliance team
- ⇒ Rice County has 21 requests awaiting a certified wetland determination from the compliance team

Upcoming Events/Deadlines:

-

FSA report prepared by Taylor Carlson, presented by Jenny Simek:



Rice County, Minnesota

2800 1st Avenue NW, Suite 500
Faribault, MN 55021
Taylor.Carlson@usda.gov
(507) 332-7418 ext 108

TO: Rice County Soil and Water Conservation District Board

FROM: Rice County Farm Service Agency

SUBJECT: June 2026 Board Meeting

Old Business

Acreage Reporting

- July 15th is the reporting deadline.
- Producers can certify in-person or digitally. Producers can also grab their maps in-person or can request them digitally.

New Business

FSA County Committee (COC)

- Nomination period begins on June 15, 2026, and ends August 3, 2026.
- Rice LAA2 is up for election (Shieldsville, Morristown, Walcott, Warsaw, and Wells Townships)
 - See attached map for reference (Blue highlighted area)

Base Acre Increase for Safety Net Program (ARC/PLC)

- Eligible landowners have from June 1 until Aug. 31, 2026, to review and consider base acre increases on farms enrolled. Operators will need to work with landowners.
- Contact FSA if:
 - Acreage history data is incorrect or missing,
 - There are "subsequent acres" listed on the producer's Base Allocation summary,
 - If the producer elects to opt out of receiving any additional base acres.

Assistance for Specialty Crop Producers (ASCF)

- Application period is open through Aug 7, 2026.
- Payment rates: (crop list is not all-inclusive)
 - Tier 1 - \$650 per acre: Aronia/Garlic/Mushrooms/Strawberries
 - Tier 2 - \$225 per acre: Apple/Broccoli/Cucumbers/Tomatoes/Squash
 - Tier 3 \$65 per acre: Sweet corn
 - Beans and Peas - \$25 per acre

June CCC Interest Rates announced through Notice FI-3477

- MAL - 4.750%
- FSFL 3-year term - 4.000%
- FSFL 5-year term - 4.125%
- FSFL 10-year term - 4.375%

County Committee (COC) Meeting; Regular sessions are open to the public (0:15-0:30)

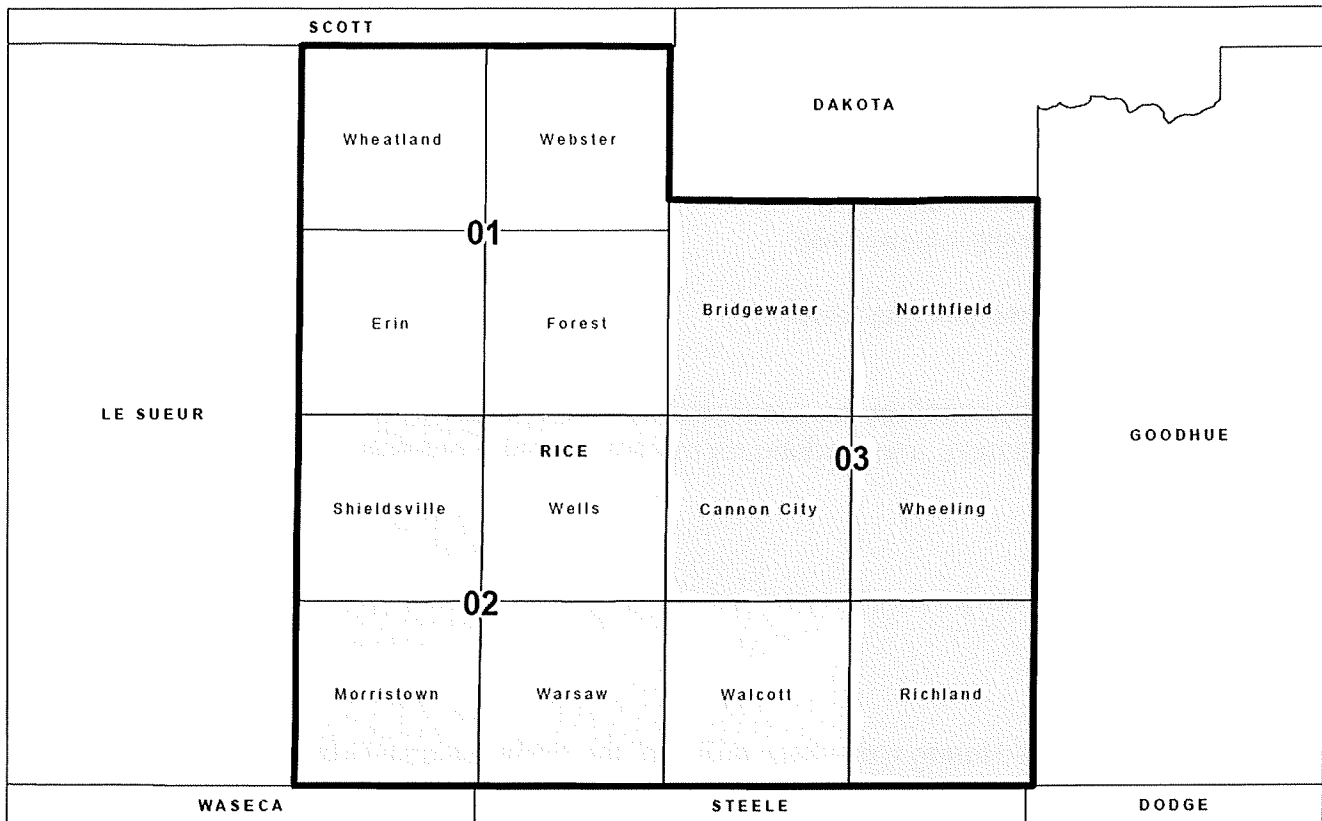
Farm Service Agency

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

- Next COC meeting is scheduled for August 11, 2026 at 8:30 a.m.



LAA Reference Map— Minnesota Farm Service Agency



131 - Rice County

Source: Farm Service Agency

Map is intended for Farm Service Agency (FSA) business purposes only. Map derived serves only as a general reference map.

GIS
March 17, 2022
UTM Zone 15 NAD 83

DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT:



Rice Soil and Water Conservation District

2211 2nd Ave NW Suite 200 Faribault, MN 55021

Phone: (507) 332-5408 www.riceswcd.org

June 2026 District Manager's Report

The end of May focused on many things including searching for SWCD board candidates, working with AI H on a WCA case, checking fields for cover crop and reduced tillage certification,

and getting ready for interseeding covers. June has been busy completing RCPP contract paperwork for payments, working on the 2027 budget, and plenty of odds and ends. Emmie, Teresa, Sue and I installed a butterfly garden at the office to use as a demonstration garden, and Roger Bongers graciously donated the rocks for the edging.

Specific activity/meetings this past month:

- EQIP Local Work Group meeting to prioritize conservation funding
- Mtg with Winjum on WCA restoration order
- RCPP Soil Health meeting
- Bus tour meetings
- Cannon Implementation Group meeting
- Area 7 resolutions meeting in Stewartville
- BALMM mtg.
- Lower MN Steering Committee mtg-Jordan

Looking ahead, I am putting together the preparations for the strategic planning meeting, looking into grants for more well testing, and working on more soil health projects.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Pahs

In addition: Regarding the Hering waterway violation, the attorney is still looking into this matter.

All supervisor positions had candidates file.

SUPERVISOR REPORTS:

Gene Kuntz: Attended the resolutions meeting. Suggested inviting House of Representatives candidates to meetings. Peas are being harvested. Corn looks good.

Al Malecha: no report.

Roger Bongers: Crops and weeds are coming up.

Richard Peterson: Attended the resolutions meeting and the NRCS Local Work Group meeting.

John Larson: Compeer has a regen lending program.

Staff Reports:

Teresa DeMars:

Past Month

- Women in Conservation event marketing
- June newsletter

- Vacation
- Jefferson Prairie Planning
- Southeast MN Soil Health Bus Tour Strip Till Conference marketing

Next Month

- Women in Conservation event
- July newsletter
- Vacation July 4th
- Jefferson Prairie Planting
- Southeast MN Soil Health Bus Tour Strip Till Conference marketing

Emmie Scheffler:

This past month, I have been working on items for the Cannon, including investigating a new tracking system and setting up the August tour. I completed four surveys and met with three landowners to get bids. I met with the TSA to look at two sites and NRCS engineers on five other sites. I am currently working on CRP plans, RIM, and 6 designs.

Alan Kraus:

- Spring interseeding program
 - Acres are down from previous years
 - Total 215 acres planted
 - Maintenance on planter completed
- Soil Health Incentive Programs
 - RCPP Funding
 - Spring practice verifications completed
 - LCCMR Cover Crop program has been approved. Program will start in August
 - BWSR Soil Health Delivery - \$4500 remaining to contract with growers
- Bridgewater Streams project
 - Water sampling continues – by Clean River Partners
- Rice-Steele Soil Health Nitrogen Rate Project
 - Met with all farmers
 - All plots are planted
 - N side dressing underway
- SE Minnesota Bus Tour to the National Strip-till Conference
 - Meetings with Rice & Steele staff to plan this project
 - 27 of 50 seats are filled
- Looking ahead
 - Continue planning for Soil Health Bus Tour to Strip-till Conference
 - Follow-up on interseeding program
 - Prep for Passport to Ag
 - Begin outreach for LCCMR Cover Crop program
 - Work with Freeborn Area Soil Health Team on summer/fall field day

Allison Henderson:

Last/Current Month

- WCA applications

- DNR well readings
- Native plant sale p/u day
- Buffer reporting
- WCA Violations Restoration guidance
- Assisting with lake sampling

Next Month:

- Continuing follow up with WCA restoration guidance
- DNR well readings
- Reviewing WCA applications
- WCA site visits
- Buffer monitoring
- Technical Assistance to landowners as it comes up

Commissioner Charlie Peters: Budgets will be tough. County Road 23 tried a new milling project that failed. Twin Oaks development will have 8 more houses. Completed Park tour. Tonight is the appeal board meeting for taxes.

OTHER/CORRESPONDENCE: BWSR is having 1W1P listening sessions. July 28th in the afternoon and in Rochester July 30th in the afternoon.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

June 4 Cover Crop Chat by the Minnesota Soil Health Coalition, 12:30 pm, virtual.

June 16 Compost Webinar with Dan Janski by the Minnesota Soil Health coalition, 1:00 - 2:00 pm, online

June 17 Rice SWCD Board Meeting, 8:00 AM, at the Rice SWCD office in Faribault.

June 17 Managing Invasive Species in Woodlands and Shorelines, 6:00 - 7:30 pm in Millersburg.

June 23 Intensive Rotational Grazing Field day at New Story Farm, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm in Hutchinson.

June 24 Nitrogen and Soil Health at Legvold Farms, roundtable discussion, 8:00 am - 11:00 am by Northfield.

July 30 Passport to Agriculture by Rice County ag organizations, 4:00 - 8:00 pm at the Rice County Fairgrounds in Faribault.

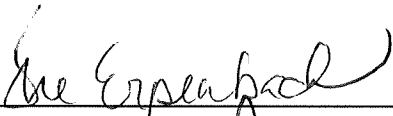
August 5-7 Southeast Minnesota Soil Health Bus Tour to the 2026 National Strip-Tillage Conference by the Rice and Steele SWCD in Springfield, IL.

ADJOURN:

A motion by Roger Bongers, seconded by Al Malecha to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 am.

All aye. None opposed. Motion carried.

Submitted by:





Board Member –