Meeting Minutes
DeKalb County
Soil and Water Conservation District

Call to order Annual Meeting

The Monthly Board Meeting of the DeKalb County SWCD was held on October 14, 2026 at the DeKalb County Farm Bureau's Center for Agriculture in Sycamore Illinois. The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairman Dan Kenney at 7:03 p.m.

Attendees

Directors: Dan Kenney, Lynn Martz and Anita Zurbrugg

Associate Directors: Stan Doty and Paul Koeppen Jr.

Staff: Grace Coveliers, Resource Conservationist; Dean Johnson, Executive Director; and Brooke Watson, Administrative Coordinator.

NRCS: Aaron Seim

IDOA: Not Present

Directors not present included: Rick Bend, Paul Kuhn

Approval of the agenda

Motion to approve the October 14, 2026 agenda made by Director Zurbrugg, seconded by Director Martz. Motion carried.

Approval of minutes

Motion to approve the meeting minutes of September 9, 2026 made by Director Martz and seconded by Director Zurbrugg. Motion carried.

Approval of Treasurers Report

Motion to approve the Treasurers Report made by Director Zurbrugg. Director Kenney seconded the motion, motion carried.

Reports

NRCS- Aaron Seim provided a report on his activities for the month of October and the outlook for November. Nationally and statewide, NRCS is undergoing reorganization. The Sycamore office staff added a third county to their territory on October 1, 2026 and the NRCS Sycamore office staff now oversees DeKalb, Lee and Ogle County. There are no current NRCS staff in Lee County but a position

(NRCS report continued)

has been posted for an NRCS Soil Conservationist, that will be located there. NRCS Sycamore office staff will rotate coverage to have a physical presence at the Lee County office, located in Amboy but Aaron is planning to work out of the Lee County office on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

NREC- Peggy Anesi appeared as a guest on the October edition of the DeKalb Sustainability Alliance podcast, discussing the importance of watersheds and water conservation. The episode can be watched through via their facebook page. The Watersheds Stewards course scheduled to start October 6, was cancelled due to low enrollment.

Administrative Coordinator- Brooke Watson provided a written report on her activities for the month of October and the outlook for November.

Resource Conservationist- Grace Coveliers provided a written report on her activities for the month of October and the outlook for November.

Executive Director- Dean Johnson provided a written report on his activities for the month of October and the outlook for November.

DeKalb County Watersheds Council: Grace Coveliers shared that the planning process has started for the Somonauk Creek Watershed-Based Plan (Somonauk Creek WBP). Grace and Brooke met with Cecily Cunz of Baxter & Woodman Engineering to discuss a tentative schedule of events, data collection and deliverables. Individuals to serve on the Steering Committee for the Somonauk Creek WBP have been selected and the Committee was approved by DeKalb County Stormwater Management and Planning Committee on September 24, 2026. We've begun coordinating steering committee meetings, with the first scheduled for November 4, 2026 at the Sandwich Public Library District. Grace and Cecily drafted the Education and Outreach Strategy, which has been submitted to the IEPA grant administrator for pre-approval. Grace has also coordinated gathering GIS data from DeKalb and LaSalle counties to incorporate into the watershed inventory.

Grace met with ISGS researchers Kisa Mwakanyamale-Gilkie and Jason Thomason to finalize project goals and determine a total cost. They provided a quote outlining a $1.3 million cost for DeKalb County. Dean, Grace, Anita and Brooke had a positive meeting with Jessica Beezhold, a member of Rep. Lauren Underwood's staff, on Monday about the HTEM mapping project. She does think that this project aligns with Rep. Underwood's interests and goals around transparency with water resources and opportunities to provide the public and local leaders more data. She was also encouraging of both funding opportunities through Rep. Underwood's office and other federal grant processes. We will continue to move forward with sharing details about the project with DeKalb county groups and stakeholders, as well as further developing a budget. Jessica encouraged us to submit an application for this project to be considered through Rep. Underwood's FY28 Community Project Funding Requests (2 week application period opens in Spring 2027), which if selected could provide congressional funding in 2028.

(DeKalb County Watersheds Council report continued)

McHenry County and Boone County Water Resource Specialists, Scott Kuykendall and Dan Kane, have offered their support in legislator outreach and guidance as DeKalb County explores HTEM mapping. Boone County's Helicopter-based Time-Domain Electromagnetics (HTEM) project is nearing completion. Data will be publicly available when complete.

The DeKalb County Watersheds Council met on September 21, 2026 and agreed to support regional stormwater planning efforts through coordination with the Region 1 Planning Council regarding its IEPA 604(b) grant application.

A sub-committee of DeKalb County Watersheds Council is continuing to plan the Water Futures Summit scheduled for March 13, 2026. The goal is to bring together professionals, community members, farmers, local leaders, conservation partners, and residents for a full day focused on one resource that connects all of us: water. We want to help attendees develop a strong foundation of knowledge so they can participate meaningfully in conversations and civic engagement surrounding water resources and leave with information they can put into action in their own homes, farms, businesses, and communities. Program is being developed to intentionally expand the conversation beyond any one aspect of water management. Throughout the day, we hope to explore topics including the water cycle, hydrology, urban stormwater runoff, best management practices, flooding, wastewater treatment, sustainable and traditional agricultural practices, water and economic development, watershed planning, and other issues that will help our community better understand where our water comes from, where it goes, and how our decisions affect it. The morning will feature two concurrent tracks of presentations, followed by lunch and additional presentations in the afternoon. Presentation formats will include both individual speakers and panel discussions. The group is working on finalizing the schedule, moderators, sponsorship information, registration details and promotional collateral.

Changes to the DeKalb County Stormwater Ordinance have been reviewed and a red-line version of the updates are being prepared to be discussed and voted on at the next meeting on October 15, 2026. The new countywide water resource planning and management position for DeKalb County, the Water Resources Manager, has been tabled until after the country budget for 2027 is resolved.

Correspondence

Dean will be attending the October 28, 2026 meeting for the DeKalb County Planning, Zoning and Development Committee to share about HTEM mapping and seek their support in moving forward. If Changes to the DeKalb County Stormwater Ordinance have been voted on at the next DeKalb County Stormwater meeting on October 15, 2026, they would also be put forward for approval at this DeKalb County Planning, Zoning and Development Committee meeting. Dean encouraged Board of Directors and Associate Directors to attend and signal their support.

Dean is continuing to work with Rep. Jeff Keicher, who has been concerned about failed attempts at securing SWCD funding. Rep. Keicher believes SWCDs need to seek support and guidance from The Nature Conservancy, as he has seen many of their policy proposals experience success getting through the General Assembly. He has worked with Ashley Maybanks, Director of Government

(Correspondence continued)

Relations at The Nature Conservancy, and there will be a meeting next week with DeKalb SWCD, Eliot Clay from AISWCD and Ashley.

Dean welcomed a class from the NIU Department of Anthropology to Johnsons Pumpkins and Corn Maze. Students in Dr. Kristen Borre's "Study of Environmental Sustainability" course explored the soils beneath their feet by getting into a soil pit to examine soil layers and learn how glaciation helped shape the landscape and soil characteristics we see throughout DeKalb County today.

They also participated in a rainfall simulator demonstration to see firsthand how poorly managed soil can be vulnerable to erosion and nutrient runoff during rainfall events. The visit sparked conversations about how conservation practices can improve soil health, reduce erosion, protect water quality, and support more sustainable agricultural systems.

Dean has been invited to share a presentation about watersheds at the DeKalb Area Garden Club meeting at 7 p.m. on November 12, 2026 at the Ellwood House Museum.

Anita is participating in the University of Illinois Extension Climate Stewards program, which is a four-week, interactive program led by university scientists and IL Extension that equips community members with the tools they need to communicate effectively about climate change, activate local collective solutions, and motivate others to join them. It is only being offered at six Extension offices across Illinois and Anita is participating at the DuPage County Extension Office in Naperville.

IDOA has released CPRG funding, which has been transferred to the DeKalb County SWCD restricted bank account. Payment cannot be released to producers until IDOA has reviewed completed applications.

Time Sheet Approval

Employee Time Sheets Reviewed and Approved By: Director Zurbrugg

Unfinished business

None

New business

FY26 Comptrollers Report - Brooke Watson shared the FY26 Comptrollers Report prepared by Foster's Tax & Accounting, LLC. Director Zurbrugg moved to approve the FY26 Comptrollers Report. Director Martz seconded the motion, motion carried.

Contribution Agreement with NRCS - Grace Coveliers shared the proposed renewal of the Contribution Agreement with NRCS. Director Martz moved to approve renewing the Contribution Agreement with NRCS. Director Zurbrugg seconded the motion, motion carried.

Select Nominating Committee - The SWCD Board appointed Kristine Sawyer, Stan Doty, and Paul Koeppen Jr to serve as the nominating committee for the FY27 Election.

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: Director Zurbrugg moved to adjourn the meeting, and it was seconded by Director Martz. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Announcements

The next meeting of the DeKalb County SWCD will be on November 18, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the DeKalb County Farm Bureau's Center for Agriculture in Sycamore Illinois.

Chairman

Date