



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 August 12, 2026 at the Nicholas and Rosemary Moore Farm, as part of the Summer Outing hosted by Stan and Terri Doty. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Paul Kuhn at 7:40 p.m.

Attendees

Directors: Rick Bend, Paul Kuhn, Lynn Martz and Anita Zurbrugg

Associate Directors: Stan Doty and Peggy Doty.

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

NRCS: Aaron Seim

IDOA: Not Present

Directors not present included: Dan Kenney

Guests: Linda Kuhn, Alex Ibes, Mike Martz, Ron Moore and Katie Williamson

Approval of the agenda

Motion to approve the August 12, 2026 agenda made by Director Martz, seconded by Director Zurbrugg. Motion carried.

Approval of minutes

Motion to approve the meeting minutes of July 8, 2026 made by Director Martz and seconded by Director Bend. Motion carried.

Approval of Treasurers Report

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

Reports

NRCS- Aaron Seim provided a report on his activities for the month of July and the outlook for August. Across four allocation rounds of EQIP funding, \$41 million was allocated for projects in Illinois. 3,382 total EQIP allocations were submitted, with 511 ultimately funded. Unfortunately, zero projects were funded in DeKalb County. Across two allocations of funding for CSP, Illinois received \$50.6 million in funding. 1,380 projects were submitted for ranking, resulting in 261 projects receiving funding. There is still an opportunity where additional projects may be awarded. DeKalb County saw one project receive funding for this cycle. DeKalb County currently has 39 Farm Bill Contracts, of which 4 are CSP. The NRCS team and Grace have been doing contract management and annual site reviews for CRP. Nationally and statewide, NRCS is undergoing reorganization. The Sycamore office staff may have to add a third county to their territory. Official notice will be released later this month.

NREC- Peggy Anesi provided a report on her activities for the month of July and the outlook for August. Extension is collaborating with Purdue University on rainscaping work. University of Illinois Extension - DeKalb County has been selected for a grant to host one of six, rainscaping demonstration sites across Illinois. Peggy is installing a rain garden at the Genoa Water Treatment Plant and native plants will be installed this fall. She is going to host a rainscaping program with Master Gardeners, who will also get hand-on experience with the installation process. The Watershed Stewards program has been rescheduled for Tuesdays from 9:30 a.m. - 12 p.m., starting Oct. 6 through Nov. 17. Sessions will be in-person at Russell Woods Nature Center and will include an additional fieldtrip to the Water Treatment Plant. This is an educational program only and no volunteer hours or future commitments are required, unlike some other Extension “Stewardship” programming. Another great year of youth camp at Russell Woods Nature Center has concluded. This was the first year it had significant support from 4-H staff and it was a huge success.

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

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

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

DeKalb County Watersheds Council: Dean Johnson shared the next DeKalb County Watersheds Council meeting is Monday, September 21 at 3 p.m. in the auditorium at the DeKalb County Farm Bureau. A Sub-Committee of the Council is beginning to plan the DeKalb County Water Futures Summit for mid-March 2027. This one-day event will happen on a Saturday and feature speakers and breakout sessions. It will be a continuation of the momentum from last year’s Watersheds for Leaders program.

Correspondence

DeKalb County Pheasants Forever Banquet is Tuesday, September 1 at the Regale Center in Sycamore.

Dean received an invitation to attend the Agricultural Round Table with the DeKalb County Farm Bureau and Illinois State Representatives Brad Fritts, Jeff Keicher and Tony McCombie. At the event, Rep. Jeff Keicher brought up the state legislation for SWCD funding that failed. He feels like 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 Relations at The Nature Conservancy, and wants to host a meeting with DeKalb SWCD, Eliot Clay from AISWCD and Ashley in September.

The AISWCD sent out notification that the SWCD signage for state highways has finally been dispersed throughout Illinois. All should be installed soon.

The DeKalb County Stormwater Planning and Management Committee is close to offering changes for amendments to the DeKalb County stormwater ordinances. The Committee will meet in September to vote on the changes, followed by participating in public hearings and then putting it up for approval with the DeKalb County Planning, Zoning and Development Committee and DeKalb County Board. The amendments will include better policies on greenspace, water connectivity and water volume. DeKalb County Watersheds Member and representative on the DeKalb County Stormwater Planning Committee, Kelsey Musich, has been meeting informally with various stakeholders to receive feedback and hopefully address comments prior to a proposal to the DeKalb County Planning, Zoning and Development Committee. The main pushback has centered around developing BMPs to treat one inch of rain in the annual flush. Key stakeholders would rather commit to developing BMPs to treat only half-of-an-inch of rain in the annual flush. If these amendments can be passed, the municipalities will have to adopt the ordinance changes or make them more restrictive within their own ordinances.

Time Sheet Approval

Employee Time Sheets Reviewed and Approved By: Director Martz

Unfinished business

None

New business

DeKalb County Water Futures Summit - A keynote speaker is being sought after to provide a strong kick-off to the event and to assist with marketing and promotion. Anticipating this to be a full day long event and would like to provide purchase for lunch for participants and speakers. Allocation

could come from the Samardzija grant, assuming the event and planning aligns with the requirements of the grant. Director Zurbrugg moved to approve that leftover funds that meet the requirements of the Samardzija grant, could be used towards covering the cost of lunch for all participants and speakers at the DeKalb County Water Futures Summit. Director Martz seconded the motion, motion carried.

Aquifer 3D Mapping Opportunity- SWCD staff have continued to have conversations with key stakeholders about the aquifer 3D mapping opportunity, also known as Helicopter Time-Domain Electromagnetics (HTEM). It seems that having the DeKalb County SWCD as the HTEM project lead will increase the likelihood for the opportunity to become possible. Preliminary research suggests there could be grant funding opportunities to make the project possible. However, receiving the grant funds to cover the project, which is anticipated to cost more than \$500,000, would trigger an audit as the total SWCD income for the year would cross the audit requirement threshold. There would be a financial cost of about \$12,000 to complete an audit, but it could be possible to build that cost into grant agreements. Discussion took place about how the HTEM data would be used and why it could be important. Chairman Kuhn moved to support DeKalb SWCD in continuing to explore the HTEM project and being the lead agency if needed, pursuing funding opportunities, and covering the cost of an audit if needed. Director Zurbrugg seconded the motion, motion carried.

Pheasants Forever Banquet Sponsorship -Director Martz made a motion to approve a \$350 sponsorship for the annual Pheasants Forever Banquet, again this year. Director Zurbrugg seconded the motion, motion carried.

Annual Plan of Work - Director Bend made a motion to approve the FY27 Annual Plan of Work. Director Martz seconded the motion, motion carried.

Soil Health Assessment -Grace Coveliers shared that the 2026 Soil Health Assessment is complete but will be reviewed at the September Board of Directors Meeting.

Baxter & Woodman Agreement - Somonauk Creek Watershed Plan - Grant agreement has been signed and work can begin. DeKalb SWCD has an agreement with Baxter & Woodman to complete the Somonauk Creek Watershed Plan, with a cost of about \$175,000. The cost of the contract is built into the grant agreement and Baxter & Woodman will work with DeKalb SWCD on a fair billing schedule. Director Zurbrugg made a motion to approve the Baxter & Woodman Agreement to complete the Somonauk Creek Watershed Plan. Director Bend seconded the motion, motion carried.

Conservation Minute: In honor of being at the Nicholas and Rosemary Moore Farm and in memory of Nick, Dean Johnson shared the DeKalb SWCD annual report from 1981, when Nick Moore served as chairman of the Board of Directors. Highlights included a letter from Nick; a total budget of \$89,000 including a balance of \$12,000; the winner of the “No-Till Contest” harvested a high yield of 134 bushels of corn; the David Stahl family from Somonauk was the Farm Family of the Year; and familiar faces on the Board of Directors included Director Richard Bend and Associate Director Della Bend.

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: Director Zurbrugg moved to adjourn the meeting, and it was seconded by Director Bend.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Announcements

The next meeting of the DeKalb County SWCD will be on September 9, 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