

Sibley SWCD

# ANNUAL WORK PLAN



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2026

[www.sibleyswcd.org](http://www.sibleyswcd.org)

## 2026 Annual Work Plan

### **SIBLEY SWCD MISSION STATEMENT**

The Sibley Soil & Water Conservation District is organized for the purpose of assisting landowners with managing and promoting a diversified landscape that is both agriculturally productive and environmentally sustainable.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) are political subdivisions of the State established under Minnesota Statute 103C. Each SWCD is governed by a board of 5 elected supervisors. Established in 1952, 2026 begins the 74<sup>th</sup> year of operation for the Sibley Soil and Water Conservation District. The District has developed programs and applied technology to address natural resource issues. The District strives to provide a well-rounded suite of conservation services to meet the needs of Sibley County residents.

### **PURPOSE OF THE DISTRICT AND PLAN**

The purpose of the District is to provide a local organization through which landowners and operators in the District may cooperate with each other and with agencies of the County, State and Federal governments on soil and water conservation, watershed protection, flood prevention, farm forestry, wildlife improvement, recreation, rural farm development, and pollution reductions. Assistance made available through the District shall be consistent with the District's priorities and will encourage the use of all land within its capability and its need for protection/improvement.

## 2026 Annual Work Plan

### Sibley SWCD works in the following areas to achieve the objectives of the Annual Work Plan:

<p>Throughout all our work, Sibley SWCD remains committed to building and strengthening relationships within the community. We offer a Peer-to-Peer Mentorship program and provide education and outreach opportunities in every season. Developing our staff, supervisors, and partnerships is of utmost importance and directly supports our day-to-day operations as well as our pursuit of new funding opportunities.</p>		
Implementation	Compliance	Monitoring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aquatic Invasive Species</li> <li>• Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program</li> <li>• Drinking Water Treatment</li> <li>• Soil Health Practices</li> <li>• Technical Assistance</li> <li>• Tree Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffer Law</li> <li>• Reinvest in Minnesota Easements</li> <li>• Wetland Compliance Act</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation Reserve Program</li> <li>• Drinking Water Testing</li> <li>• Observation Wells</li> <li>• Rain Gauge Reporting</li> <li>• Watershed Pollutant Load Monitoring Network and Surface Water Assessment Grants</li> </ul>

### 2026

As we look ahead to 2026, we will place special emphasis on Watershed Based Implementation Funding, soil health practices, drinking water protection, and tree program priorities. We will continue to serve as the fiscal agent for the Lower Minnesota River West Watershed as it approaches its midpoint evaluation. All four watershed plans that include Sibley County—the Lower Minnesota River West, Minnesota River–Mankato, Hawk Creek–Middle Minnesota, and South Fork of the Crow River—are now in the implementation phase. Soil health practices continue to grow in popularity in Sibley County, and we intend to build on this momentum to reach middle adopters of these practices. Understanding, testing, treating, and protecting drinking water will remain a top priority through our grant partnership with the Minnesota Department of Health. Our tree program will continue to provide affordable, conservation-grade options for local landowners as we address a changing landscape impacted by Emerald Ash Borer and other ecological threats. Together, these efforts will strengthen the long-term resilience of Sibley County’s natural resources and support a healthier environment for our community.

## 2026 Annual Work Plan

### **COOPERATING AGENCIES**

*Buffalo Creek Watershed District (BCWD)*

*City of Gaylord*

*Farm Service Agency*

*Friends of High Island*

*Gaylord Hub*

*Gibbon Sportsman's Club*

*High Island Creek Watershed District (HICWD)*

*Lake Titlow Committee*

*Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees (MACDE)*

*Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD)*

*Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)*

*Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA)*

*Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)*

*Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)*

*Minnesota Office of State Climatology*

*Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)*

*Minnesota Soil Health Coalition (MSHC)*

*National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD)*

*Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)*

*Neighboring Counties and SWCDs*

*Pheasants Forever (PF)*

*Sibley County Departments*

*South Central Area VI*

*South Central Technical Services Area (SCTSA)*

*United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)*

*United States Geological Survey (USGS)*

*University of Minnesota Extension Service*

*U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (ACOE)*

## 2026 Annual Work Plan

### STAFF

**Joel Wurscher** – District Manager

**Jeremy Buckentin** – Senior District Technician

**Jack Bushman** – Water Resources Coordinator

**Tara O'Brien** – Conservation Technician

**Hayley Thies** – Operations Specialist

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS



From left to right: Loren Evenson, Paul Wiemann, Kathleen Thies, Wayne Grams, and Robert Nielsen

District 1 – Kathleen Thies – 2026 Treasurer

District 2 – Paul Wiemann – 2026 Chair

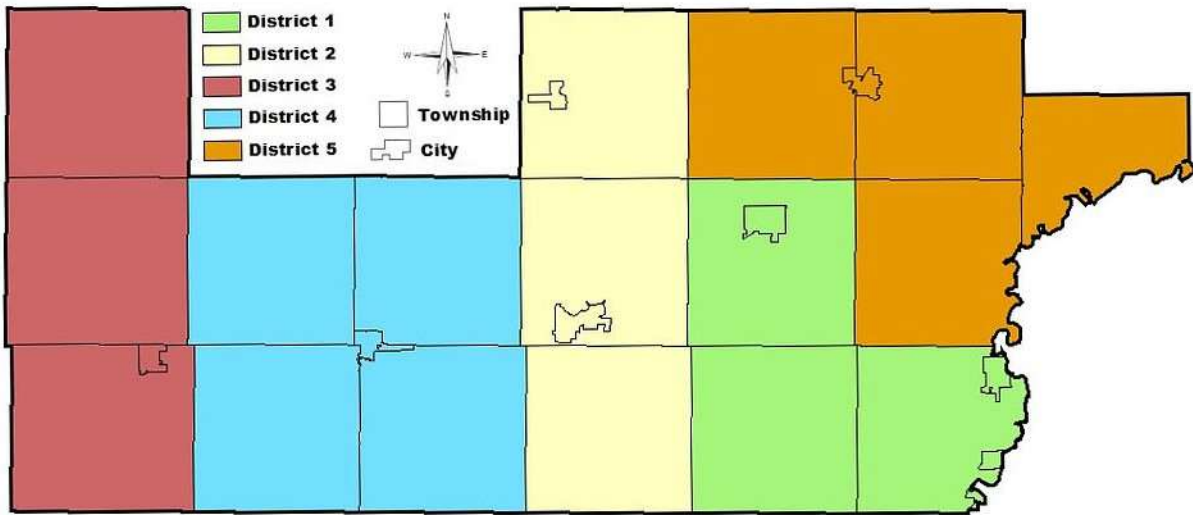
District 3 – Loren Evenson – 2026 Member

District 4 – Wayne Grams – 2026 Secretary

District 5 – Robert Nielsen – 2026 Vice Chair

## 2026 Annual Work Plan

### Sibley SWCD Supervisor District Boundaries



Board meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 4:00 PM. Meetings are held at the USDA Conference Room located at 112 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Gaylord, MN 55334.

<b>2026 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS</b>			
<b>Committee</b>	<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Member or Alternate</b>	<b>Meetings</b>
SC SWCD TSA	Robert Nielsen	Kathleen Thies	Quarterly
Personnel	Paul Wiemann	Robert Nielsen	As Needed
Legislative	Loren Evenson	Wayne Grams	Once a Year
Budget	Paul Wiemann	Kathleen Thies	Once a Year
WBIF	Paul Wiemann	Loren Evenson	Tri-Annually
Buffer	Kathleen Thies	Robert Nielsen	As Needed

## 2026 Annual Work Plan

### BUDGET

<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>2025 Budget</b>	<b>2026 Budget</b>
Employee Salary	\$ 310,000.00	\$ 415,000.00
Employers Share of PERA & FICA	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
Health Insurance	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 70,000.00
Supervisors Compensation & Expense	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
MCIT Insurance	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
National, State & Area Dues	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00
Office Expense	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 11,000.00
Supplies	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,750.00
Truck Expense	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
Education & Promotion	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 7,000.00
Audit	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 7,000.00
New Equipment	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
Project Expense	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 300,000.00
Rent	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 710,500.00</b>	<b>\$ 956,750.00</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
Conservation Delivery Grant	\$ 18,868.00	\$ 18,868.00
RIM Easement Services	\$ 5,700.00	\$ 5,800.00
Sibley SWCD Aid	\$ 160,934.40	\$ 160,934.40
Conservation Contracts	\$ 11,794.00	\$ 11,794.00
Soil Health Cost Share Grant	\$ 80,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
RCCP Soil Health Practices Grant	\$ -	\$ 180,000.00
Aquatic Invasive Species	\$ 61,210.00	\$ 61,000.00
Wetland Conservation Act	\$ 18,364.00	\$ 13,452.00
Local Water Management	\$ 19,952.00	\$ 14,615.00
Trees	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
Interest	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Buffer Grant	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 18,000.00
Observation Well Program	\$ 1,440.00	\$ 2,880.00
Other Revenues	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
<b>Income Grants, Charges for Services</b>	<b>\$ 403,762.40</b>	<b>\$ 556,843.40</b>
<b>County Allocation Requested</b>	<b>\$ 155,308.00</b>	<b>\$ 165,557.00</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 559,070.40</b>	<b>\$ 722,400.40</b>

## 2026 Annual Work Plan

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### January

Board meeting – January 13  
Financial reports and tax statements  
Quarterly reports and sales tax due  
MASWCD dues  
Tree sales open

#### February

Board meeting – February 10  
Lower MN – West PAC meeting  
E-link reporting due  
Tree sales

#### March

Board meeting – March 10  
TSA meeting  
Legislative Day at the Capitol  
Tree sales  
Supervisor Q1 expense reports

#### April

Board meeting – April 14  
1W1P Policy Committee meeting  
Quarterly tax reports due  
Tree sales and distribution

#### May

Board meeting – May 12  
Lower MN – West PAC meeting  
Local Work Group meeting

#### June

Board meeting – June 9  
Area VI meeting  
Supervisor Q2 expense reports

#### July

Board meeting – July 14  
Quarterly tax reports due  
Select Conservationist of the Year  
Distribute newsletter  
Develop and submit county budget

#### August

Board meeting – August 11  
Lower MN – West PAC meeting  
Sibley County Fair  
Annual SWCD picnic

#### September

Board meeting – September 8  
Supervisor Q3 expense reports

#### October

Board meeting – October 13  
Quarterly tax reports due  
BWSR Academy  
MASWCD Resolutions

#### November

Board meeting – November 10  
Lower MN – West PAC meeting  
Area VI meeting  
NACD dues

#### December

Board meeting – December 8  
MASWCD annual convention  
AIS plan and metrics  
Distribute newsletter  
Supervisor Q4 expense reports