



2024 Legislative Summary

May 21, 2024

Executive Summary

This document provides a summary of 2024 legislation impacting BWSR's work – including the work of our external partners statewide, particularly Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Watershed Districts.

An earlier version of this summary reflected changes in [Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90](#), a policy bill creating administrative and technical changes to our shared work. This bill included modernization changes to statutes impacting both Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Watershed Districts – some of the statutes governing that work had not been updated in decades.

The bill also reflects changes to the Wetland Conservation Act following a United States Supreme Court case that diminished federal protection. There were also a set of administrative adjustments to the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) program and to the public drainage management procedures.

This summary has since been updated to reflect appropriations from the Legacy Bill, which contains appropriations from the Outdoor Heritage Fund and the Clean Water Fund ([Laws 2024, Chapter 106](#)), and the Supplemental Omnibus Environment and Natural Resources Policy Bill ([Chapter 116](#)).

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Soil and Water Conservation District Updates

The changes reflected in the following sections are intended to make clarifying and modernizing updates to Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103C that govern soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs), including incorporation of recent statutory updates in other sections, and clarifying the ability to borrow funds for projects.

Soil and Water Conservation Policy

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 2

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103C.005](#)

As part of other updating and modernizing efforts, this change updates the list of practices that SWCDs support to include soil health (which was enacted in law in 2023).

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, sections 4, 5, 6

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103C.331](#), subdivisions 5, 6, 7

This change removes a reference to M.S. 103A.206 (which is repealed), and replaces it with a reference to M.S. 103C.005 (Soil and Water Conservation Policy). This is a technical change with no impact.

The change to M.S. 103C.331, subdivision 6 also clarifies that SWCDs can implement practices on public land (as opposed to only state land) within the district.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, sections 8 through 14

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103C.331](#), subdivisions 8 through 14

These changes recognize the broad variety of work that SWCDs accomplish, and their role in soil and water implementation practices beyond those previously listed in M.S. sections 103F.401-103F.455. The new language refers more broadly to “statutory responsibilities” to acknowledge the breadth of SWCD work.

Changing Location of Principal SWCD Office

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 3

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103C.221](#)

This change removes the requirement for BWSR to approve where the SWCD office is located while noting that the new location remain within the district.

Comprehensive Plan/Plan Updates

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 11

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103C.331](#), subdivision 11

This section modifies the provisions that allow SWCD comprehensive plan updates, including: references more broadly around inclusion of all statutory responsibilities; requiring the plan to be consistent with the statewide framework provided in Chapter 103B; and requiring a public comment period of at least 60 days prior to being submitted to BWSR for approval. This is similar to plans developed by other organizations that require state approval.

Compensation for Work or Projects

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 14

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103C.331](#), subdivision 14

This change clarifies the option for SWCDs to help landowners with operations and maintenance needs on conservation practices and to receive compensation for the work.

State or Federal Funding Assistance

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 15

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103C.331](#), subdivision 15

This provision provides flexibility to districts to apply for other potential state funding opportunities to help perform their authorized work in addition to existing language around federal funding.

Partnerships

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 17

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103C.331](#), by adding new subdivision 21

This new subdivision recognizes the opportunity for SWCDs to work with multiple partners when implementing efforts related to state, federal, Tribal, local government and private entities.

Loans

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 18

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103C.331](#), by adding new subdivision 22

This language clarifies soil and water conservation districts' ability to obtain loans when prudent to accomplish statutory duties.

Watershed District Updates

The changes reflected in the following sections are intended to make clarifying and modernizing updates to statutes governing watershed districts, and provide clarification around watershed districts' roles and responsibilities. The Watershed Law (currently M.S. Chapter 103D) was enacted in 1955 and has had minimal statutory updates in the decades since.

Engineers and Licensed Technical Experts

*Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, sections 19
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.011](#), subdivision 10*

These changes reflect the ability of watershed districts to utilize licensed technical professionals in addition to licensed engineers in the planning and design of district projects. Other professional disciplines involved in many watershed projects include soil science, geology, biology, etc.

Watershed District Purpose

*Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 20
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.201](#), subdivision 2*

This language reflects general updating of watershed district purposes from the original 1955 statements, harmonizing language with the Wetland Conservation Act and reducing redundancies.

Petitions for Changes to Watershed Districts; Boundary Changes; Withdrawals; Manager Appointments

*Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 21
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.205](#), subdivision 4*

This language cleans up reporting requirements by removing the requirement to report to the Commissioner of Natural Resources, and simply reporting to the Director Division of Ecological and Water Resources of the Department of Natural Resources.

*Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 22
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.251](#), subdivision 5*

This section modifies the petition requirements for watershed district boundary changes to “at least 50 resident owners or 50 percent of resident owners, whichever is less” in the area of proposed boundary changes. In some areas, there may be fewer than 50 resident owners. This amendment focuses the signature requirement on people in the geographic area affected by the proposed boundary change.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 23
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.251](#), subdivision 6

This section requires 10 days' notice of a public hearing regarding proposed boundary changes.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 24
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.255](#)

This change allows district managers to seek boundary changes and also requires 10 days' notice of a public hearing regarding said change. It also specifies that the watershed district board must file a copy of findings and withdrawal order with the secretary of state, the auditor of each county affected by the watershed district, the commissioner, and the watershed district.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 25, 26
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.261](#), subdivision 1, 2

These changes enable district managers to seek boundary changes (by a majority of the board, not a majority of a quorum of the board). This change also requires 10 days' notice to each watershed district affected by the petition, as well as other public officials (such as the county auditor).

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 27
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.271](#), subdivision 7

This section adjusts language around public meeting requirements for termination orders and is similar to language in section 103D.321 on principal place of business; language is also adjusted to "publicly accessible" facility. Open meeting law requires publicly accessible meeting areas, but not public ownership of the facility where the open meeting is held.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 28
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.301](#), subdivision 1

For boundary changes, requires that when more than one county is affected by a change, managers must be distributed among the counties by considering the counties' portion of the land area and net tax capacity of the watershed.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 29
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.301](#), subdivision 3

This change allows a staggering of watershed district manager terms at the same time that managers are redistributed.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 30
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.305](#), subdivision 2

This change allows for a petition to increase the number of managers on a board to be signed by a majority of the managers of the district.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 31
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.305](#), subdivision 5

This change addresses needed detail on findings, process, distribution of order, and terms for new managers, and also filing requirements of those findings with the Secretary of State, county auditors, and other public officials.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 32
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.311](#), subdivision 4

This change allows the district administrator to file a record of appointed managers.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 33
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.315](#), subdivision 9

This change outlines a 30-day requirement for the district's first meeting (increased from 10).

Principal Place of Business & Public Meeting Requirements

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 34
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.315](#), subdivision 10

This change clarifies that watershed districts are subject to open meeting law standards under Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13D.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 35
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.321](#), subdivision 1

This change addresses publicly accessible facilities for district meetings and the principal place of business, emphasizing public access over public ownership. It also clarifies that if the watershed district does not have a principal office, the location of regular meetings is to be used as the principal place of business.

Advisory Committees – Tribal Representation

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 36
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.331](#), subdivision 2

This change adds a requirement for advisory committees to include “a representative of each federally recognized Tribal government within the watershed district” when practicable.

District Ability to Dispose of Property

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 37
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.335](#), subdivision 11

This change makes it clear that districts have the ability to dispose of property when the property no longer serves the purpose of the district.

Rulemaking Authority

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 38

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.341](#), subdivision 1

This change clarifies the limits of the board's rulemaking authority to implement regulatory powers of the managers specifically.

Financial Assurance

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 39

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.345](#), subdivision 4

This change allows for financial assurance outside of bonds, which may include letters of credit, escrow, etc.

Annual Reporting Requirement

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 40

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.355](#), subdivision 1

This section outlines annual reporting requirements. These are similar to metropolitan watershed district reporting requirements under Minnesota Rule 8410.0150.

Removal of Managers- Criteria

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 41

Adds new Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.357](#)

This new section allows a district to establish a code of ethics and stipulates that a manager may be removed from their position if found to be in violation of the board's code of ethics, or for malfeasance, nonfeasance, or misfeasance.

Watershed Management Plans

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 42

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.401](#)

This section makes a number of changes to update requirements for watershed management plans.

- **Plan contents:** Clarifies that plans may reflect both watershed district powers and purposes; clarifies that a district maintains the authority to adopt a plan even when participating in a comprehensive watershed management planning program under section 103B.801 (One Watershed, One Plan/1W1P); deletes references to the Metropolitan Council because metro watersheds are covered separately under chapter 103B.
- **Reviewing draft plan:** Adds specificity on period of review to a 60-day review and comment period and a 10-day requirement to respond to comments (this parallels similar requirements in section 103B.231, subd. 7).

- **Hearing notice:** Adds specificity on period of review to a 60-day review and comment period and notice requirements by district, and clarifies that the district is in charge of this process (rather than BWSR).
- **Board approval:** Gives the watershed district authority over its planning process, and parallels language in section 103B.231 for metropolitan watershed districts. Language also provides a dispute resolution process in the case of BWSR not approving a plan.
- **Adoption:** Clarifies that the watershed district takes the final step of adopting the plan, within 120 days of a board order.
- **Amendments:** Provides for a minor plan amendment process in parallel with metropolitan watershed districts (as described in MN Rule 8410.0140).

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 43

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.405](#), subdivision 1

This change clarifies that the requirements of a plan fall under the responsibility of the watershed district, not BWSR.

Projects

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 44

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.535](#), subdivision 3

This minor change allows an administrator to give notice of publication of filing an order.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 45

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.701](#)

This language makes clarifying changes and supports a more efficient process for project initiation, such as not requiring unanimous consent and allowing approval by a majority of the board members.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 45

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.701](#)

This language allows sources of funding other than property assessments for projects.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 47

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.705](#), by adding new subdivision 5

This technical change moves language on project determination as part of the petition process.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 48

Adds new Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.707](#)

This new section consolidates the process of project initiation by managers, including allowing a majority of board members to approve project initiation, ability to combine funding sources outside of only

property assessments, and procedures for determining benefit of the project when undertaking assessments.

*Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, sections 49, 50, 51
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.711](#), subdivisions 3, 4, 6*

This covers minor changes to administration of projects and ability to halt work on a project initiated by petition.

*Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, sections 53, 54
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.729](#), subdivisions 1, 2*

This change covers minor amendments to reflect necessary changes in statutory cross-references due to other changes in the bill.

Project Funding in Addition to Assessments

*Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 52
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.715](#), subdivision 1*

This minor change reflects the new ability to fund projects outside of only property assessments and clarifies when an appraisal process is necessary. This is only related to projects funded by assessments.

*Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, sections 55, 56
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.731](#), and section [103D.745](#), subdivision 3*

This covers clarifying changes around assessments and appraisal processes for projects funded by assessments and ensures a relationship between cost and benefit of project and assessment.

*Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 59
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.901](#), subdivision 2*

This change removes reference to repealed section related to project funding.

Other Administrative Changes

*Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 57
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.805](#)*

This change clarifies an administrator's ability to be responsible for board records (here, specifically projects).

*Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 58
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103D.811](#), subdivision 3*

Leaves contract authority execution with the district managers and specifies state contracting requirements under M.S. 574.26.

Drainage Working Group

Sunset language

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, 60

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103E.729](#), subdivision 9

Extends the “sunset” date for this section related to repair costs and reports from July 31, 2024 to July 31, 2029.

Minnesota Public Drainage Manual

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 1

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103B.101](#), subdivision 13

Defines the Minnesota Public Drainage Manual in statute and requires that the manual include best management practices.

Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM)

Many of the changes in these sections are actions that move language from Minnesota Rules to Minnesota Statutes for improved clarity around the laws that govern Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) administration.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, sections 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103F.511](#), by adding subdivisions 1a, 1b, 1c, 3a, 3b, 5b, 5d, 7a, 7b

These changes move definitions from Minnesota Rules (repealed MN Rules 8400.3030) to Minnesota Statutes for purposes of program clarity. Definitions include those for:

- Agricultural crop production
- Agricultural land
- Approved practice
- Conservation easement program
- Conservation plan
- Food plot
- Land with crop history
- Pasture
- Perennial cover

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 71
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103F.515](#)

In addition to moving language from repealed Minnesota Rules in Rules Chapter 8400 to this statutory section, this section also adds additional environmentally sensitive areas to the list of land eligible for RIM enrollment.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 72
Adds new Minnesota Statutes, section [103F.527](#)

This change moves language from repealed Rules 8400.3630 and 8400.3700 to this new section regarding conservation practices.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 73
Adds new Minnesota Statutes, section [103F.528](#)

This change moves language from repealed Rules 8400.3210, 8400.3260, and 8400.3830 to this new section regarding soil and water conservation district responsibilities and delegation opportunities for the RIM conservation program.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 74
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103F.535](#), subdivision 5

Moves language from repealed Rule 8400.3610 to this section on altering conservation easements.

Waters of the State (Wetland Conservation)

On May 25, 2023, a U.S. Supreme Court Decision (*Sackett vs. Environmental Protection Agency*) and corresponding U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rule changing the definition of Waters of the United States (WOTUS) to conform to that case brought forward concern that there could be a reduction in federal jurisdiction when a wetland does not have a continuous surface connection (e.g., seasonal potholes, floodplains, wet meadows, forested peatlands, etc.) and where a water would have previously been within federal jurisdiction according to the “significant nexus,” standard (this standard was eliminated in recent rulemaking.)

An interagency team of state agencies was created to assess the impacts of this change to Minnesota’s waters and wetlands and to develop related information and policy options for consideration by agency leadership.

The language adopted by the state Legislature this year throughout chapter 103G is based off of recommendations from this interagency team and is intended to help fill those regulatory gaps for otherwise federally unregulated waters.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 75
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103G.005](#), subdivision 14d

This change removes the prohibition against splitting a project into phases for the “sole” purpose of gaining additional exemptions. In practice, properties are not split for a sole purpose.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 76
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103G.005](#), subdivision 17b

This section makes necessary modernizing changes to wetland “type” to remove references to outdated methods and better reflect modern and accepted techniques. For example, the hydrogeomorphic (HGM) classification is more useful, and Circular 39 is now outdated, particularly for purposes of the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA). HGM is better connected with function and is more consistent with the current scientific understanding of how wetlands function. This also reduces potential misunderstandings or conflicts of understanding, as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers no longer uses the Circular 39 method either.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 77
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103G.005](#), subdivision 19

This section modifies the definition of wetlands to address potential gaps in regulatory authority post-*Sackett*, such as waters that are too small to be classified as public waters or too deep to be considered wetlands (greater than 8.2 feet deep). Note that the reference in the 1987 Manual that established 6.6 feet for the cutoff between wetlands and deepwater aquatic habitats is outdated and has been effectively changed to 8.2 feet via a 2013 update.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 78
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103G.222](#), subdivision 1

This change makes technical change to strike out a deleted cross-reference.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 79
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103G.2241](#), subdivision 1

This section removes language that is outdated or no longer used. Exemptions have been deleted or modified when they are no longer needed or are inconsistent with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers or USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). New language also eliminates a potential gap where state law may exempt certain wetland impacts that the Clean Water Act and federal farm programs do not. This language better reflects consistency where warranted with both federal farm programs and the Federal Clean Water Act.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 80
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103G.2241](#), subdivision 2

This section moves the definition of public drainage system to the new paragraph (b).

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 81
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103G.2241](#), subdivision 6

This section changes utility exemptions to better match federal utilities exemptions and authorizes wetland impacts. The section also deletes unnecessary language around permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Finally, this section removes the seasonal or annual exemption certification in paragraph (b) is a result of the changes to paragraph (a).

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 82
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103G.2241](#), subdivision 9

This section amends the “de minimis” exemption to remove wetland type, simplify it, and make it more consistent with federal Clean Water Act requirements. This language retains recognition of percent wetland areas in Minnesota and also recognizes that when the total area of impacts to wetlands as part of a project exceeds the applicable de minimis amount, a replacement plan is required for the entire amount. In removing wetland “types”, this amended language adds objective size considerations to be used.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 83
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103G.2242](#), subdivision 1

This section specifies BWSR’s requirement to adopt rules that protect, or mitigate impacts to, intermittent and perennial watercourses upstream of public waters (such as headwater streams) to prevent a regulatory gap post-Sackett.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 84
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103G.2242](#), subdivision 2

This section authorizes the Technical Evaluation Panel to use the hydrogeomorphic (HGM) consistent with other modernizing changes in chapter 103G.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 85
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103G.2242](#), subdivision 2a

Changes in this section address the longer timeline needed to address complex local government decision-making processes and local government bank plans for federally authorized wetland banking.

Local Government Road Wetland Replacement Program

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 78
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103G.222](#), subdivision 1

This change clarifies that the state is responsible for wetland mitigation on state roads rather than via the Local Government Roads Wetlands Replacement Program.

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 86
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103G.2242](#), subdivision 3

This section clarifies that BWSR can administer a wetland banking program that may include monetary payments. The intent here is for Minnesota’s programs to be federally recognized.

Riparian Protection and Water Quality Practices

Jurisdictional Authority

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 61
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103F.48](#), subdivision 1

This change updates and clarifies the definition of a local government unit “with jurisdiction” (as determined by BWSR) includes both adoption and implementation of riparian protection activities, and also clarifies that the determination is revocable.

Authority to Issue Penalty Orders

Minnesota Laws 2024, [Chapter 116](#), Article 4, sections 1 and 2
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103B.101](#), subdivisions 12 and 12a

These changes allow BWSR or counties and watershed districts with jurisdiction over riparian protection laws (buffer laws) to issue penalty orders up to \$10,000 for violations of the law and its requirements. For BWSR, this is equal to penalty amounts already in place for other regulatory violations.

Language also gives BWSR the ability to forgive all (or part) of a penalty issued if compliance is achieved.

Lawns to Legumes

Additional Appropriation

Minnesota Laws 2024, [Chapter 116](#), Article 1, section 4, subdivision 4

The Legislature appropriated an additional \$800,000 in fiscal year 2025 to BWSR for the Lawns to Legumes pollinator gardening program under M.S. [103B.104](#).

Pollinator Account

Minnesota Laws 2024, [Chapter 116](#), Article 4, section 3
Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103B.101](#), by creating new subdivision 19

This new subdivision creates a specific pollinator account to support BWSR’s pollinator activities, including Lawns to Legumes, Habitat Friendly Utilities, and other pollinator activity programs. This account is created to reflect new language requiring 2.5% of Minnesota state lottery proceeds to be deposited in this pollinator account.

Data Privacy

Minnesota Laws 2024, [Chapter 116](#), Article 4, section 4

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [103B.104](#), by adding new paragraph (d)

Under this language, data on individuals who apply for or receive financial or technical assistance under the Lawns to Legume program are classified as private data on individuals. This means that application data is not available to the public (but is available to the individual who has applied for the program on request). The language further specifies BWSR's requirement to maintain private data in such a way as to protect it from disclosure. This language will prevent outside parties, such as marketers, from using BWSR's pollinator programs as a way to gain contact information or mailing lists for private gain or other purposes not associated with the program.

Minnesota State Lottery Revenues – Pollinator Account Deposit

Minnesota Laws 2024, [Chapter 116](#), Article 4, section 6

Amends Minnesota Statutes, section [297A.94](#), paragraph (h)

This change requires that a small percentage of all state lottery proceeds be deposited in the designated pollinator account established under M.S. 103B.101, subdivision 19 (which is created in this same bill). Based on most lottery proceeds data, this is an estimated annual amount of \$960,000 to support pollinator programs.

Miscellaneous

Beaver Damage Control Grants

Minnesota Laws 2024, Chapter 90, Article 3, section 88

Repeals Minnesota Statute, section 103F.950

This section for Beaver Damage Control Grants was funded only in fiscal year 2006 and has not been used since.

Manure Management Activities

Minnesota Laws 2024, [Chapter 116](#), Article 1, section 4, subdivision 2

This session law appropriated \$850,000 to BWSR to assist local governments and landowners in implementing manure management activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions such as methane, or that protect groundwater. This legislation also prioritizes areas of the state with high nitrate levels in groundwater, or that have geology that makes groundwater vulnerable to contamination, such as the karst region of southeast Minnesota.

Funding may be used for any of the following, provided all funded projects are designed to improve water quality or reduce greenhouse gas emissions.:

- Providing grants
- funding projects and practices that limit agricultural use of vulnerable land, such as establishing karst feature buffers or conservation easements
- cost-share assistance for constructing manure management and storage facilities

Anaerobic digesters at feedlots are not eligible for funding.

For feedlot funding, recipients are required to have a nutrient management plan and operate at fewer than 1,000 animal units.

Red River of the North – Adaptive Phosphorous Management

Minnesota Laws 2024, [Chapter 116](#), Article 1, section 4, subdivision 3

The Legislature appropriated \$300,000 to the Red River Basin Commission to undertake a feasibility assessment of adaptive phosphorus management for the Red River of the North and allows the commission to contract with external experts to conduct this work. Legislation asks the Red River Basin Commission to incorporate input from an advisory group of representatives from agriculture, soil and water conservation districts, watershed districts, municipalities, and other Minnesota organizations that are represented on the board of directors of the commission. The commission may also work with representatives of relevant organizations from bordering North Dakota, South Dakota, and Manitoba.

The assessment must:

- address applicable water-quality targets for phosphorus loading
- include an allocation of phosphorus between point and nonpoint sources

- identify cost-effective nutrient reduction implementation strategies

The assessment may also include other state water-quality goals and objectives.

The commission must submit their final assessment to the chairs and ranking minority members of legislative committees with jurisdiction over agriculture and environment policy and finance by June 30, 2026.

The appropriation is available until June 30, 2026.

Report on Soil Health Appropriations

Minnesota Laws 2024, [Chapter 116](#), Article 4, section 7

This language requires BWSR to submit a report on use of money appropriated for soil health activities in Laws 2023, Chapter 60. The report must be submitted to chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees and divisions with jurisdiction over environment and natural resources by January 15, 2026.

Definition of “Public Waters”

Minnesota Laws 2024, [Chapter 116](#), Article 3, section 47

Language added in this bill to Minnesota Statute 103G.005, subdivision 15, specifies processes and timelines for the Department of Natural Resources to update the public waters inventory. The bill further appropriates funding to the DNR to update the public waters inventory.

Tax-Forfeited Land; Initial Sale

Minnesota Laws 2024, [Chapter 127](#), Article 70, section 4

Clarifications were made regarding sale of tax-forfeited lands, including rights affected by forfeiture. The forfeiture of the property extinguishes all liens, claims, and encumbrances other than items such as easements and right-of-way holders who are not interested parties.

Minnesota Advisory Council on Infrastructure

Minnesota Laws 2024, [Chapter 127](#), Article 3, section 5

Establishes a Minnesota Advisory Council on Infrastructure to define and maintain a vision for the future of Minnesota’s infrastructure that provides for its proper management coordination and investment. Along with other agencies, BWSR is included as a non-voting member.

Outdoor Heritage Funds (Legacy Funds) – Appropriations

BWSR Appropriation	Description
\$2,068,000 Camp Ripley ACUB	“to acquire permanent conservation easements and restore and enhance forest wildlife habitat within the boundaries of the Minnesota National Guard Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape and Army Compatible Use Buffer”
\$1,569,000 Riparian Habitats, Kettle and Snake River watersheds	“to acquire permanent conservation easements to protect high-quality forests, wetlands, and shoreline within the Kettle and Snake River watersheds”
\$2,042,000 Wild Rice Shoreland Protection	“to acquire permanent conservation easements on wild-rice lake shoreland habitat for native wild-rice bed protection”
\$3,202,000 RIM Wetlands	“to acquire permanent conservation easements and to restore wetlands and native grassland habitat under Minnesota Statutes, section 103F.515”
\$2,242,000 RIM - Pine and Leech Watershed Targeted RIM	“to acquire permanent conservation easements of high-quality forest, wetland, and shoreline habitat”
\$1,000,000 Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project	“to acquire lands in fee and permanent conservation easements and to restore wildlife habitat in the Mississippi headwaters”
\$4,950,000 Red River Basin Riparian Habitat Program	“to acquire permanent conservation easements to protect, restore, and enhance stream and riparian habitat throughout the Red River watershed”
\$2,315,000 Lower Wild Rice River Corridor Habitat Restoration	“to acquire land in permanent conservation easement and to restore river and related habitat in the Wild Rice River corridor”

Clean Water Fund (Legacy Funds) – Appropriations

BWSR Appropriation	Description
<p>\$3,434,000 Working Lands Floodplain Easements</p>	<p>“to purchase, restore, or preserve riparian land and floodplains adjacent to lakes, rivers, streams, and tributaries, by conservation easements or contracts to keep water on the land, to decrease sediment, pollutant, and nutrient transport; reduce hydrologic impacts to surface waters; and increase protection and recharge for groundwater”</p>
<p>\$4,000,000 Easements – Lands Adjacent to Public Waters</p>	<p>“to purchase permanent conservation easements to protect lands adjacent to public waters that have good water quality but that are threatened with degradation”</p>
<p>\$2,000,000 Water Legacy Grants Program</p>	<p>“for developing and implementing a water legacy grant program to expand partnerships for clean water. Of this amount, \$500,000 is for grants to watershed districts to reduce the costs to landowners for green infrastructure projects, including rain gardens, permeable pavement, rainwater harvesting and reuse, and other clean water practices. Priority must be given to projects in low-income and high-pollution areas. Watershed districts may partner with local community groups, nonprofit organizations, and other interested parties to perform the work and provide outreach to communities.”</p>
<p>\$1,000,000 Great Lakes Restoration Initiative</p>	<p>“to provide support to soil and water conservation districts and other local governments and partner organizations in the Lake Superior basin to leverage Great Lakes Restoration Initiative other federal Great Lakes funding to implement prioritized activities”</p>
<p>\$1,000,000 RIM Easement Program Groundwater Protection</p>	<p>“for conservation easements ... or for grants or contracts to local units of government or Tribal governments, including for fee title acquisition or for long-term protection of groundwater supply sources. Consideration must be given to drinking water supply management areas and alternative management tools in the Department of</p>

BWSR Appropriation	Description
	Agriculture Minnesota Nitrogen Fertilizer Management Plan, including using low-nitrogen cropping systems or implementing nitrogen fertilizer best management practices. Priority must be placed on land that is located where the vulnerability of the drinking water supply is designated as high or very high by the commissioner of health, where drinking water protection plans have identified specific activities that will achieve long-term protection, and on lands with expiring conservation contracts.”
