

2026 BWSR Spring Training

March 31, 2026

Track One: 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM

Concurrent Session Descriptions (may be modified)

RIM Site Inspections and Easement Stewardship

Participants will learn the requirements and expectations for conducting RIM easement site inspections, including using the newly revised Site Inspection Form and associated guidance. Presenters will also cover what to do when a compliance concern is observed and provide a brief overview of the easement non-compliance process. Participants will also learn the process for RIM Conservation Plan Amendments and how to submit them to BWSR. Finally, presenters will provide a summary of changes to the revised Easement Alteration Policy, effective January 1st, 2026.

Trainers: Karli Swenson, Peter Jordet, & Sara Reagan – BWSR

Program Evaluation: What are we Doing?

This session provides a practical overview of program evaluation for natural resource professionals and local government managers. Participants will explore the foundational concepts behind evaluation and examine why evaluation matters for accountability, learning, and strategic decision-making. The session will cover essential preparation steps, identify critical partners and stakeholder roles, and walk through the core stages of the evaluation process from defining purpose to interpreting and using findings. Attendees will leave with a clear framework and actionable insights to begin or strengthen evaluation efforts within their organizations.

Trainer: Jason Weinerman - BWSR

How can Using Climate Data make More Effective Plans?

Climate change can be an overwhelming topic - in this session, we'll touch on the key points that agricultural and natural resource professionals need to know for making better programs and plans! We'll also explore what climate data are available to use, how using climate data can make plans and programs more robust, and walk through a process of incorporating climate data into our plans. Come prepared to share a plan/project that you are working on!

Trainers: Katie Black & Kristen Schmitt - University of Minnesota Climate Adaptation Partnership

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Track Two: 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Concurrent Session Descriptions (may be modified)

Film School: iPhone Video Basics

From setup and filming to editing and sharing, learn tips and techniques that will make iPhone video production faster, more fun (for you) and more polished (for your viewers). We'll discuss how video can help tell conservation stories, and cover composition and storytelling basics that apply to photos, too. If your work truck is your film studio, or if you're just getting started, this is for you.

Trainer: Ann Wessel – BWSR

Office of the Secretary of State – Official Documents

The Office of the Secretary of State serves as the recordkeeper for several Official Documents that Watershed Districts, Soil & Water Conservation Districts and local government are expected to file and track. Learn more about these documents and related tasks if your role includes administrative / legal functions.

Trainer: Alex Erickson – Office of the Secretary of State

Hitting a Home Run for Drinking Water Protection

Come learn how drinking water protection work is getting done in Minnesota and how you can do it too! You will learn 1) how Sherburne SWCD is retesting private wells from the MN Dept. of Agriculture's Township Testing Program to measure implementation success, 2) what types of practices you can incorporate into your programming to promote private well education, outreach, and testing and, 3) how unique partnerships can be the key to successful projects and programs.

Trainers: Miranda Wagner & Francine Larson – Sherburne SWCD, Anne Nelson – Minnesota Department of Health, Aaron Meyer Minnesota Rural Water Association