



# LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

## Executive Summary for Action

Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers Meeting  
Wednesday, May 21, 2025

### **Agenda Item**

#### **Item 9. C. - Distribution of Managers**

#### **Prepared By**

Linda Loomis, Administrator

#### **Summary**

On May 5, 2025, a message was sent to Scott County Board Chair, Dave Beer. Other Scott County Commissioners copied the message. A sample resolution, for the County Board to adopt, supporting a LMRWD request to increase the number of Managers, was attached to the message. To date, no response has been received.

#### **Attachments**

Letter to Scott County Board Chair Dave Beer dated May 5, 2025  
Sample Resolution to increase the number of LMRWD managers

#### **Recommended Action**

No action recommended – for information only



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER  
WATERSHED DISTRICT

**May 5, 2025**

Attn: Chair Dave Beer  
Scott County Board of Commissioners  
Scott County Government Center  
200 Fourth Avenue West  
Shakopee, MN 55379

**Subject: Request for Support in Expanding the LMRWD Board of Managers**

Dear Chair Beer and Commissioners,

On behalf of the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD), I write to formally initiate a request for your support in expanding the LMRWD Board of Managers from five (5) to six (6) members, with the additional seat designated for Scott County.

This request follows a unanimous resolution passed by the LMRWD Board at our April 2025 meeting. The motion was introduced by Scott County's current Manager, Janet Williams, and builds upon the dedicated work and leadership of former Manager Apollo Lammers. It reflects our commitment to ensuring that the governance of the District evolves with the communities it serves.

Scott County represents the largest portion of the LMRWD by both land area and population and—beginning with taxes payable in 2025—has the highest net tax capacity among all counties within the District. In addition to this substantial demographic and financial contribution, Scott County is home to critical watershed infrastructure, including the Port of Savage, the only federally designated port on the Minnesota River, and the LMRWD's primary dredge material management site. These assets are essential to regional commerce, environmental stewardship, and flood mitigation.

Minnesota Statutes § 103D.305 provides several options to petition the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) to increase the number of managers. Such a petition may be made by one-half or more of the counties within the watershed district; counties with 50 percent or more of the area within the watershed district; a majority or greater number of the cities within the watershed district; 50 or more resident owners residing in the watershed district, excluding resident owners within the corporate limits of a city if the city has signed the petition; or the managers of the watershed district, by resolution adopted by a majority of the managers of the watershed district.

The watershed-initiated petition requires the least formal coordination, provided there is support from affected counties. Since it represents a majority of both land area and population, the



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER  
WATERSHED DISTRICT

LMRWD Board would like to start the process by seeking a resolution of support from Scott County. Once we receive a formal resolution of support from Scott County, we will move forward in formally requesting similar action from Carver, Hennepin, and Dakota Counties and proceed with a formal petition to BWSR.

We are grateful for Scott County's leadership and partnership in advancing the health and sustainability of the Lower Minnesota River watershed. Should you have any questions or should you wish to meet for further discussion, I would be honored to do so.

Sincerely,

**Joseph Barisonzi**

President, Board of Managers

Lower Minnesota River Watershed District

[jbarisonzi@iwlamnvally.org](mailto:jbarisonzi@iwlamnvally.org)

612-867-8791

Cc: [Janet Williams](#)

RESOLUTION NO. [Insert Number]

**A Resolution to Support the Petition of the  
Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers  
to the Board of Water and Soil Resources  
Requesting an Expansion of the Watershed District Board**

WHEREAS, the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD) was originally established to serve as the local sponsor of the Federal, nine-foot navigational channel on the Minnesota River. Subsequent statutory changes have expanded the LMRWD's role to protect, manage, and enhance the Lower Minnesota River and its watershed, ensuring sustainable water resources, flood mitigation, erosion control, and water quality for the benefit of residents and businesses, industrial stakeholders, and natural ecosystems within its jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, the LMRWD spans across Scott, Carver, Hennepin, and Dakota Counties, overseeing a critical section of the Minnesota River, which serves as a vital natural resource, economic corridor, and ecological asset for the region; and

WHEREAS, the governance and decision-making of the LMRWD must reflect the evolving needs of the watershed, ensuring that the growing population, changing land use, increasing economic activity, and environmental challenges are adequately addressed; and

WHEREAS, the current five-member LMRWD Board of Managers structure does not fully reflect the substantial growth and development in Scott County, which now represents a major portion of the LMRWD's land area, population, and tax base, and continues to undergo significant urbanization and industrial development along the river corridor; and

WHEREAS, Scott County is home to the District's most critical port infrastructure, serving as the economic and logistical hub for commercial navigation along the Lower Minnesota River, including:

- The Port of Savage, the only federally designated river port on the Minnesota River, functions as a major grain terminal and transshipment hub, facilitating the movement of millions of bushels of agricultural commodities, aggregates, and industrial materials annually to national and international markets. This port serves as a vital link in the regional supply chain, supporting agribusiness, construction, and manufacturing sectors across multiple counties.
- The LMRWD's primary dredge material management site which is essential for maintaining navigational depth and operational safety along the river's commercial shipping channel. This dredging program ensures uninterrupted barge traffic, mitigates sediment accumulation that threatens water quality and aquatic habitats, and upholds the long-term economic viability and ecological health of the Minnesota River; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes § 103D.305 provides a clear legal pathway to expand the number of watershed district managers upon petition and approval by the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR); and

WHEREAS, expanding the Board from five (5) to six (6) members, with an additional manager appointed by Scott County, will:

- Ensure equitable representation for all counties within the LMRWD, aligning governance with population growth, economic impact, and environmental responsibilities;
- Strengthen governance and decision-making by incorporating a broader range of perspectives to address challenges such as stormwater management, sediment control, wetland restoration, and riverbank stabilization;
- Enhance inter-county collaboration by fostering more inclusive, balanced decision-making across jurisdictions that share responsibility for the health, sustainability, and economic vitality of the Minnesota River; and

WHEREAS, it is in the public interest and consistent with the mission of the LMRWD to ensure fair, proportional, and effective representation of all counties contributing to and impacted by watershed governance;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the [Scott] County Board of Commissioners reaffirms its commitment to the mission of the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District, including the protection, management, and enhancement of water resources for the benefit of the public, economy, and environment of the region.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the [Scott] County Board of Commissioners supports the expansion of the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers from five (5) to six (6) members, with the additional manager to be appointed by Scott County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the [Scott] County Board of Commissioners supports the Petition of the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers to expand its Board composition from five (5) to six (6) members, with the additional manager to be appointed by Scott County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the [Scott] County Board of Commissioners encourages the Boards of Commissioners for [Carver, Hennepin, and Dakota] Counties to adopt similar resolutions in support of the LMRWD petition to BWSR.

Adopted this [Insert Date], by the [Scott] County Board of Commissioners.

Signed:

[Insert Names & Titles]