

2026 MASWCD Candidate Prospectus



for the offices of
MASWCD President and
MASWCD Vice President

September 9 deadline for submitting a letter of interest



Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
www.maswcd.org

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Forward

MASWCD has developed this document to help acquaint member soil and water conservation district supervisors with the responsibilities and duties involved with serving as MASWCD President and Vice President.

This document also serves as a call for nominations for the two offices, as required by MASWCD Bylaws, Article 5.1. This is a process by which supervisors may self-nominate if interested in running for one of these offices.

Application Deadline

If you are interested in serving MASWCD through participation as President or Vice President, **please submit a letter of interest to sheila.vanney@maswcd.org by September 9, 2026.** The letter should state your motivations for seeking MASWCD office and a brief synopsis of your background and experience. Profiles of all the candidates will be compiled and distributed to SWCD offices.

Elections & Terms of Office

The President and Vice President of this Association are elected to two-year terms by the members at the annual meeting of the Association. The person receiving a majority of the votes cast shall be declared elected. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off will be held with the candidates with the lowest number of votes deleted for each subsequent ballot until one candidate receives a majority of the votes cast.

MASWCD's annual meeting is scheduled for November 30-December 2, 2026. Candidates will be introduced during the December 1 business meeting, and elections will take place during the December 2 business meeting.

MASWCD Mission & Vision

MASWCD Mission Statement

The mission statement is a declaration of our purpose. It clarifies why we do what we do and describes the basic purpose of the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

“MASWCD is a nonprofit organization providing leadership, educational opportunities, and a common voice for Minnesota’s soil and water conservation districts.”

MASWCD Vision Statement

A vision states the outcomes we hope to gain in a set amount of time. It is the picture of our preferred future. The vision statement answers the questions, “What do you hope to have in place in the next 2 - 3 years?” and “What is your vision for the future of the MASWCD?”

“The Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts is a catalyst for all SWCDs, governed by locally elected leaders, to be effective, vibrant and sustainable.”

Primary Goals & Objectives of MASWCD

The Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) represents the soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) of Minnesota. The Association strives to serve as a unified voice and advocate for the SWCDs.

A Common Voice. MASWCD began in 1952 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Information, opinions and ideas received from the SWCDs are gathered and then relayed to a particular audience or purpose. To best represent and serve Minnesota's soil and water conservation districts, MASWCD provides:

Information on Conservation Issues. MASWCD provides information to policy makers, key agencies, soil and water conservation district board members and staff.

Policy Development. MASWCD provides a forum for local issues and direction for legislative and administrative goals.

Advocacy Services for Conservation Programs. MASWCD advocates and lobbies for funding and programs which aid SWCDs in conserving and enhancing Minnesota's soil and water resources. Some of these programs come directly from MASWCD policy development.

Coordination of Training for SWCD Personnel. MASWCD provides education and training to SWCD supervisors and staff in everything from administrative to technical to leadership skills.

Primary Goals & Objectives of MASWCD (*continued*)

Conservation Education. MASWCD helps provide soil and water conservation districts with the tools they need to inform and educate the public they serve. This includes information and materials for educating the youth in their communities and support of the Minnesota State Envirothon.

Annual Meeting. The MASWCD annual meeting and trade show is attended by soil and water conservation district board members and staff, federal and state agencies, state legislators, members of Congress and conservation organizations.

MASWCD Strategic Areas

The MASWCD Board of Directors discusses and identifies strategic areas, or primary ways the work of the Association will be done in the coming year. Strategic areas are pursued to further advance the mission, vision, and standing policies. The following are MASWCD's strategic areas:

- **Conduct Outreach and Empower District Ownership**
- **Provide a Forum for Developing and Advancing Policy**
- **Maintain and Nurture Political Network**
- **Maintain and Nurture Partnership Network**
- **Continue to Enhance Communication with Members and Partners**
- **Provide Education for Supervisors and Staff**
- **Provide SWCD Program Support**
- **Enhance MASWCD Budget**
- **Evaluate and Educate MASWCD Board and Staff**

MASWCD Focus Areas

From the above strategic areas, the board annually identifies focus areas that drive the workload and priorities of the Association for the year. These are the 2026 focus areas:

- **Launch a MASWCD Inaugural Advocacy Cohort to build a powerful narrative to secure increased SWCD Aid appropriations at the legislature.**
- Strengthen the long-term funding trajectory needed to accelerate **watershed-based implementation** and on-the-ground activities
- Accelerate locally led partnership work between USDA NRCS, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and Soil and Water Conservation Districts.
- Conduct and assess MASWCD's inaugural District Manager Professional Development Cohort.

Roles and Responsibilities of the MASWCD President and Vice President

MASWCD President

The President of this organization is the presides at all meetings of the Board of Directors. He/She is in frequent contact with MASWCD staff, other Board members, agency staff and other members of the Association. He/She is often authorized by the Board to represent MASWCD at various meetings and conferences. The President appoints all committees and representatives. All appointments are subject to ratification by the full Board of Directors. Except when needed to break a tie, the President does not have a vote on the Board of Directors.

MASWCD Vice President

The Vice President performs the duties of the President in his/her absence. The Vice President actively contributes during Board meeting discussions. The Vice President does not have a vote on the Board of Directors, unless he/she is also serving as an Area Director.

MASWCD Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is made-up of the President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer. The Secretary/Treasurer is elected by the board at the annual organizational meeting, which usually immediately follows the conclusion of the convention. The Executive Committee is empowered to take emergency actions, subject to ratification by the Board, during the interim between board meetings.

Roles and Responsibilities of the MASWCD President & Vice President (continued)

NACD Board of Directors

Delegates to the Board of Directors of the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) are designated by the MASWCD Board of Directors at their annual organizational meeting.

Expenses

- **President** - MASWCD reimburses travel expenses as authorized by the Board of Directors. Daily per diem is paid for travel day(s) and day(s) in attendance at authorized meetings. The President will attend meetings at his/her discretion as pertaining to official duties of the Association.
- **Vice President** - MASWCD reimburses travel expenses as authorized by the Board of Directors.
 - **When the Vice President is not also an Area Director**, per diem is paid for travel day(s) and day(s) in attendance at authorized meetings.
 - **When the Vice President is also an Area Director**, per diem is paid by the Area except when attending special meetings authorized by Board of Directors.

Roles and Responsibilities of the MASWCD President & Vice President (continued)

In addition to the above information specific to the President and Vice President, the President and Vice President share the following roles and responsibilities with the full Board of Directors.

Responsibilities and Powers

1. Receive reports from Officers, Directors, Staff, Committees of MASWCD, and partner agencies and groups.
2. Act on recommendations on resolutions brought forward by the Resolution/Policy Committee, and act on any emergency resolutions. [Emergency resolutions must be submitted to the Area Director. It is then the responsibility of the Area Director to carry forward the emergency resolution to the MASWCD Board for action.]
3. Consider proposed amendments to MASWCD bylaws, to be acted on by the delegates at the annual convention.
4. Review and act upon the MASWCD annual budget, developed by the Finance Committee, to be voted on at the annual convention.
5. Establish membership of MASWCD committees. At the beginning of a new President's term, he/she reviews the names of volunteers to serve on MASWCD committees and makes committee appointments, subject to ratification by the full board.
6. Review all committee activities.
7. Work to strengthen the MASWCD Areas and maintain effective liaisons with Area associations and districts in the respective Areas.
8. When requested to do so by the individual Areas, give guidance and assistance to the Area associations in developing and implementing plans and programs for improving the effectiveness of district operations.

Roles and Responsibilities of the MASWCD President & Vice President (continued)

Board Member Duties

1. Work with the Board to define the MASWCD mission and vision and to help communicate and actively support and achieve these through effective organizational planning, monitoring and evaluation.
2. Serve as a knowledgeable advocate for MASWCD programs, policies and services.
3. Foster effective two-way communication between members and MASWCD, which involves active listening as well as presenting.
3. Work with a state perspective, support and carry out all Board actions.
4. Articulate the value of MASWCD and its members' active participation and support of the state organization.
5. Identify, recruit and encourage active leadership at the local, Area, state, regional and national levels.
6. Participate as a valuable team member by attending Board meetings, sharing experiences and offering insights.
7. Bring issues and concerns to the Board, listen to and respect others and maintain a consensus-building attitude.
8. Represent the MASWCD Board of Directors at meetings, as authorized.

Roles and Responsibilities of the MASWCD President & Vice President (continued)

Performance Expectations

1. Attend and actively participate in all official MASWCD Board of Directors meetings.
2. Establish and maintain communication with all districts in the Area and promote participation in the process.
3. Share member feedback with MASWCD Officers, Directors and Staff.
4. Attend and participate in the MASWCD Annual Convention. In addition, Board members are encouraged to attend legislative functions, National Association of Conservation District (NACD) North Central Region Meetings, NACD Annual Meetings, and other leadership meetings.
5. Assist in making meetings valuable for members and encourage all members to participate in MASWCD meetings.
6. Contact all districts in the Area annually regarding dues payment and follow-up with non-paying districts as appropriate.
7. Be supportive of decisions made by the Board of Directors.

Roles and Responsibilities of the MASWCD President & Vice President (continued)

Qualifications

All members of the MASWCD Board of Directors must be supervisors of a conservation district which is a dues paying member of the association.

MASWCD Board members should:

1. Have leadership experience and feel comfortable assuming a leadership role.
2. Be familiar with the work and overall objectives of MASWCD.
3. Possess good working knowledge of conservation and natural resource management issues.
4. Be familiar with the public and private agencies and organizations which cooperate with districts.
5. Possess strong communication skills and the ability to relate effectively with people.
6. Have a clear understanding of the relationship between the Staff and the Board of Directors.
7. Have an understanding of the working relationship between MASWCD and our agency partners in conservation.
8. Be willing to devote the time and resources necessary to accomplish the objectives of the association.
9. Become familiar with MASWCD travel expense guidelines, MASWCD bylaws, MASWCD timeline of events, and other policies and procedures of the MASWCD.

Benefits of Serving on the MASWCD Board of Directors

As President or Vice President on the MASWCD Board of Directors, you will:

- have the opportunity for personal and professional growth;
- gain a better understanding of local, state and national issues impacting local SWCD programs;
- meet and communicate with your SWCD peers from across the state and the nation to learn about the diverse conservation needs of districts;
- build strong working relationships with policy makers from conservation, agriculture, wildlife and other organizations; and
- be part of a forum to define and implement goals to address Minnesota's conservation district needs.



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