



502 7th Street Southwest
Suite 5
Roseau, MN 56751
Phone: 218-463-1903
Roseauswcd.org

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING STATE LEGISLATURE TO REINSTATE DRAINAGE EXEMPTION LANGUAGE

WHEREAS certain areas within Roseau County contain unique geographic, hydrologic, and soil conditions that present challenges for effective and efficient agricultural operations; and

WHEREAS a healthy agribusiness sector is a vital component of our local economy; and

WHEREAS some of these agricultural lands are highly manipulated due to constant tillage activities which make it difficult to determine said wetland boundaries; and

WHEREAS, if wetlands are located on these agricultural lands, the functions of these wetlands have been severely degraded due to the constant manipulation; and

WHEREAS the Roseau Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisors value the functions that undisturbed wetlands perform; and

WHEREAS, the wetland policies, prior to the 2024 Legislative changes, provided a balanced approach to agricultural production and wetland conservation; and

WHEREAS recent statutory changes in State wetland policies have created unintended consequences for Federal farm program participants and non-Federal farm program participants; and

WHEREAS, these recent statutory changes removed several drainage exemptions, and now require an agricultural producer to obtain a valid Certified Determination from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS); and

WHEREAS a very small percentage of agricultural land in Roseau County is covered by a valid Certified Determination to satisfy these statutory requirements; and

WHEREAS a federal farm program participant may have to wait for up to two (2) years to receive a valid Certified Determination from the NRCS due to their current staffing levels; and

WHEREAS this time delay may cost the Federal farm program participant hundreds of thousands of dollars due to decreased yield; and

WHEREAS a non-Federal farm program participants have no opportunity to obtain a Certified Determination from the NRCS; and

WHEREAS these statutory changes directly affect an agricultural producer's ability to improve farming operations to be more effective and efficient, and may jeopardize landowners' eligibility for United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) program benefits; and

WHEREAS these compliance challenges cannot be fully resolved at the local level and do require targeted legislative action; and

WHEREAS, the Roseau Soil and Water Conservation District seek clarity, predictability, and fairness in the application of wetland and drainage requirements for all agricultural producers in order to protect agricultural viability, support landowners, and maintain essential County economic opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Legislature has the authority to enact statutory remedies to address these issues.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that legislation has been introduced this legislative session that will provide a targeted statutory fix to address the drainage exemptions and related compliance issues affecting all agricultural producers.

BE FURTHER RESOLVED that the Roseau Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors strongly supports, and urges legislative passage, of this important legislation. (STATE OF MINNESOTA) (COUNTY OF ROSEAU)

I, Scott Johnson, in and for Roseau Soil and Water Conservation District, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a part of the proceedings adopted by the Roseau Soil and Water Conservation District Board on March 10, 2026.

Scott Johnson
Roseau SWCD - District Manager