

# WATERSHED WEEKLY

FEBRUARY 20, 2026

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## BOARD MEETING

The Shell Rock River Watershed District Board of Managers will host their monthly board meeting on March 10, 2026, at 8:30 AM. The meeting will be recorded and uploaded to the District's website: [www.shellrock.org](http://www.shellrock.org)



## LEADERSHIP

SRRWD staff, Leah Stadheim, is participating in the 2025-2026 Leadership Cohort. The group recently learned more about Economic Development and our diverse business scene here in Freeborn County. They toured facilities like Lou-Rich/Innovance, Design Ready Controls, TravCo Prints, Select Foods, and more!

If you're interested in joining next year's cohort, please fill out this interest form today! <https://bit.ly/ALFCLeadershipInterest>



## OUTREACH

Education and Outreach Coordinator, Leah Stadheim, spoke to Ms. Tewes's class about the an Adopt-a-Drain program. The Adopt-a-Drain program is a fun and important way for kids and families to help keep their community clean and protect local lakes and rivers. When it rains, water flows into storm drains on streets and in neighborhoods. Unlike water from sinks and toilets, stormwater does not go to a treatment plant—it flows directly into nearby streams, rivers, and lakes. If trash, leaves, or pet waste are left near drains, they can wash into the water and cause pollution. By "adopting" a drain, kids can promise to safely check it, clear away litter (with an adult's help), and make sure water can flow freely. This simple action helps prevent flooding, keeps waterways healthy for fish and wildlife, and shows how even small efforts can make a big difference for the environment. Sign up at [www.shellrock.org](http://www.shellrock.org).



## OUTREACH

SRRWD staff Leah Stadheim and Courtney Phillips presented at the Freeborn Mower Electric Employee event earlier this week. The theme this year was "Hooked on Wellness." Courtney provided updates on District projects and Leah highlighted the Adopt-a-Drain program, rain barrel cost-share, and the weekly e-newsletter.



## AG URBAN FORUM

SRRWD staff Courtney Phillips and Mike Wacholz attended the Ag Urban Forum. The 2026 forum's theme was Advancing Nutrient Trading with Sustainable Farming and Conservation Practices. The Ag-Urban Partnership consists of individuals from the agricultural and urban wastewater sectors who come together to discuss water resource concerns and develop joint solutions. A forum is held annually with rotating water resource themes to promote education of current issues, establish connections between the agricultural and urban sectors, and advance innovative ways to protect Minnesota's water resources.



## SOIL HEALTH WINTER WORKSHOP

Program and Project Manager, Courtney Phillips, attend the Soil Health Winter Workshop. This educational workshop focused on practical soil health strategies, with an emphasis on how strip-till and cover crops can improve farm profitability and efficiency. The theme of the event, "Strip-Till Makes Dollars and Sense," highlighted both the agronomic and economic benefits of conservation-based farming practices. The workshop featured four presenters:

- Pat Duncanson presented on soil health as a whole and debunking myths that are often associated with strip-till, cover crops, etc.
- Randy DePuydt focused on strip-till as a key component in a regenerative ag system with observations from multiple points of view
- Greg Entinger talked about the economics of strip-till and how he saved time and money by utilizing the practice
- Kristen Dieterman spoke about the Rice Creek Project and how practices like strip-till and cover crops can directly affect the community.



## LEGISLATIVE EVENT

The Minnesota Watersheds annual Legislative Briefing and Reception will be held on March 3 at the Capitol Ridge Radisson Hotel in St. Paul. This event provides the opportunity to hear from our lobbying team about our legislative priorities and get updates from state agencies on their legislative efforts. In addition to our lobbying team, MPCA Watershed Division Director Glenn Skuta, DNR Commissioner Sarah Strommen, and BWSR Assistant Executive Director Justin Hanson are scheduled to speak.



## HOLD THE DATE

ISG is bringing back The Future of Southern Minnesota Lakes Conference for its fourth year from March 6-7, 2026 creating space for lake association members, environmental professionals, and community leaders dedicated to preserving and restoring Southern Minnesota lakes. Space is limited. Register by February 27, 2026, to secure your spot.