



Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

6A
Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: April 28, 2026

Title of Item: Discuss Amended NE Minnesota Regional Solid Waste Plan

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION ONLY	Action Requested: <input type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft)	<input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing* <small>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</small>
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Submitted by: Andrew Carlstrom	Department: Environmental Services
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Presenter (Name and Title): Andrew Carlstrom, Environmental Services Director	Estimated Time Needed: 10 Minutes
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Summary of Issue:

In 2023 and in accordance with Minnesota Statute Chapter 115A, the northeast Minnesota counties of Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis (Counties) and the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District (WLSSD) collaborated to develop their 10 year Northeast Minnesota Regional Solid Waste Plan (Regional Plan). On June 13, 2023 the Aitkin County Board adopted the plan.

In 2025 under the direction of the MPCA, amendments were made to update all of the individual county solid waste operations. Little was amended to Aitkin County's portion of the plan and updates are found on page 5-33. This amended plan has now been published for public comment from April 9 to May 11, 2026. Following the public comment period, the Aitkin County Board is anticipated to adopt or reject the attached proposed amended plan and attached draft resolution in May or June.

Please see the MPCA Public Notice, proposed draft resolution, and draft [NE MN Regional Solid Waste Plan](#). Discussion only today.

Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:
N/A

Recommended Action/Motion:
Discussion Only

Financial Impact:

Is there a cost associated with this request? Yes No

What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$

Is this budgeted? Yes No *Please Explain:*

Public Notice of a preliminary decision to approve a SWMP amendment

Solid Waste

General information

Public comment period begins: April 9, 2026**Public comment period ends:** May 11, 2026**Name and address(s) of County,
District, or Multicounty Area:**Aitkin County Environmental Services
Planning and Zoning Office
307 2nd St NW, Rm 219
Aitkin, MN 56431*Additional information may also be
obtained at these offices.***Location and contact information:**Andrew Carlstrom, Director of
Environmental Services, Planning and
Zoning
307 2nd St NW, Rm 219
Aitkin, MN 56431
Aitkin County
218-927-7342**MPCA contact person:**Heidi Ringhofer
Resource Management and Assistance Division
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
525 Lake Ave S, Ste 400
Duluth, MN 55802
Phone: 218-302-6652
Email: heidi.ringhofer@state.mn.us
File manager phone: 651-757-2728 or
844-828-0942

A draft Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) Amendment is available for review on the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Public Notices webpage at <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/get-engaged/public-comments>. Additional materials relating to the draft SWMP Amendment are available for inspection by appointment at any MPCA office (<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/about-mPCA/contact-us>) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The MPCA will mail or email a copy of the draft SWMP Amendment upon request. Comments and other requests must be received at the MPCA in writing on or before the public comment period end date and U.S. Mail comments must be received by 4:30 p.m.

Description of SWMP Amendment

The Solid Waste Officers of the Northeast Region (SWONERs), consisting of Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis Counties, and the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District (WLSSD), collectively submitted a draft amendment to their regional SWMP, which was originally approved in 2023. This amendment proposes an integrated solid waste management system through the year 2036. This amendment was completed due to major changes in the solid waste management system; primarily a change in final landfilling destination of municipal solid waste (MSW) for six of the eight entities. Carlton, Cook, Koochiching, Lake, and WLSSD will be taking their MSW to the St. Louis County Regional Landfill in Virginia. Itasca County will be taking their MSW to General Waste MSW Landfill in Keewatin, which is currently in the process of being permitted. Pertinent details in regard to recycling programs were also updated as part of the amendment.

Procedure for submitting comments

During the public comment period a person may submit comments to the MPCA on the SWMP Amendment.

Comments may be submitted:

- 1) Online at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/publiccomments>; or
- 2) By U.S. postal mail to the following address:
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
c/o Heidi Ringhofer
525 Lake Ave S, Ste 400
Duluth, MN 55802

Submitted comments must state:

- (1) Your interest in the SWMP Amendment.
- (2) The action you wish the MPCA to take, including specific references to the section of the SWMP Amendment you believe should be changed.
- (3) The reasons supporting your position, stated with sufficient specificity as to allow the MPCA to investigate the merits of the position.

Public informational meeting

A person may request the MPCA to hold a public informational meeting on the SWMP Amendment. A person requesting a public informational meeting must submit the following information as part of the request:

- (1) A statement of why a public informational meeting is necessary;
- (2) The issues the MPCA should address at the public informational meeting; and
- (3) A proposed time and place for the public informational meeting.

SWMP Final Decision

In making a final decision on the SWMP Amendment, the commissioner will consider all information submitted by the county, all information received from the public during the public comment period, and all information submitted during a public informational meeting if one is held. The commissioner must also determine whether the SWMP Amendment meets the requirements of Minn. R. parts 9215.0540 to 9215.0790. The commissioner's approval will remain in effect for ten years unless the commissioner determines that a shorter period of time is required to ensure that the county implements the plan.

PROPOSED resolution #20260526-xxx NE MN Regional Solid Waste Management Plan Amendment

WHEREAS, the Counties of Aitkin, Carlton, Koochiching, Cook, Lake, Itasca, St. Louis, and the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District executed a Joint Powers Agreement to develop and complete a Solid Waste Management Plan for the 7 County Region in Northeastern Minnesota; AND

WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of Minnesota requires that Minnesota Counties develop and update a Solid Waste Management Plan in accordance with applicable statutes and rules including Minnesota Statute Chapter 115A and Minnesota Rules Chapter 9215; Aitkin County must comply with applicable statutes and rules including Minnesota Statute Chapter 458D ; AND

WHEREAS, the Aitkin County Board recognize the need to plan for and practice sound methods of managing solid waste and recycling; AND

WHEREAS, the 7 County region represented by the Northeast Waste Advisory Council and the Solid Waste Officers of the Northeast Region have developed a regional solid waste management plan satisfying the statutory requirements; AND

WHEREAS, the undersigned Board supports the Plan as a collective effort to address solid waste management through reduction, recycling, composting and other elements necessary to effectively manage solid waste generated in the 7 County region; AND

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Aitkin County Board of Commissioners approves and adopts the Northeast Minnesota Regional Solid Waste Management Plan and supporting documents dated 2026.

Adopted this 26th Day of May, 2026 By The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners.

Attest:

J. Mark Wedel
County Board Chair

David J. Minke, County Administrator
Clerk to the County Board

STATE OF MINNESOTA}
COUNTY OF AITKIN}