

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

DECEMBER 31, 2016

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Board of Supervisors
South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District
Duluth, Minnesota

Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities and the general fund of South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District, Duluth, Minnesota, as of and for the year ended December 31, 2016, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the District's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. This includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express opinions on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

Opinions

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities and the general fund of the South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District as of December 31, 2016, and the respective changes in financial position for the general fund for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Other Matters

Required Supplementary Information

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the management's discussion and analysis on pages 3–6, the budgetary comparison statement on page 21, and the defined benefit pension plan schedules on page 22 be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated July 10, 2017 on our consideration of the South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

Peterson Company Ltd

PETERSON COMPANY LTD.
Certified Public Accountants
Waconia, Minnesota

July 10, 2017

**MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
DECEMBER 31, 2016**

The South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District's discussion and analysis provides an overview of the District's financial activities for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2016. Since this information is designed to focus on the current year's activities, resulting changes, and currently known facts, it should be read in conjunction with the financial statements.

USING THIS ANNUAL REPORT

This annual report consists of three parts: management's discussion and analysis (this section), the basic financial statements, and required supplementary information. The basic financial statements include a series of financial statements. The Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities provide information about the activities of the District as a whole and present a longer-term view of the District's finances. For governmental activities, financial statements tell how services were financed in the short term as well as what remains for future spending. Fund financial statements also report the District's operations in more detail than the government-wide statements by providing information about the District's general fund. Since Districts are single-purpose, special-purpose government units, the District combines the government-wide and fund financial statements into a single presentation.

The Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities

One of the most important questions asked about the District's finances is, "Is the District as a whole better or worse off as a result of the year's activities?" The Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities report information about the District as a whole and about its activities in a way that helps answer this question. These statements include all assets and liabilities using the accrual basis of accounting, which is similar to the accounting used by most private-sector companies. All of the current year's revenues and expenses are taken into account regardless of when cash is received or paid.

These two statements report the District's net position and changes in them. You can think of the District's net position — the difference between assets plus deferred outflows of resources and liabilities plus deferred inflows of resources — as one way to measure the District's financial health, or financial position. Over time, increases or decreases in the District's net position are one indicator of whether its financial health is improving or deteriorating. You will need to consider other non-financial factors, however, such as changes in the state and local governmental funding, to assess the overall health of the District.

In the Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities, the District presents governmental activities. All of the District's basic services are reported here. Appropriations from the county and state finance most activities.

Reporting the District's General Fund

Our analysis of the District's general fund is part of this report. The fund financial statements provide detailed information about the general fund—not the District as a whole. The District presents only a general fund, which is a governmental fund. All of the District's basic services are reported in the general fund, which focuses on how money flows into and out of the fund and the balances left at year-end that are available for spending. The fund is reported using an

accounting method called modified accrual accounting. This method measures cash and all other financial assets that can be readily converted to cash. The general fund statements provide a detailed short-term view of the District's general government operations and the basic services it provides. Governmental fund information helps you determine whether there are more or fewer financial resources that can be spent in the near future to finance the District's programs. We describe the relationship (or differences) between governmental activities (reported in the Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities) and governmental funds in a reconciliation included with the financial statements.

THE DISTRICT AS A WHOLE

Our analysis focuses on the net position and change in net position of the District's governmental activities.

Net Position:

	Governmental Activities	
	2016	2015
Current Assets	\$ 999,164	\$ 1,080,340
Capital Assets, net of depreciation	61,350	8,070
Deferred Outflows of Resources	143,996	20,982
Combined Assets and Deferred Outflows of Resources	<u>\$ 1,204,510</u>	<u>\$ 1,109,392</u>
Current Liabilities	\$ 767,153	\$ 842,015
Long-Term Liabilities	310,942	156,872
Deferred Inflows of Resources	33,610	24,932
Combined Liabilities and Deferred Inflows of Resources	<u>\$ 1,111,705</u>	<u>\$ 1,023,819</u>
Investment in Capital Assets	\$ 61,350	\$ 8,070
Unrestricted	<u>31,455</u>	<u>77,503</u>
Total Net Position	<u>\$ 92,805</u>	<u>\$ 85,573</u>

Net position of the District's governmental activities increased by \$7,232. Unrestricted net position, the part of net position that can be used to finance day-to-day operations without constraints established by debt covenants, enabling legislation, or other legal requirements changed from \$77,503 at December 31, 2015 to \$31,455 at December 31, 2016.

Change in Net Position:

	Governmental Activities	
	2016	2015
<u>Revenues</u>		
Intergovernmental	\$ 1,858,825	\$ 1,532,978
Charges for Services	91,437	58,212
Investment Earnings	1,695	1,716
Miscellaneous	3,867	1,379
Total Revenues	<u>\$ 1,955,824</u>	<u>\$ 1,594,285</u>
 <u>Expenditures</u>		
Conservation	<u>\$ 1,948,592</u>	<u>\$ 1,587,227</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>\$ 1,948,592</u>	<u>\$ 1,587,227</u>
 Increase (decrease) in Net Position	 <u>\$ 7,232</u>	 <u>\$ 7,058</u>

The District's total revenues increased by \$361,539. The total cost of programs and services increased by \$361,365.

THE DISTRICT'S GENERAL FUND

As the District completed the year, its general fund as presented in the balance sheet reported a combined fund balance of \$232,011, which is below last year's total of \$238,325.

General Fund Budgetary Highlights

The actual charges to appropriations (expenditures) were \$280,020 above the final budgeted amounts. The most significant negative variance of \$304,954 occurred in State Project Expenditures. The most significant positive variance of \$229,791 occurred in State Revenue.

CAPITAL ASSETS & LONG-TERM LIABILITIES

Capital Assets

At the end of 2016, the District had \$61,350 invested in capital assets. This amount represents a net increase (including additions and deletions) of \$53,280 from last year.

Long-Term Liabilities

At the end of 2016, the District had \$26,759 in accrued compensated absences and \$284,183 in Net Pension Liability. This compares to \$11,761 in 2015 for accrued compensated absences and \$145,111 in Net Pension Liability.

CONTACTING THE DISTRICT'S FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This financial report is designed to provide our citizens, customers and creditors with a general overview of the District's finances and to show the District's accountability for the money it receives. If you have questions about this report or need additional financial information, contact the South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District at 215 North 1st Ave East, Room 301, Duluth, MN 55802. The phone number is 218-723-4867.

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
DULUTH, MINNESOTA
STATEMENT OF NET POSITION AND
GOVERNMENTAL FUND BALANCE SHEET
DECEMBER 31, 2016**

	General Fund	Adjustments	Statement of Net Position
Assets			
Cash	\$ 828,284	\$ -	\$ 828,284
Due from Other Governments	169,470	-	169,470
Prepaid Items	1,410	-	1,410
Capital Assets:			
Equipment (net of accumulated depreciation)	-	61,350	61,350
Total Assets	<u>999,164</u>	<u>61,350</u>	<u>1,060,514</u>
Deferred Outflows of Resources			
Defined Benefit Pension Plan	-	143,996	143,996
Combined Assets and Deferred Outflows of Resources			
	<u>\$ 999,164</u>	<u>\$ 205,346</u>	<u>\$ 1,204,510</u>
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities:			
Unearned Revenue	\$ 745,095	\$ -	\$ 745,095
Due to Other Governments	17,919	-	17,919
Accrued Payroll Taxes	4,139	-	4,139
Long-term Liabilities:			
Net Pension Liability	-	284,183	284,183
Compensated Absences	-	26,759	26,759
Total Liabilities	<u>767,153</u>	<u>310,942</u>	<u>1,078,095</u>
Deferred Inflows of Resources			
Defined Benefit Pension Plan	-	33,610	33,610
Combined Liabilities and Deferred Inflows of Resources			
	<u>\$ 767,153</u>	<u>\$ 344,552</u>	<u>\$ 1,111,705</u>
Fund Balance/Net Position			
Fund Balance			
Nonspendable - Prepaids	\$ 1,410	\$ (1,410)	\$ -
Assigned - Compensated Absences	26,759	(26,759)	-
Unassigned	203,842	(203,842)	-
Total Fund Balance	<u>\$ 232,011</u>	<u>\$ (232,011)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
Net Position			
Investments in Capital Assets		\$ 61,350	\$ 61,350
Unrestricted		31,455	31,455
Total Net Position		<u>\$ 92,805</u>	<u>\$ 92,805</u>

Notes are an integral part of the basic financial statements.

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
DULUTH, MN
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND
GOVERNMENTAL FUND REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016**

	General Fund	Adjustments	Statement of Activities
Revenues			
Intergovernmental	\$ 1,857,701	\$ 1,124	\$ 1,858,825
Charges for Services	91,437	-	91,437
Investment Earnings	1,695	-	1,695
Miscellaneous	3,867	-	3,867
Total Revenues	<u>\$ 1,954,700</u>	<u>\$ 1,124</u>	<u>\$ 1,955,824</u>
Expenditures/Expenses			
Conservation			
Current	\$ 1,900,319	\$ 48,273	\$ 1,948,592
Capital Outlay	60,695	(60,695)	-
Total Expenditures/Expenses	<u>\$ 1,961,014</u>	<u>\$ (12,422)</u>	<u>\$ 1,948,592</u>
Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures/Expenses	\$ (6,314)	\$ 13,546	\$ 7,232
Fund Balance/Net Position January 1	<u>\$ 238,325</u>	<u>\$ (152,752)</u>	<u>\$ 85,573</u>
Fund Balance/Net Position December 31	<u><u>\$ 232,011</u></u>	<u><u>\$ (139,206)</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 92,805</u></u>

Notes are an integral part of the basic financial statements.

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016**

Note 1 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The financial reporting policies of the South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District conform to generally accepted accounting principles. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) is responsible for establishing GAAP for state and local governments through its pronouncements (statements and interpretations).

Financial Reporting Entity

The South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District is organized under the provisions of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103C. The District is governed by a Board of Supervisors composed of five members nominated by voters of the District and elected to four-year terms by the voters of the County.

The purpose of the District is to assist land occupiers in applying practices for the conservation of soil and water resources. These practices are intended to control wind and water erosion, pollution of lakes and streams, and damage to wetlands and wildlife habitats.

The District provides technical and financial assistance to individuals, groups, districts, and governments in reducing costly waste of soil and water resulting from soil erosion, sedimentation, pollution and improper land use.

Each fiscal year the District develops a work plan which is used as a guide in using resources effectively to provide maximum conservation of all lands within its boundaries. The work plan includes guidelines for employees and technicians to follow in order to achieve the District's objectives.

Generally accepted accounting principles require that the financial reporting entity include the primary government and component units for which the primary government is financially accountable. Under these principles the District does not have any component units.

Government-Wide Financial Statements

The government-wide financial statements (i.e. The Statement of Net Position and The Statement of Activities) report information on all of the nonfiduciary activities of the District.

The Statement of Activities demonstrates the degree to which the direct expenses of a given function or segment are offset by program revenues. Direct expenses are those that are clearly identifiable with a specific function.

The government-wide financial statements are reported using the economic resources measurement focus and the accrual basis of accounting. Revenues are recorded when earned and expenses are recorded when a liability is incurred, regardless of the timing of cash flows. Grants and similar items are recognized as revenues as soon as all eligibility requirements imposed by the provider have been met.

Fund Financial Statements

The government reports the General Fund as its only major governmental fund. The general fund accounts for all financial resources of the government.

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016**

Governmental fund financial statements are reported using the current financial resources measurement focus and the modified accrual basis of accounting. Revenues are recognized as soon as they are both measurable and available. Revenues are considered to be available when they are collectible within the current period or soon enough thereafter to pay liabilities of the current period. For this purpose the District considers all revenues, except reimbursement grants, to be available if they are collected within 60 days of the end of the current fiscal period.

Reimbursement grants are considered available if they are collected within one year of the end of the current fiscal period. Expenditures are recorded when a liability is incurred under accrual accounting.

Intergovernmental revenues are reported in conformity with the legal and contractual requirements of the individual programs. Generally, grant revenues are recognized when the corresponding expenditures are incurred.

Investment earnings are recognized when earned. Other revenues are recognized when they are received in cash because they usually are not measurable until then.

In accordance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 33, *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Nonexchange Transactions*, revenues for nonexchange transactions are recognized based on the principal characteristics of the revenue. Exchange transactions are recognized as revenue when the exchange occurs.

Budget Information

The District adopts an estimated revenues and expenditures budget for the general fund. Comparisons of estimated revenues and budgeted expenditures to actual are presented in the financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Amendments to the original budget require Board approval. Appropriations lapse at year-end. The District does not use encumbrance accounting.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions which affect: the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenditures during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Assets, Deferred Outflows of Resources, Liabilities, Deferred Inflows of Resources, and Net Position

Assets

Investments are stated at fair value, except for non-negotiable certificates of deposit, which are on a cost basis and short-term money market investments, which are stated at amortized cost.

Receivables are collectible within one year.

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016**

Capital assets are reported on a net (depreciated) basis. General capital assets are valued at historical or estimated historical cost.

Prepaid expenses are for items that will provide future benefit over the next twelve months.

Unearned Revenue

Governmental funds and government-wide financial statements report unearned revenue in connection with resources that have been received, but not yet earned.

Long-Term Liabilities

Compensated Absences and Net Pension Liability are accounted for as an adjustment to net position.

Classification of Net Position

Net position in the government-wide financial statements is classified in the following categories:

Investment in capital assets – the amount of net position representing capital assets net of accumulated depreciation.

Restricted net position – the amount of net position for which external restrictions have been imposed by creditors, grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations of other governments; and restrictions imposed by law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation.

Unrestricted net position – the amount of net position that does not meet the definition of restricted or investment in capital assets.

Deferred Outflows/Inflows of Resources

In addition to assets, the statement of financial position will sometimes report a separate section for deferred outflows of resources. This separate financial statement element, deferred outflows of resources, represents a consumption of net position that applies to future periods and so will not be recognized as an outflow of resources (expense/expenditure) until then. Currently, the District has only one item that qualifies for reporting in this category, deferred amounts related to their pension obligations. The length of the expense recognition period for deferred amounts is equal to the average of the expected remaining service lives of all employees that are provided with pensions through the pension plan, determined as of the beginning of the measurement period.

In addition to liabilities, the statement of financial position will sometimes report a separate section for deferred inflows of resources. This separate financial statement element, deferred inflows of resources, represents an acquisition of net position that applies to future periods and will not be recognized as an inflow of resources (revenue) until that time. The District has only one type of item that qualifies for reporting in this category, amounts related to their pension obligations. These deferred amounts represent differences between projected and actual earnings on pension plan investments and are recognized over a five-year period.

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016**

Pensions

For purposes of measuring the net pension liability, deferred outflows/inflows of resources, and pension expense, information about the fiduciary net position of the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) and additions to/deductions from PERA's fiduciary net position have been determined on the same basis as they are reported by PERA except that PERA's fiscal year end is June 30. For this purpose, plan contributions are recognized as of employer payroll paid dates and benefit payments and refunds are recognized when due and payable in accordance with the benefit terms. Investments are reported at fair value.

Classifications of Fund Balances

Fund balance is divided into five classifications based primarily on the extent to which the District is bound to observe constraints imposed upon the use of the resources in the General Fund. The classifications are as follows:

Nonspendable – the nonspendable fund balance category includes amounts that cannot be spent because they are not in spendable form, or are legally or contractually required to be maintained intact. The “not in spendable form” criterion includes items that are not expected to be converted to cash.

Restricted – fund balance is reported as restricted when constraints placed on the use of resources are either externally imposed by creditors (such as through debt covenants), grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations of other governments; or are imposed by law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation.

Committed – the committed fund balance classification includes amounts that can be used only for the specific purposes imposed by formal action (resolution) of the Board. Those committed amounts cannot be used for any other purposes unless the Board removes or changes the specified use by taking the same type of action (resolution) it employed to previously commit those amounts.

Assigned – amounts in the assigned fund balance classification the District intends to use for specific purposes that do not meet the criteria to be classified as restricted or committed. In the General Fund, assigned amounts represent intended uses established by the Board or the Board Administrator who has been delegated that authority by Board resolution.

Unassigned – Unassigned fund balance is the residual classification for the general fund and includes all spendable amounts not contained in the other fund balance classifications.

The District applies restricted resources first when expenditures are incurred for purposes for which either restricted or unrestricted (committed, assigned, and unassigned) amounts are available. Similarly, within unrestricted fund balance, committed amounts are reduced first followed by assigned, and then unassigned amounts when expenditures are incurred for purposes for which amounts in any of the unrestricted fund balance classifications could be used.

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016**

Explanation of Adjustments Column in Statements

Capital Assets: In the Statement of Net Position and Governmental Fund Balance Sheet, an adjustment is made if the District has capital assets. This adjustment equals the net book balance of capitalized assets as of the report date and reconciles to the amount reported in the Capital Assets Note.

Long-Term Liabilities: In the Statement of Net Position and Governmental Fund Balance Sheet, an adjustment is made to reflect the total Compensated Absences and Net Pension Liability the District has as of the report date. See note on Long-Term Liabilities.

Depreciation, Net Pension Expense and Change in Compensated Absences for the year: In the Statement of Activities and Governmental Fund Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance, the adjustment equals the total depreciation for the year reported, plus or minus the net pension expense and the change in Compensated Absences between the reporting year and the previous year.

Vacation and Sick Leave

Under the District's personnel policies, employees are granted vacation leave in varying amounts based on their length of service. Vacation leave accrual varies from 4 to 8 hours per pay period. Sick leave accrual is 4 hours per pay period. The limit on the accumulation of vacation leave is 240 hours and there is no limit on the accumulation of sick leave. Upon termination of employment from the District, employees are paid accrued vacation leave and up to 20 sick leave hours.

Risk Management

The District is exposed to various risks of loss related to tort; theft of, damage to, and destruction of assets; errors and omissions; injuries to employees; workers' compensation claims; and natural disasters. Property and casualty liabilities and workers' compensation are insured through Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust. The District retains risk for the deductible portion of the insurance. The amounts of these deductibles are considered immaterial to the financial statements.

The Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust is a public entity risk pool currently operated as a common risk management and insurance program for its members. The District pays an annual premium based on its annual payroll. There were no significant increases or reductions in insurance from the previous year or settlements in excess of insurance coverage for any of the past three fiscal years.

Note 2 - Detailed Notes

Capital Assets

Changes in Capital Assets, Asset Capitalization and Depreciation.

	<u>Beginning</u>	<u>Addition</u>	<u>Deletion</u>	<u>Ending</u>
Equipment	\$18,289	\$60,695	\$0	\$78,984
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<u>10,219</u>	<u>7,415</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>17,634</u>
Net Capital Assets	<u>\$ 8,070</u>			<u>\$61,350</u>

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016**

The cost of property, plant and equipment is depreciated over the estimated useful lives of the related assets. Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the lesser of the term of the related lease or the estimated useful lives of the assets. Depreciation is computed on the straight-line method. For the purpose of computing depreciation, the useful life for Machinery and Equipment is 5 to 10 years. Current year depreciation is \$7,415.

The District uses the threshold of \$500 for capitalizing assets purchased.

Unearned Revenue

Unearned revenue represents unearned advances from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) for administrative service grants and for the cost-share program. Revenues will be recognized when the related program expenditures are recorded. Unearned revenue for the year ended December 31, 2016, consists of the following: BWSR Flood Relief Grants \$681,981; Capacity Grant \$38,613; MPCA Walmart SEP Fund \$20,000; WCA \$4,501; Total \$745,095.

Long-Term Liabilities

Changes in long-term liabilities for the period ended December 31, 2016 are:

	January 1, <u>2016</u>	<u>Increases</u>	<u>Decreases</u>	December 31, <u>2016</u>
Net Pension Liability	\$ 145,111	\$ 139,072	\$ -	\$ 284,183
Compensated Absences	<u>11,761</u>	<u>14,998</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>26,759</u>
Total	<u>\$ 156,872</u>	<u>\$ 154,070</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 310,942</u>

Deposits

Minnesota Statutes 118A.02 and 118A.04 authorize the District to designate a depository for public funds and to invest in certificates of deposit. Minnesota Statute 118A.03 requires that all District deposits be protected by insurance, surety bond, or collateral. When not covered by insurance or surety bonds, the market value of collateral pledged shall be at least ten percent more than the amount on deposit (plus accrued interest) at the close of the financial institution's banking day.

Authorized collateral includes treasury bills, notes and bonds; issues of U.S. government agencies; general obligations rated "A" or better; revenue obligations rated "AA" or better; irrevocable standard letters of credit issued by the Federal Home Loan Bank; and certificates of deposit. Minnesota Statutes require that securities pledged as collateral be held in safekeeping in a restricted account at the Federal Reserve Bank or in an account at a trust department of a commercial bank or other financial institution that is not owned or controlled by the financial institution furnishing the collateral.

Custodial Credit Risk Deposits

Custodial credit risk is the risk that in the event of a financial institution failure, the District's deposits may not be returned to it. The District does not have a deposit policy for custodial credit risk. As of December 31, 2016, the District's deposits were not exposed to custodial credit risk.

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016**

Note 3 - Defined Benefit Pension Plans

Plan Description

The District participates in the following cost-sharing multiple-employer defined benefit pension plan administered by the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA). PERA's defined benefit pension plans are established and administered in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, Chapters 353 and 356. PERA's defined benefit pension plans are tax qualified plans under Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code.

All full-time and certain part-time employees of the District are covered by the General Employees Retirement Fund (GERF). GERF members belong to either the Coordinated Plan or the Basic Plan. Coordinated Plan members are covered by Social Security and Basic Plan members are not. The Basic Plan was closed to new members in 1967. All new members must participate in the Coordinated Plan.

Benefits Provided

PERA provides retirement, disability, and death benefits. Benefit provisions are established by state statute and can only be modified by the state legislature.

Benefit increases are provided to benefit recipients each January. Increases are related to the funding ratio of the plan. Members in plans that are at least 90 percent funded for two consecutive years are given 2.5 percent increases. Members in plans that have not exceeded 90 percent funded, or have fallen below 80 percent, are given 1 percent increases.

The benefit provisions stated in the following paragraphs of this section are current provisions and apply to active plan participants. Vested, terminated employees who are entitled to benefits but are not receiving them yet are bound by the provisions in effect at the time they last terminated their public service.

GERF benefits are based on a member's highest average salary for any five successive years of allowable service, age, and years of credit at termination of service. Two methods are used to compute benefits for PERA's Coordinated Plan members. The retiring member receives the higher of a step-rate benefit accrual formula (Method 1) or a level accrual formula (Method 2). Under Method 1, the annuity accrual rate for a Coordinated Plan member is 1.2 percent of average salary for each of the first ten years and 1.7 percent for each remaining year. Under Method 2, the annuity accrual rate is 1.7 percent for Coordinated Plan members for each year of service. For members hired prior to July 1, 1989, a full annuity is available when age plus years of service equal 90 and normal retirement age is 65. For members hired on or after July 1, 1989, normal retirement age is the age for unreduced Social Security benefits capped at 66.

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016**

Contributions

Minnesota Statute Chapter 353 sets the rates for employer and employee contributions. Contribution rates can only be modified by the state legislature.

Coordinated Plan members were required to contribute 6.50 percent of their annual covered salary in calendar year 2016. The District was required to contribute 7.50 percent for Coordinated Plan members in calendar year 2016. The District's contributions to the GERF for the year ended December 31, 2016, were \$18,944. The District's contributions were equal to the required contributions for each year as set by state statute.

Pension Costs

At December 31, 2016, the District reported a liability of \$284,183 for its proportionate share of the GERF's net pension liability. The District's net pension liability reflected a reduction due to the State of Minnesota's contribution of \$6 million to the fund in 2016. The State of Minnesota is considered a non-employer contributing entity and the State's contribution meets the definition of a special funding situation. The State of Minnesota's proportionate share of the net pension liability associated with the District totaled \$3,768. The net pension liability was measured as of June 30, 2016, and the total pension liability used to calculate the net pension liability was determined by an actuarial valuation as of that date. The District's proportion of the net pension liability was based on the District's contributions received by PERA during the measurement period for employer payroll paid dates from July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016, relative to the total employer contributions received from all of PERA's participating employers. At June 30, 2016, the District's proportion share was .0035 percent, which was an increase of .0007 percent from its proportion measured as of June 30, 2015.

For the year ended December 31, 2016, the District recognized pension expense of \$24,736 for its proportionate share of GERF's pension expense. In addition, the District recognized an additional \$1,124 as pension expense (and grant revenue) for its proportionate share of the State of Minnesota's contribution of \$6 million to the General Employees Retirement Fund.

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016**

Pension Costs (continued)

At December 31, 2016, the District reported its proportionate share of GERS's deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources from the following sources:

	Deferred Outflows of Resources	Deferred Inflows of Resources
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Difference between expected and actual economic experience	\$ -	\$ 21,866
Changes in actuarial assumptions	55,643	-
Difference between projected and actual investment earnings	52,648	-
Changes in proportion	26,004	11,744
Contributions paid to PERA subsequent to the measurement date	9,701	-
Total	<u>\$ 143,996</u>	<u>\$ 33,610</u>

The \$9,701 reported as deferred outflows of resources related to pensions resulting from District contributions subsequent to the measurement date will be recognized as a reduction of the net pension liability in the year ended December 31, 2017. Other amounts reported as deferred outflows and inflows of resources related to pensions will be recognized in pension expense as follows:

<u>Year ended December 31:</u>	<u>Pension Expense Amount</u>	
2017	\$	27,263
2018		27,263
2019		35,573
2020		10,586

Actuarial Assumptions

The total pension liability in the June 30, 2016, actuarial valuation was determined using the following actuarial assumptions:

Inflation	2.50 percent per year
Active Member Payroll Growth	3.25 percent per year
Investment Rate of Return	7.50 percent

Salary increases were based on a service-related table. Mortality rates for active members, retirees, survivors and disabilitants were based on RP 2014 tables for males or females, as appropriate, with slight adjustments. Cost of living benefit increases for retirees are assumed to be 1.0 percent per year for all future years.

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016**

Actuarial assumptions used in the June 30, 2016, valuation were based on the results of actuarial experience studies. The most recent four-year experience study in the GERF was completed in 2015.

The following changes in actuarial assumptions occurred in 2016:

-) The assumed post-retirement benefit increase rate was changed from 1.00 percent per year through 2035 and 2.50 percent per year thereafter to 1.00 percent per year for all future years.
-) The assumed investment return was changed from 7.90 percent to 7.50 percent. The single discount rate was changed from 7.90 percent to 7.50 percent.
-) Other assumptions were changed pursuant to the experience study dated June 30, 2015. The assumed future salary increases, payroll growth, and inflation were decreased by .25 percent to 3.25 percent for payroll growth and 2.50 percent for inflation.

The State Board of Investment, which manages the investments of PERA, prepares an analysis of the reasonableness on a regular basis of the long-term expected rate of return using a building-block method in which best-estimate ranges of expected future rates of return are developed for each major asset class. These ranges are combined to produce an expected long-term rate of return by weighting the expected future rates of return by the target asset allocation percentages. The target allocation and best estimates of geometric real rates of return for each major asset class are summarized in the following table:

Asset Class	Target Allocation (%)	Real Rate of Return (%)
Domestic Stocks	45	5.50
International Stocks	15	6.00
Bonds	18	1.45
Alternative Assets	20	6.40
Cash	2	0.50
Total	100%	

Discount Rate

The discount rate used to measure the total pension liability in 2016 was 7.50 percent, a reduction from the 7.90 percent used in 2015. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed that contributions from plan members and employers will be made at the rates set in Minnesota Statutes. Based on these assumptions, the fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments of current plan members. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total pension liability.

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016**

Pension Liability Sensitivity

The following presents the District's proportionate share of the net pension liability for all plans it participates in, calculated using the discount rate disclosed in the preceding paragraph, as well as what the District's proportionate share of the net pension liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate 1 percentage point lower or 1 percentage point higher than the current discount rate:

	1% Decrease in Discount Rate (6.5%)	Discount Rate (7.5%)	1% Increase in Discount Rate (8.5%)
District's proportionate share of the GERS net pension liability:	\$ 403,624	\$ 284,183	\$ 185,796

Pension Plan Fiduciary Net Position

Detailed information about each pension plan's fiduciary net position is available in a separately issued PERA financial report that includes financial statements and required supplementary information. That report may be obtained on the Internet at www.mnpera.org.

Note 4 - Operating Leases

The District leases office space on a yearly basis. Under the current agreement total costs for 2016 were \$8,368.

Note 5 - Stewardship, Compliance and Accountability

Excess of expenditures over budget – The General Fund had expenditures in excess of budget for the year as follows: Expenditures \$1,961,014; Budget \$1,680,994; Excess \$280,020.

Note 6 - Reconciliation of Fund Balance to Net Position

Governmental Fund Balance, January 1	\$ 238,325
Less: Excess Of Expenditures Over Revenues	<u>(6,314)</u>
Governmental Fund Balance, December 31	<u>\$ 232,011</u>
Adjustments from Fund Balance to Net Position:	
Plus: Capital Assets	\$ 61,350
Plus: Deferred Outflows of Resources	143,996
Less: Long-Term Liabilities	(310,942)
Less: Deferred Inflows of Resources	<u>(33,610)</u>
Net Position	<u>\$ 92,805</u>

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2016**

Note 7 - Reconciliation of Change in Fund Balance to Change in Net Position

Change in Fund Balance	\$ (6,314)
Capital Outlay	60,695
Pension Expense, net	(24,736)
The cost of capital assets are allocated over the capital assets' useful lives at the government-wide level.	(7,415)
In the statement of activities certain operating expenses including compensated absences are measured by the amounts earned.	<u>(14,998)</u>
Change in Net Position	<u><u>\$ 7,232</u></u>

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
DULUTH, MINNESOTA
BUDGETARY COMPARISON STATEMENT
BUDGET AND ACTUAL
GENERAL FUND
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016**

	Original/ Final Budget	Actual	Variance With Final Budget Positive (Neg)
Revenues			
Intergovernmental			
County	\$ 58,003	\$ 59,103	\$ 1,100
Local	27,000	21,216	(5,784)
State	1,547,591	1,777,382	229,791
Total Intergovernmental	<u>\$ 1,632,594</u>	<u>\$ 1,857,701</u>	<u>\$ 225,107</u>
Charges for Services	<u>\$ 40,100</u>	<u>\$ 91,437</u>	<u>\$ 51,337</u>
Miscellaneous			
Interest Earnings	\$ 2,500	\$ 1,695	\$ (805)
Other	5,800	3,867	(1,933)
Total Miscellaneous	<u>\$ 8,300</u>	<u>\$ 5,562</u>	<u>\$ (2,738)</u>
Total Revenues	<u>\$ 1,680,994</u>	<u>\$ 1,954,700</u>	<u>\$ 273,706</u>
Expenditures			
District Operations			
Personnel Services	\$ 366,115	\$ 324,623	\$ 41,492
Other Services and Charges	46,341	44,707	1,634
Supplies	3,300	9,203	(5,903)
Capital Outlay	50,000	60,695	(10,695)
Total District Operations	<u>\$ 465,756</u>	<u>\$ 439,228</u>	<u>\$ 26,528</u>
Project Expenditures			
District	\$ 30,000	\$ 31,594	\$ (1,594)
State	1,185,238	1,490,192	(304,954)
Total Project Expenditures	<u>\$ 1,215,238</u>	<u>\$ 1,521,786</u>	<u>\$ (306,548)</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>\$ 1,680,994</u>	<u>\$ 1,961,014</u>	<u>\$ (280,020)</u>
Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ (6,314)</u>	<u>\$ (6,314)</u>
Fund Balance - January 1	\$ 238,325	\$ 238,325	\$ -
Fund Balance - December 31	<u>\$ 238,325</u>	<u>\$ 232,011</u>	<u>\$ (6,314)</u>

Notes are an integral part of the basic financial statements.

**SOUTH ST. LOUIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
DULUTH, MINNESOTA**

**SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTIONS
GENERAL EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT FUND
DECEMBER 31, 2016**

Fiscal Year Ending	Statutorily Required Contributions (a)	Contributions in Relation to the Statutorily Required Contributions (b)	Contribution Deficiency (Excess) (a-b)	Covered Payroll (c)	Contributions as a Percentage of Covered Payroll (b/c)
2015	\$ 13,923	\$ 13,923	\$ -	\$ 185,640	7.50%
2016	\$ 18,944	\$ 18,944	\$ -	\$ 252,587	7.50%

* This schedule is intended to show information for ten years. Additional years will be displayed as they become available. The amounts presented for each year-end were determined December 31.

**SCHEDULE OF PROPORTIONATE SHARE OF NET PENSION LIABILITY
GENERAL EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT FUND
DECEMBER 31, 2016**

Fiscal Year Ending	Employer's Proportion of Net Pension Liability (Asset)	Employer's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability (Asset) (a)	Covered Payroll (b)	Employer's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability (Asset) as a Percentage of Covered Payroll (a/b)	Plan Fiduciary Net Position as a Percentage of the Total Pension Liability
2015	0.0028%	\$ 145,111	\$ 173,277	83.75%	78.19%
2016	0.0035%	\$ 284,183	\$ 219,845	129.27%	68.90%

* This schedule is intended to show information for ten years. Additional years will be displayed as they become available. The amounts presented for each fiscal year were determined June 30.

MINNESOTA LEGAL COMPLIANCE REPORT

Board of Supervisors
South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District
Duluth, Minnesota

We have audited, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* (issued by the Comptroller General of the United States), the financial statements of South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District of Duluth, Minnesota, as of and for the year ended December 31, 2016, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District's basic financial statements, and have issued our report thereon dated July 10, 2017.

The *Minnesota Legal Compliance Audit Guide for Political Subdivisions*, promulgated by the State Auditor pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 6.65, contains six categories of compliance to be tested: contracting and bidding, deposits and investments, conflicts of interest, public indebtedness, claims and disbursements, and miscellaneous provisions. Our audit considered all of the listed categories, except that we did not test for compliance with the provisions for public indebtedness because the District is not allowed to issue debt.

In connection with our audit, nothing came to our attention that caused us to believe that the South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District failed to comply with the provisions of the *Minnesota Legal Compliance Audit Guide for Political Subdivisions*. However, our audit was not directed primarily toward obtaining the knowledge of such noncompliance. Accordingly, had we performed additional procedures, other matters may have come to our attention regarding the South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District's noncompliance with the above referenced provisions.

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

Peterson Company Ltd

PETERSON COMPANY LTD.
Certified Public Accountants
Waconia, Minnesota

July 10, 2017

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER
FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS
BASED ON AN AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PERFORMED
IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS**

Board of Supervisors
South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District
Duluth, Minnesota

We have audited, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of the governmental activities of South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District, Duluth, Minnesota, as of and for the year ended December 31, 2016, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District's basic financial statements, and have issued our report thereon dated July 10, 2017.

Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District's internal control over financial reporting to determine the audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District's internal control over financial reporting.

A *deficiency* in internal control over financial reporting exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency or a combination of deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency or a combination of deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control over financial reporting was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the entity's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

Peterson Company Ltd

PETERSON COMPANY LTD.
Certified Public Accountants
Waconia, Minnesota

July 10, 2017