Freeborn County CD J-27
Redetermination of Benefits
Viewers Report
December 17, 2025 (Final)
Public Hearing on January 20, 2026

Valuation prior to drainage

Beginning land use, property value, and economic productivity have been determined with the consideration that the benefited properties within the watershed originally did not have an adequate outlet for artificial drainage.

"A" – Standing water or cattails, wetland classification with economic productivity for agriculture purposes of $0 per acre, and a market value of $1,000 to $2,000
"B" – Seasonally flooded/pasture ground. Pasture classification with economic productivity of $130 per acre based on grazing days and/or hay values, and a market value of $2,500 to $3,500
"C" – Wet subsoil – Generally farmable land with moderate crop potential, with annual economic productivity of $650 per acre based upon average annual yield of 70% of optimum with $421 production costs, and a market value of $4,000 to $5,000
"D" – Upland areas not needing much artificial drainage and intermixed with wetter soils, with annual economic productivity of $817 per acre based upon an average annual yield of 88% of optimum with $421 production costs, and a market value of $5,000 to $6,000

Valuation with NRCS recommended drainage

Potential land use, property value, and an increase in economic productivity, after public and private drainage have been installed as NRCS design standards as recommended in the Minnesota Drainage Guide, using current crop rotation, income, and expense:

"A" – Drained slough area, medium classification land with economic productivity of $696 per acre based upon average production of 75% of optimum with $421 per acre production costs, and a market value of $5,000 to $6,000
"B" – Well drained ground, high land classification with economic productivity of $743 per acre based upon average annual production of 80% of optimum with $421 production costs, and a market value of $6,000 to $7,000
"C" – Well drained ground, highest land classification with economic productivity of $789 per acre based upon average annual production of 85% of optimum with $421 production costs, and a market value of $6,500 to $9,000
"D" – Well drained ground, high land classification with improved farm ability, with economic productivity of $882 per acre based upon average production of 95% of optimum with $421 production costs, and a market value of $6,000 to $8,000

Utilizing these productive values, potential benefit values were determined for the system based upon a 25 year effective life with proper maintenance, private tile improvement cost were depreciated over the same 25 year period, and an allowance of 0.5% return on the system investment. A three year average County yield was used for the benefit value calculations along with a three year average sale price for the corn and beans.

Increased productivity

Crop	Yield	Value	Income	%	Adjusted
Corn	199.7	$5.56	$1,110	50%	$555
Beans	56.3	$13.26	$747	50%	$373
					$928

Production costs

Corn	$557 X 50% = $279
Beans	$284 X 50% = $142
	$421

Potential Benefit value

	"A"	"B"	"C"	"D"
	75% of $928	80% of $928	85% of $928	95% of $928
	$696	$743	$789	$882
Minus cost of production	$421	$421	$421	$421
Net income	$275	$322	$368	$461
Previous income	$0	$130	$229	$396
Increased income	$275	$192	$139	$65
Private tile costs	$56	$31	$27	$18
Annual increase	$219	$161	$112	$47
Capitalized for 25 years @ ½ %	**$5,143**	**$3,769**	**$2,633**	**$1,102**
% of potential Benefit	75%	75%	75%	75%
Reduced benefit Value	**$3,857**	**$2,827**	**$1,974**	**$826**

The potential benefit values have been reduced to reflect a less than optimum yield. Benefit values were adjusted based on multiple factors. Acres, location to the open ditch, location to the County tile, drainage coefficient, soil type

Petition for an Improvement

A petition for an improvement has been filed for Freeborn County CD J-27. This Re-determination of Benefits is determining benefits as they are in December of 2025. (Without any improvement). If the improvement is implemented in the future, the benefits will be adjusted accordingly.

Summary

Freeborn County CD J-27 consists of 1,360.02 acres of farmland, roads, and building sites with benefits of $1,850,308

a. 1,336.92 acres of farmland and building sites in Freeborn County in Geneva and Newry Townships with benefits of $1,792,829
b. 23.10 acres of County and Township roads with benefits of $57,478
c. 1,360.02 Total acres with $1,850,308 of benefits

<u>Potential Benefit Value</u>
100% of Optimum Benefit Value

Average land benefits over a 25-year period are **$3,162** per acre

a. A soil $5,143
b. B soil $3,769
c. C soil $2,633
d. D soil $1,102

Building site benefit

a. (Average of B + C + D soils) X 1.5 = **$3,752**

Ponds, woodland, and non-benefited acres

a. **$10**

Road benefits

a. Gravel roads, County or Township
(Average land benefit) X 1.0 = **$3,162**
b. Paved roads, County or State
(Average land benefit) X 1.5 = **$4,742**

Tile benefits

a. A tile benefit was given for most County tile at a rate of $0.50 per linear foot. This value was given because of the ease of access for private tile, and for the drainage the County tile may provide. 15,965 feet of County tile, **$7,500 of tile benefits**

Grass strip right of way easement acres

Grass Strip damages were paid to landowners in a prior redetermination of benefits for Freeborn County CD J-27. The establishment of a permanent one rod grass strip on each side of the total length of the open ditch, is required per Minnesota Ditch Law, 103-E.021. This State law requires establishment of this 16.5-foot grass strip, beginning at the top of the berm, and extending outward. This strip must be planted in perennial vegetation of grass or legumes. The landowner is responsible for the control of noxious weeds. No fences or grazing of livestock is allowed within the one rod grass strip. The Viewers and Engineer recommend that no trees be allowed within this right-of-way.

Crop damages

Crop damages will be paid per acre on standing crops damaged by construction or repair on the County open ditch or County tile system as determined by the Freeborn County Ditch Inspector.

Outlet Benefit

Freeborn CD J-27 outlets into Freeborn – Mower JCD J-24. JCD J-24 needs to be bigger and cleaned more often because of the additional water from CD J-27. JCD J-24 was re-determined in September of 2021. At that time, it was determined that CD J-27 would have a 0.28% outlet benefit into Freeborn – Mower JCD J-24. CD J-27 will pay for all their own repair and maintenance plus 0.28% of all repair and maintenance on JCD J-24.

<u>Benefits and damages statement</u>

This report covers the Redetermination of Benefits for a previously constructed drainage system. The basis for determining benefits and damages is therefore, based upon a comparison of the conditions that would have existed prior to the County open ditch and County tile systems construction, with those that do exist with the drainage system in a reasonable state of repair.

Supporting documentation for the analysis and conclusions of the report are contained in our files and are available for inspection. The figures stated herein are based on a full and fair comparison of all pertinent facts and information that the viewers were aware of at the time of this redetermination process. The following aids were used in this viewing process.

- Freeborn County online GIS parcel information site
- USDA Web Soil Survey
- Google Earth aerial satellite photos
- Yield averages taken from USDA national agriculture statistics service
- Production costs taken from University of Minnesota FinBin
- Average commodity sale prices from Minnesota FinBin
- Sales data from the Freeborn County Assessor's office and website
- Visual inspection of each 40-acre parcel or less
- Consultation with the County Auditor / Treasurer, drainage staff, ditch inspectors

The Viewers determined that the lands affected by the drainage system are generally similar and that the following comments refer to all such tracts.

1. **Existing land use, property value and economic productivity:**

Land is used for building sites, roads, and for agricultural purposes. The property value is consistent with most agricultural land sales within Freeborn County. Agricultural lands are primarily used to produce corn and soybeans. The land has good economic productivity when properly drained.

2. **Potential land use, property value and economic productivity from the drainage system:**

The drainage system has been in existence for many years and provides drainage for agricultural purposes. The property value is consistent with most agricultural land sales within Freeborn County. Land affected by the drainage system has the potential to produce above average yields.

3. **The benefits or damages from the drainage system:**

Benefits derived by lands affected by the drainage system are due to (A) Improved capacity to remove surface waters due to previous construction and maintenance of the County open ditch and County tile system, which results in an increase in the current market value of property; or (B) an increase in the potential for agricultural production as a result of the previous construction and continued maintenance of the drainage system; or (C) increased value of the property as a result of potential different land use.

4. There is no damage to any riparian rights.

5. There are no acres added to any tract or lot and there are no public waters, wetlands, and other areas not currently being cultivated, that are proposed to be drained in this proceeding.

6. There are no acres which before the drainage benefits could be realized would require a public waters work permit to work in public waters under 103G.245 to excavate or fill a navigable water body under United States Code, Title 33, Section 403, or a permit to discharge into waters of United States under United States Code, Title 33, Section 1344.

7. There are no acres being assessed for drainage of areas that would be considered conversion of a wetland under United States Code, Title 16, Section 3821, if the area was placed in agricultural production.

This report is respectfully submitted to the Drainage Authority of Freeborn County CD J-27 by:

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Robert M. Hansen ____________________

Kendall Langseth ____________________

Submitted this 17th day of December 2025