



# Minnesota's Endangered Species, The PLSS

Patrick D. Veraguth, Douglas and Grant County Surveyor

- Chris Mavis, Hennepin County Surveyor
- Minnesota AMC Fall Conference
- September 16, 2021





# Section Corner Monument



# CERTIFICATE OF SURVEY

SE1/4-SE1/4

SECTION 1

1  
SOUTH 94 1ST ADD.  
2 BLOCK ONE

2.94 AC. +/-  
IN SEC. 1

S. LINE SEC. 1  
N. LINE SEC. 12

15.80 ACRES +/- (TOTAL)

12.86 AC. +/-  
IN SEC. 12

NE1/4-NE1/4  
SECTION 12

RLS  
6933

N87°45'13"E-392.86  
218.01  
218.21 REC

1/2" PIPE  
174.85  
175 REC

RLS  
6933

(51.03 REC)  
51.02  
S00°22'09"E

N89°41'13"E-565.87  
476.98

IRON IS NOT  
SET ON R/W

T127N-R38W

C.S.A.H. NO. 28

CIM  
E 1/4 COR  
SEC 1

PUBLIC ROAD

N01°02'00"E-2621.64

CIM  
NE COR  
SEC 12

CO. RD. NO. 87

RLS  
13077

N89°19'21"W  
156.17

RR  
SPIKE

P.O.B.

NO. 29

HWY 29

SECTION LINE

IGHWAY

SYMBOLS---

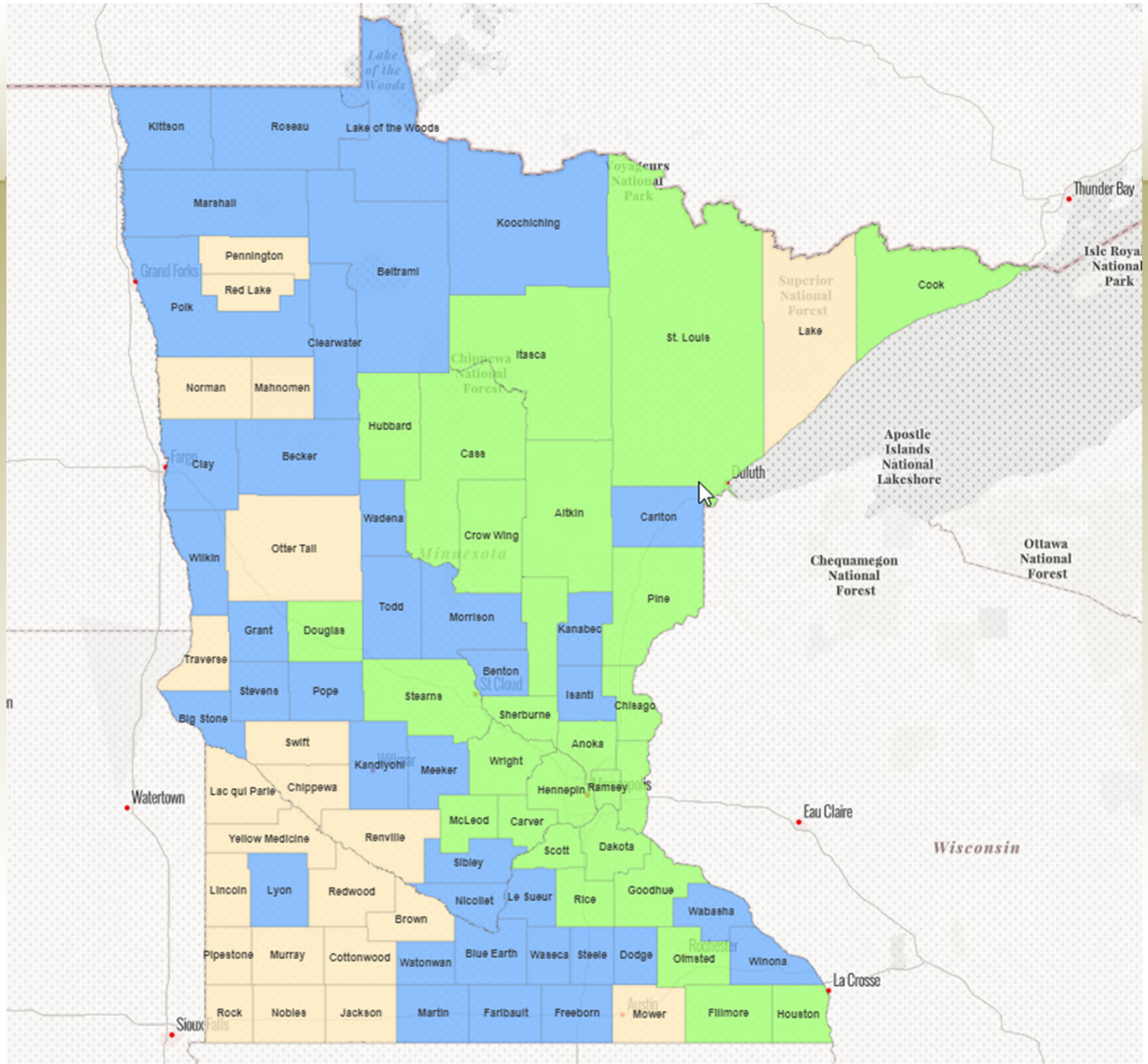
- = IRON MONUMENT FOUND IN PLACE
- = 1/2" PIPE SET MARKED RLS 13077
- × × = EXISTING FENCE



# County Surveyors

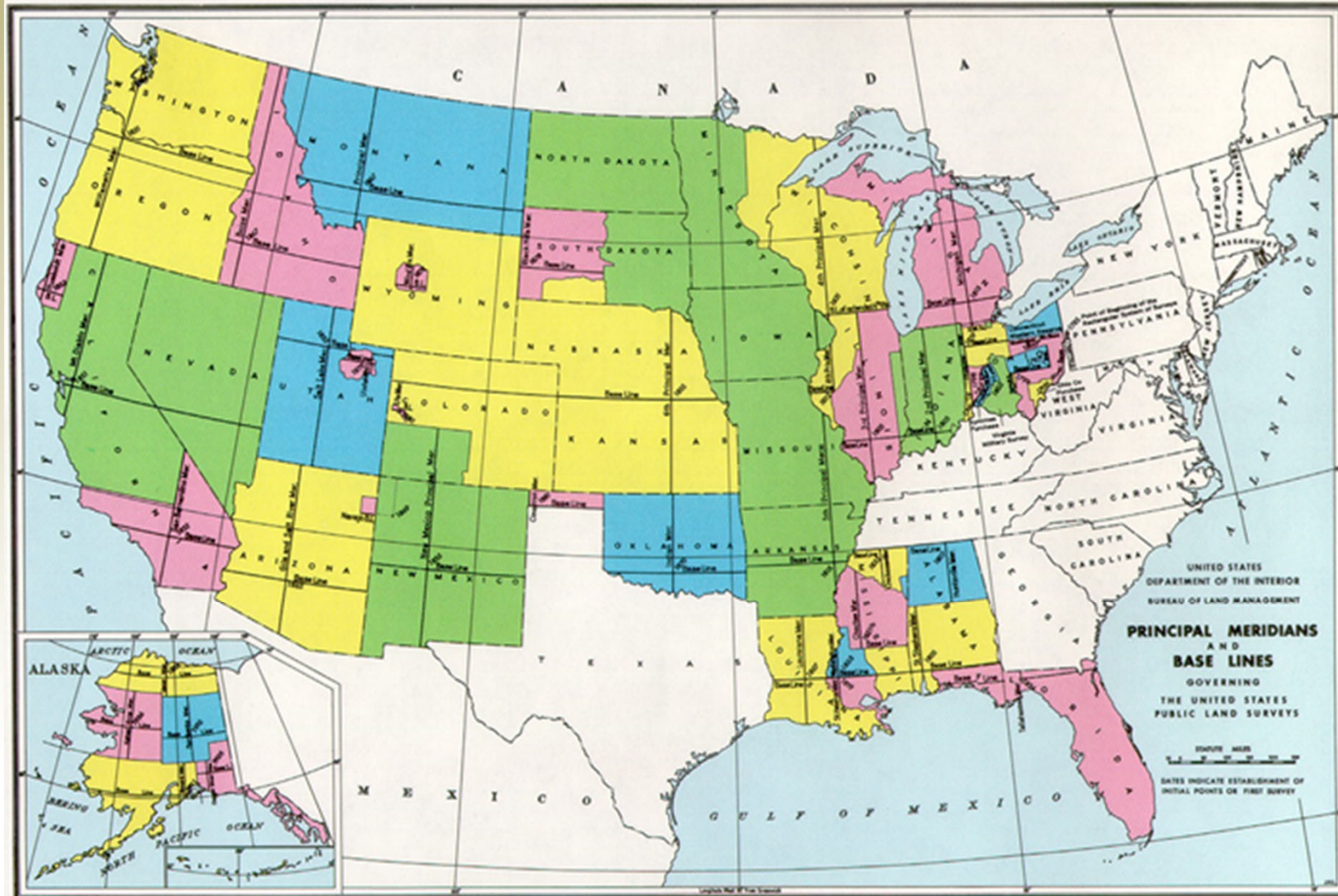
- Please stand up if your county has a County Surveyor?
- Stay standing if your County has a full time County Surveyor?
- Please stand up if your County does not have a County Surveyor?







# What is the PLSS?



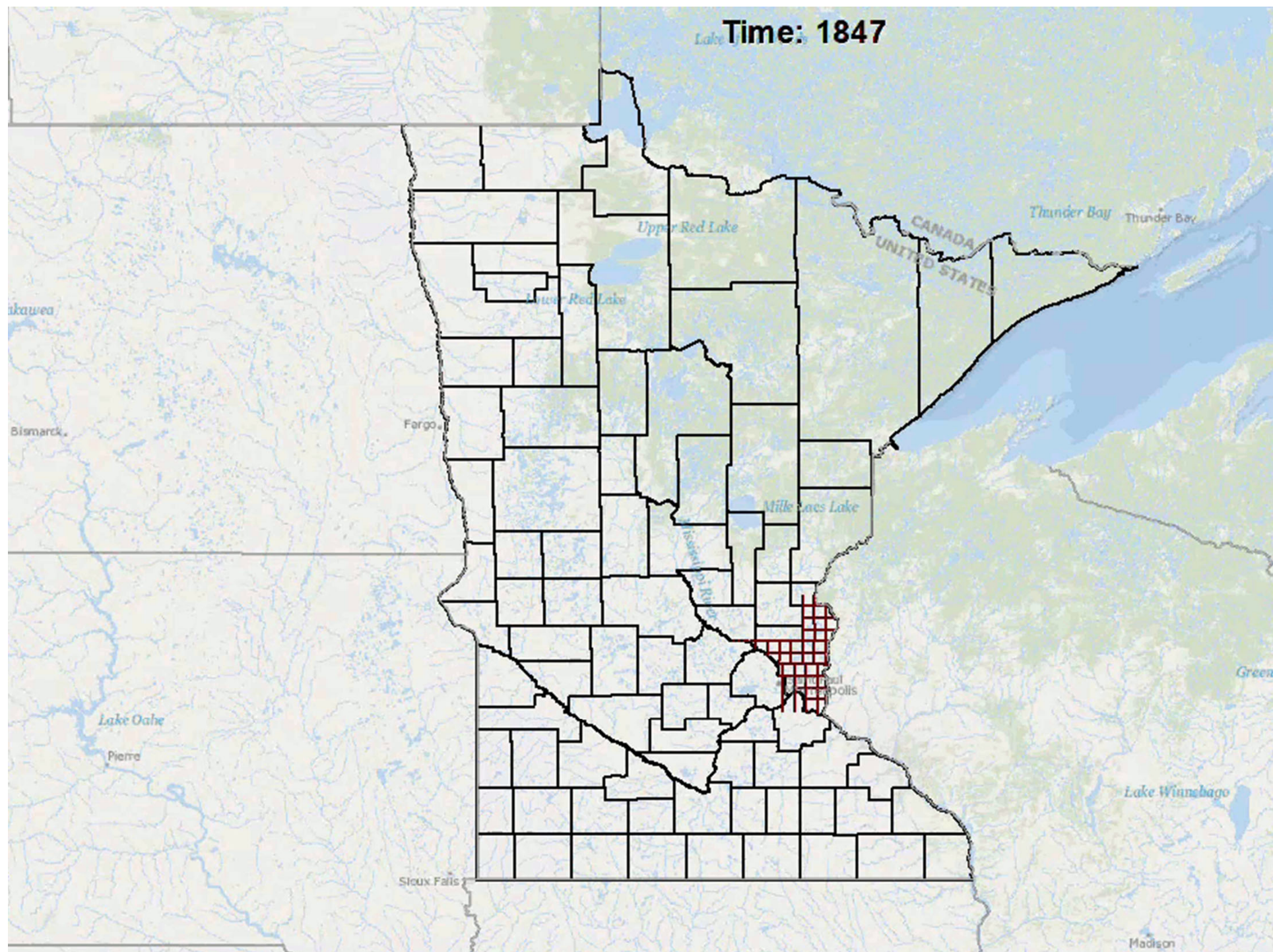


## What are PLSS corners?





**Time: 1847**





How many Corners

300,000

How many Corners

2840 T

# How many Township Corners are in the state?

# 2840 Township Corners





## Why is the PLSS Endangered Species?

- There were over 300,000 monuments set in Minnesota
- Land Surveyors are charged with trying to remonument the corner in the same position as the original wood post.
- The federal government gave the job of maintaining these corners to the states
- Minnesota gave that responsibility to the counties.
- Some counties maintained them, and some did not.
- Less than half of these corners have been certified and even less have GPS coordinates on them.





## Why does it matter to you?

- **All** Land descriptions in Minnesota are described off of these corners.
- This affects **all** infrastructure and boundaries in the State!
- The Section and Quarter Corners Control the Limits of a Section and all property internal to the section.
- The corners and lines set by the Surveyor General are unchangeable.



# Why do we need to Remonument Minnesota?

- Original Monuments gone
- Surveyors not filing Corner Certificates
- Increased risk of Property disputes
- Inequitable Taxation
- Disagreements about resource rights
- Confusion over Easement location
- Unnecessary expenditures by citizens and local governments
- Develop Statewide high accuracy Geo-referenced Parcel Map (GIS apps need higher accuracy)





## Who is working on this?

- Land Surveyors and GIS professionals have joined forces.
- Working on multiple projects at the same time.
  - Statewide LIDAR
  - Open Parcel data
  - County Boundary problems
  - Statewide PLSS remonumentation legislation
- Looking for support from other organizations:
  - County Engineers, County Recorders, County Assessors, County Auditors, County Treasurers, Mndot, MN DNR, and **AMC**



## What we have accomplished so far.

- Rough Count of all the PLSS corners in the state.
- Pilot Project in Grant County
  - Remonumented Lawrence Township
  - LCCMR Grant
  - Developed model RFP for other counties to use.
- Developing a business case for Remonumentation.
- Working on legislation
- Mngeo is looking to add a State Survey Coordinator to help coordinate this effort.
- Gathering letters of Support
- PLSS General Public Information Website
- <https://mnplss-umn.hub.arcgis.com/>





# Meet Me at the Corner!

## The Public Land Survey System in Minnesota

Free and open to the Public! - Wednesday, October 13, 2021

River's Edge Convention Center - Terry Haws Center C

104th Ave South, St Cloud, Minnesota 56301

### 1:30 - 1:55 p.m. - Introduction

Ryan Hennen, LS - Stearns County Surveyor/ Mary Ostby - Benton County Historical Society

### 1:55 - 2:25 p.m. - Meanders

Robin Mathews, LS - Pine County Surveyor/Preston Dowell, LS - St Louis Deputy County Surveyor & Ryan Stovern, GISP - St Louis County Auditor's Office

### 2:25 - 3:10 p.m. - Grant County Remonumentation Pilot Project

Pat Veraguth, LS - Douglas County Surveyor

### 3:10 - 4:00 p.m. - Field Trip

### 4:00 - 4:30 p.m. - Question and Answer Session

Of note:

**We will be handing out prizes during the event!**

This event brought to you by the following organizations:



Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium ([www.mngislis.org](http://www.mngislis.org))



Minnesota Association of County Surveyors ([www.macsinfo.us](http://www.macsinfo.us))



Minnesota Society of Professional Surveyors ([www.mnsurveyor.com](http://www.mnsurveyor.com))

Please register on-line to participate:

<https://www.mngislis.org/event/meet-me-at-the-corner2021>



# When do we want to get this done?

- Now
- This should have been done a 100 years ago.
- PLSS corners are an endangered species
- We are looking to introduce legislation at the next session to start a statewide remonumentation project.





# How are we going to pay for this?

- Do you have any ideas?
- Looking for money from the general fund.
- Most states use money from the recording fees on recorded documents.
- We are looking at remonumenting a township in each county every two years.
- Cost \$150,000 per township x 87 counties = \$13,050,000.00 every two years.
- Other states have been doing this for years



## How are we going to get this done?

- We need your support
- Any county interested in hearing more about this let us know.
- We need to create an AMC Platform Amendment for this project.
- Make it a priority for the AMC Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and AMC.



# Questions

