

# NACE ANNUAL STATE REPORT

State Association Name: Minnesota County Engineers Association (MCEA) For year of 2023

Number of Counties: 87 Number of State Assoc. Members: 87

Number NACE Member: 87

State Annual Meeting/Conferences held at: Cragun's Resort and Conference Center, Brainerd, MN  
on dates: January 16-19, 2024

Other significant meeting held during the year: MCEA Summer Conference (June 21 - 23, 2023)

## **Notable achievements of State Association and/or Individual members:**

1. Mel Odens, P.E., Kandiyohi County Engineer elected MCEA President
2. MCEA 2023 Awards presented at the 2024 Annual Meeting in January:
  - Outstanding County Engineer – Brian Giese, Pope County
  - Project of the Year Award – Steele County – CSAH 49 Reconstruction
  - Friend of Minnesota Counties Award – Pete Sarberg, Widseth
  - Outstanding Service to MCEA Award – Greg Isakson, Retired Goodhue County Engineer
  - Outstanding Contribution to Better MN Transportation Award – Vance Stuehrenberg, Blue Earth County Commissioner

## **Important Events in which State Association participated during year:**

1. Wayne Sandberg, Washington County and NACE North Central Regional Vice President and Rich Sanders, Polk County and NACE Board attended the NACE Fly-In in conjunction with the NACo Legislative Conference.
2. Several MCEA members attended the Minnesota Transportation Alliance annual Washington, DC Fly-In in September, and Transportation Day at the Capitol in St. Paul in March.
3. Several MCEA members attended the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) Annual Conference, as well as AMC's Policy Conference and Legislative Conference, continuing to highlight the role of the county engineer position in counties' leadership teams.

## **Issues and topics of particular importance for which action and efforts of State Association were directed during the year:**

### **State Issues:**

1. Legislative Advocacy: MCEA continues to be highly engaged in the state's legislative process with the association's Legislative Committee cohosting weekly conference calls with MnDOT during the legislative session. Our platform mirrors that of the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC). MCEA members work with our legislators and regularly provide testimony on transportation policy and funding bills. Major policy issues relate to speed limits, environmental issues and new regulations related to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector. County engineers serve on several statewide committees focusing on how the new GHG rules will affect local road and bridge agencies.

We continue to lobby for long term dedicated transportation funding for the state's roads and bridges.

National Issues:

1. Members of the MCEA Environmental Committee continue to track changes to Army Corps permitting requirements and the related impacts on construction projects, ongoing changing regulations related to the Northern Long Eared Bat, and monitor the status of the listing of the Monarch butterfly while guiding members on options to minimize impacts to both construction and operations.
2. MCEA continues to work with MnDOT to maximize the amount of IJA funding going to local agencies. There is also work by the Environmental Committee to track issues related to regulatory agencies halting progress on spending the money that has been awarded to local agencies.

Report Submitted by: Jodi Teich, P.E., Stearns County Engineer  
Minnesota State Director Date: 4/10/2024