

Election fraud here? Mapper says probably, officials say no

MAPPING PROJECT NAMES LOCAL PRECINCTS LIKELY AFFECTED BY ELECTION FRAUD March 15, 2024

By Dale Kovar, Herald Journal

The United States presidential election in 2024 is shaping up to be perhaps the most controversial one ever.

This is due in part to a national disagreement over the validity of the 2020 presidential election results. That disagreement is evident locally as well.

Herald Journal has obtained reports and maps from the national Precinct Mapping Project (PMP) which identify specific local areas, mostly in Wright and Carver counties, that in the

2020 presidential election had variations from historical patterns that PMP says indicate fraud and warrant further investigation. In all, PMP estimates there were at least 13,000 fraudulent ballots cast in the three-county area of Wright, Carver, and McLeod.

However, presented that information, state and county officials firmly state that the election process was accurate and valid.

In gathering data and responses, Herald Journal was clear that no accusations of wrongdoing at the local level are made in any manner, but the potential of outside influence is of interest.

PMP makes it evaluations based on an analysis of population, registered voters, incumbent vote comparisons, and historical voting patterns.

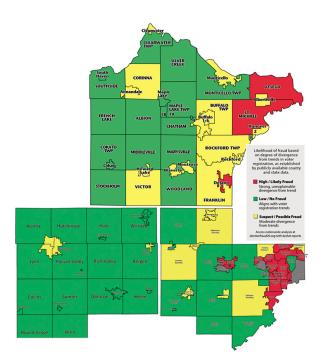
"Each county has only so many votes it can reasonably contribute to either political party, and those quantities are predictable," wrote Capt. Seth Keshel, who developed the mapping method. "I can dig to the lowest level in the smallest counties and find major divergence of statistical trends that point to the areas most likely leveraged for mail-in and ballot harvesting fraud in the 2020 election."

The basis

Keshel, of Texas, is a retired US Army captain with an extensive background in military intelligence. His resume lists leading a range of statistical projects and business analysis in the Army, health care, oil and gas industry, and professional baseball.

Many of his election-related efforts have been focused on the hotbed of controversy in Arizona, which was one of the final states to be called in 2020. Since then, Arizona and its Maricopa County have had an even more bitter battle over its 2022 Katie Hobbs vs. Kari Lake governor election. Court cases are still in progress.

With numerical data in hand, Keshel classifies his findings into three groups: high/likely fraud, suspect/possible fraud, and low/no fraud, and they are correspondingly mapped as red, yellow, or green to give a visual display. The local counties have a mix of all three colors, the maps show.



"I have always offered my findings freely and am willing to be proven wrong," Keshel wrote. "In fact, if I were proven wrong, a lot of people would be put at ease, because then we would have confidence our elections are run with integrity, and the results that come from them are trustworthy."

Having analyzed most of Arizona, his method was extended nationally with the Precinct Mapping Project. As it grew, the effort was coordinated with the Election Fairness Institute (EFI) of Phoenix, AZ, and formally launched in October. EFI describes itself as "a 501(c)(3) non-profit public interest research organization engaged in election process analysis and publication of research for the purpose of advancing transparent, secure and fair elections, free of special interest influence."

Nationally, there are 3,143 counties – or equivalent units – each of them divided into multiple precincts. In Henrico County, VA, the Precinct Mapping Project's work led to findings of voter turnout exceeding 100 percent in several precincts, one by as much as 15 percent, <u>Keshel reported.</u>

As of late February, nationally about one-tenth of precincts had been mapped by PMP. Sponsors contribute a fee based on county size which goes toward paying staff members to gather data and create the graphics.

For further detail on Keshel's methods and analysis, see these links (case-sensitive):

- <u>bit.ly/precinct-mapping</u>
- <u>bit.ly/electionoverview</u>

Rebuttals

"The Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State (SOS) has reviewed the documents provided to us by the Herald Journal," responded Deputy Communications Director/Press Secretary Cassondra Kundson. "These documents seem to use an unsubstantiated – and widely debunked – form of predictive modeling as a basis for allegations of 'election fraud.' We've found that none of the data provided in these documents has analytical value or merit, nor does it offer any form of evidence for its claims.

"Additionally, our office has been in contact with election officials from Wright and Carver counties and has found they have followed election procedures required by law. The official election results in these counties have been rigorously reviewed and verified by local and state election officials and confirmed to be accurate," she wrote.

Asked for further explanation of the "debunking," the secretary of state's office provided links to "fact-checking" articles which state Keshel's methods are not valid and there is "no evidence" of fraud. They are: <u>AP | Reuters | USA TODAY</u>

Responding for Carver County, Property and Finance Director David Frischmon said that "trend analysis of voter registrations versus actual votes from the 2020 election is obviously not evidence of election fraud."

PMP states it is not claiming proof, but is pointing to areas where interested persons should look to most likely find election irregularities, Election Fairness Institute Director Mark Finchem told the Herald Journal.

That involves an in-depth study of specific local voter rolls, paying particular attention for "impermissible addresses" – such as votes attributed to commercial addresses (a voter must have a legal residential address), or an unrealistic number of votes from a specific address, such as an apartment building of a certain size. "It's about the address, not the person," Finchem said.

Along those lines, the American Experiment (AE) based in Golden Valley reported in January on its <u>look into voter rolls</u>. Among its findings was an apartment in Minneapolis with six registered voters, three of which had near-identical names differing by only a single letter. In the same building, there were two other registered voters with the same name differing by one letter, living in adjacent apartments.

Further, American Experiment found 36 currently registered voters in the Fifth Congressional District who are age 123 or older. One person who passed away in 2021 updated her registration in October 2022 to a new address and is currently eligible to vote this year, according to AE.

Carver County's Frischmon stated: "Fact: every ballot cast in Minnesota is associated with a registered, eligible voter. When someone registers to vote in Minnesota, they must prove that they are who they say they are and that they live where they say they live. There are many ways provided in state law to be able to show that proof. All voter registrations are verified with records from the Department of Public Safety (driver's licenses and state IDs), the Social Security Administration, and other data.

"Before any ballot goes to a voter – whether by mail or in person – they must swear an oath that they are eligible to vote and acknowledge that it is a felony to falsify information on their absentee ballot application or registration," Frischmon wrote.

From Wright County Administration, the response to Herald Journal's inquiry was: "Wright County has full faith in the 2020 general election results in our county. Wright County conducted investigations into allegations of absentee-voter impropriety and those allegations were unfounded. Wright County conducted a hand count post-election review, which validated the election results."

On his Substack blog, Keshel wrote: "As always, I am more than happy to have someone prove me wrong, not by re-counting fake ballots, but by auditing ballots to see if they were cast by real, living human beings that somehow defied established trends."

Both the Secretary of State's office and Wright County encouraged anyone with allegations of election crimes to contact local law enforcement.

Knudson of SOS also pointed to "<u>extensive election security measures</u> ... before, during, and after election day" including:

• Requiring all Minnesotans to register before they vote. Voter registrations in our state are continuously maintained using a rigorous data-matching process with local, state, and federal partners to remove registrations of inactive voters and those who have moved or died.

• Requiring voters who choose to vote absentee by mail to meet additional security standards, which include matching a personal identification number entered upon request and return of the ballot.

• Requiring that the number of ballots cast in each precinct match the number of voters who signed the roster on election day or a voter certificate if voting by mail or absentee.

• Requiring a post-election review where election judges perform hand recounts from

randomized sample precincts with paper ballots to ensure they properly correlate with the counts produced by ballot tabulators.

Local responses

Although much election management responsibility is at the county level, Herald Journal also reached out to all 11 local precincts that were mapped yellow or red, offering the opportunity for comment. The only one responding was this:

• City of Mayer: "At this time the City of Mayer has no comment on fraudulent activity related to the local administration of elections. If there are questions about the absentee and/or mail-in voting process; the City of Mayer is not involved in that process. Carver County administers the absentee/mail-in process entirely. If there are questions about who may have been on the voter rosters; again, the City of Mayer is not involved in their creation. We do not have the ability to alter or change those voter rosters. The City of Mayer receives the rosters from Carver County."

Another view

Rick Weible is a former mayor of St. Bonifacius with a political science degree from the University of Minnesota, now living in South Dakota and operating a company specializing in technology security. A cybersecurity consultant, he hacked into a Konnech poll pad when Hennepin County began using them in 2016, so St. Boni opted to use paper voter rolls.

Weible is a recognized <u>leader in promoting election integrity</u>. His efforts often focus on recommending hand counts of paper ballots instead of machine tabulation as a means of assuring voter intent is properly accounted for and avoiding electronic tampering.

He explained there has been a significant change in Minnesota demographics from 10 and 20 years ago – many people who voted then have now been replaced with young people who became old enough or others who immigrated; it is a different base of voters.

Asked to comment on PMP's reports, he responded: "I am not in agreement with the conclusions of the data and see there are missing pieces that offer simple explanations as to the changing demographics in Minnesota.

"First, in many of the areas, there has been a significant increase in senior care living and multi-family housing; these types of communities typically lean more Democrat than Republican. Also over the past few years, the Minnesota SOS office has been encouraging more outreach by county officials to increase the voting participation of those in nursing homes. Those two items are impacting elections around the metro area and in Duluth. The

voter histories show that very clearly," he said.

"Secondly, it is interesting to see that when we look at the turnout from 2018 to 2022 in the governor's race, the turnout for Republicans increased in Hennepin and Carver Counties, but in Greater Minnesota, it cratered by double digits – which in greater Minnesota has nothing to do with fraud, but have everything to do with the success of candidates and the party to encourage Republicans to turn out to vote. In Greater Minnesota, in 2022, there was a significant increase in college campus voter turnout; the Democrats were very successful in messaging regarding 'abortion rights' and we can see that in the turnout in the data," Weible commented.

Asked directly about PMP, Weible said such an effort needs to consider specific details about how areas have changed. "If you look at raw numbers, you could misinterpret. If you understand the growth . . . as part of a larger picture, then maybe you have something," he said.

The reports

To either accept or reject Precinct Mapping Project's findings involves a deeper look into the method and data with personal discernment.

Herald Journal compiled individual tables of population and voting history for each precinct in the readership area that was mapped red or yellow by PMP so readers can evaluate the data for themselves.

For comparison, tables are also included for the core readership cities of Winsted and Cokato which were mapped green, plus red-mapped Waconia, Otsego, and Chaska.

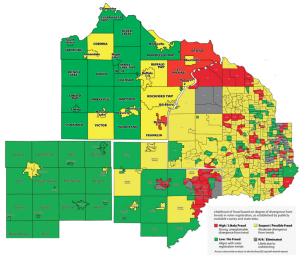
Here are the compiled data files:

- Local precinct compilations complete file
- <u>Wright County</u> individual precinct files: <u>Cokato</u> | <u>Delano</u> with additional breakdown | <u>Franklin Twp</u> | <u>Howard Lake</u> | <u>Montrose</u> | <u>Otsego</u> | <u>Victor Twp</u> | <u>Waverly</u>
- <u>Carver County</u> individual precinct files: <u>Camden Twp</u> | <u>Chaska</u> | <u>Mayer</u> | <u>Waconia</u> | <u>Watertown city</u> | <u>Watertown Twp</u>
- <u>McLeod County</u> individual precinct files: <u>Lester Prairie</u> with additional breakdown | <u>Winsted</u>
- Comparison of <u>PMP estimates and voter turnout</u>

In <u>Minnesota</u>, the Precinct Mapping Project identifies the Twin Cities metro area plus Duluth/St. Louis County and Rochester/Olmsted County as the areas most likely to have been utilized for organized fraud.

In the metro area, Wright and Carver Counties were cited along with Hennepin, Ramsey, Anoka, Washington, Scott, and Dakota.

<u>Hennepin County's mapping</u> was recently completed. It does not show any distinct geographic pattern but is dominated by yellow and red colors with 47 of the county's 425 precincts flagged as having "high statistical indication of manipulation," the report said. PMP estimates 68,623 fraudlent votes in Hennepin County, about 9% of the total.



Precinct Mapping Project: Wright, Hennepin, Carver, McLeod Counties MN

Also, see the <u>accompanying table that compares voter turnout</u> with PMP's estimate of potentially fraudluent votes.

Comparison of PMP Estimates and Turnout							
	2020	2016	2012	2008			
Wright County							
Approx. voting age population*	108,829	102,100	97,892	91,888			
Total votes cast	82,723	70,122	68,103	65,749			
Turnout - votes: voting age pop.	76%	69%	70%	71%			
PMP estimate of fraudluent votes in 2020: Votes cast minus PMP estimate: Turnout with PMP estimate removed:	7,930 74,793 69%						
Carver County							
Approx. voting age population*	82,330	77,428	72,060	69,004			
Total votes cast	66,712	56,156	53,079	49,806			
Turnout - votes: voting age pop.	81%	72%	74%	72%			
PMP estimate of fraudluent votes in 2020: Votes cast minus PMP estimate: Turnout with PMP estimate removed:	3,576 63,136 77%						
McLeod County							
Approx. voting age population*	28,314	27,607	27,800	28,713			
Total votes cast	21,031	18,945	18,650	19,124			
Turnout - votes: voting age pop.	74%	69%	67%	67%			
PMP estimate of fraudluent votes in 2020: Votes cast minus PMP estimate: Turnout with PMP estimate removed:	1,663 19,368 68%						

For example, Wright County's turnout percentage was 69%, 70%, and 71% in the previous

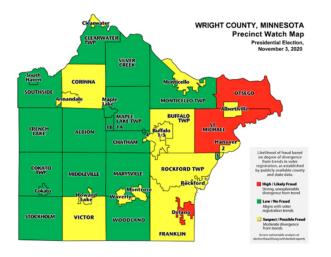
three elections, increasing to 76% in 2020. Subtracting PMP's estimate would bring the turnout to 69%.

Calculations for McLeod County were very similar while Carver County's was to a lesser degree.

Wright County

In Wright County, Delano, St. Michael, and Otsego were flagged as "red" areas with high/likely fraud. County-wide, PMP estimates 7,930 fraudulent votes.

"Five of the county's 43 precinct equivalents rank high for statistical evidence of election manipulation in the 2020 presidential race, with each such precinct containing an estimate of at least 200 votes, ranging up to 800 or more (Otsego 1A)," PMP's report stated. "In particular, the eastern half of Wright County appears to be impacted by ballot harvesting gangs operating out of Hennepin County."



Those listed as the "worst" precincts, not in any particular order, were Otsego 1A and 2A, St. Michael 1A and 1B, and Delano.

"All precincts in the worst precincts list should be prioritized for canvassing to identify voter registration illegalities, particularly in Otsego and St. Michael, which contributed what appears to be staggering amounts of fraudulent votes in the 2020 presidential contest," the report recommended.

As the only red-mapped area in the immediate Herald Journal readership area, here is a closer look at Delano (also see the accompanying tables):

		2020		2016		2012		2008
Population		6,484		5,947		5,548		5,359
Approx. voting-age population ¹		4,993		4,579		4,272		4,126
Pre-registered voters		4,141		3,630		3,293		3,032
Same-day registration		360		344		414		515
Total registrations		4,501		3,974		3,707		3,547
Number voting in person		1,657		2,479		2,800		2,641
Absentee and mail-in ballots		2,288		838		355		315
Other absentee ²		0		0		2		0
Total votes cast		3,945		3,317		3,157		2,956
Ratio for votes: registrations		88%		83%		85%		83%
Turnout - votes: voting age pop.		79%		72%		74%		72%
Votes for Republican candidate	2,228	(56%)	1,847	(56%)	1,841	(58%)	1,738	(59%)
Votes for Democrat candidate	1,604	(41%)	1,109	(33%)	1,219	(39%)	1,160	(39%)
Votes for other/no candidates		113		361		97		58
 77% of total population based on sta who moved away within 30 days of elec Sources: Voting/election data from MN Census. 	ction.							l those

Delano additional breakdown								
	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016	2020		
Population	3,897	4,268	5,359	5,548	5,947	6,484		
Voting-age population*	3,001	3,286	4,126	4,272	4,579	4,993		
Total votes cast	1,899	2,426	2,956	3,157	3,317	3,945		
Turnout	63%	74%	72%	74%	72%	79%		
Republican votes	1,080 (58%)	1,494 (62%)	1,738 (59%)	1,841 (58%)	1,847 (56%)	2,228 (56%)		
Democrat votes	699 (37%)	897 (37%)	1,160 (39%)	1,219 (39%)	1,109 (33%)	1,604 (41%)		
	Inci	ease/decrease	e between con	secutive elect	ions			
		2000 to 2004	2004 to 2008	2008 to 2012	2012 to 2016	2016 to 2020		
Population		+10%	+26%	+4%	+7%	+9%		
Turnout		+9%	-2%	+2%	-2%	+7%		
Total votes cast		+28%	+22%	+7% +5%		+19%		
* Voting-age population based on 77% of total population. Sources: MN Secretary of State, MN State Demographer, US Census.								

Keshel explained to Herald Journal his analysis of Delano's voting. "Political trend is a powerful tool," he said.

In Delano in 2012, Romney received 1,841 votes to 1,219 for Obama, a 58% to 39% margin.

In 2016, Trump got only 6 votes more, to 1,847, while Clinton's total slipped to 1,109. With effectively no gain in votes, Trump's margin improved by 2.6%. That year also saw a larger than normal third-party share of votes, which could normally be divided between the major candidates, he said.

With that history, Biden in 2020 could be expected to be below 1,200 votes from Delano, Keshel said, but Biden received 1,604. Despite Trump gaining 380 votes more in 2020 than 2016, Biden saw an increase of 495 votes above the Democrat total in 2016, and 385 more than Obama as an incumbent in 2012.

"That is only achievable by flooding the voter rolls," Keshel said. His estimate is there were at least 200 votes from Delano in question.

The "worst" precinct in Wright County by Keshel's calculation was Otsego Ward 1A with potentially more than 800 suspect votes.

There, in 2012, Romney outpaced Obama 2,277 to 1,384, margins of 61% and 37%.

Otsego is a fast-growing area, Keshel noted, but is trending to vote Republican.

In 2016, Trump received 2,836 votes, 559 more than Romney (63% share), while Clinton was at 1,284, 100 fewer than Obama.

In 2020, while Trump gained another 953 votes totaling 3,789 for 62%, Biden got 2,191 votes, an increase of 907.

With 82,273 total votes in Wright County in 2020, PMP's estimate of 7,930 fraudulent votes translates to 9.6 percent.

Other areas mapped as yellow, meaning suspect/possible fraud, included Howard Lake, Waverly, Montrose, and Victor Township, as well as the areas around Buffalo, Monticello, Rockford, Annandale, and Clearwater. Tables of population and voting history are included here for each of the local yellow-mapped precincts.

The trend

The trend Keshel identified in Delano and Otsego is also seen in many of the other local precincts and Wright County as a whole.

That is a gain in votes by the Republican party in each election while the Democrats saw a drop in 2016 before a spike in 2020.

Speaking in Monticello in 2022, Keshel demonstrated with historical results how the pendulum swings between parties over time. When either party has a substantial gain in one election, it is at the expense of the other, he said. That wasn't the case in 2020.



In Wright County, Trump in 2016 gained 2,808 votes from Romney's performance in 2012 while Clinton saw a drop of 5,407 from Obama's 2012 total.

Then in 2020, while Trump received 8,699 more votes than his first run, Biden had a gain of

8,096 votes.

The same trend is evident in Minnesota's state-wide totals.

Keshel pointed out that nationally Trump was the first incumbent president since the 1800s to gain votes and lose an election. This was despite receiving 11 million more votes than while winning in 2016, and 12 million more than Obama received as an incumbent, he said.

(Update: a detailed explanation of how data is used for precinct mapping is available here.)

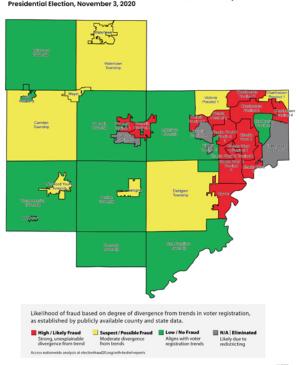
Carver County

In Carver County, a similar pattern emerged along the eastern edge near Hennepin County.

Mapped as red (high/likely fraud) were Chanhassen, Victoria, Chaska, and Carver plus two of Waconia's three precincts.

In all, PMP estimates 3,576 fraudulent votes in Carver County with those cities above making up the "worst" list.

The report summarizes: "Carver County is a Republican stronghold . . . that has supported every GOP presidential nominee since 1936, defying even New Deal trends favoring Democrats in the region. In 2020, the Republican nominee posted the third highest total of net new votes in the county but finished with the closest margin of victory since 1996, a year impacted heavily by a third party candidate.



CARVER COUNTY, MINNESOTA Precinct Watch Map

"14 of the county's 36 precinct equivalents rank high for statistical evidence of election manipulation in the 2020 presidential race, with each such precinct containing an estimate of at least 150 fraudulent votes, ranging up to 600 or more (Chaska Ward 1).

"As is the case in neighboring Wright County, Carver County's eastern extremity appears to be impacted by ballot harvesting gangs operating out of Hennepin County, with relatively little impact to the western half of the county, despite many large precinct equivalents existing there."

Areas in Carver County mapped yellow included the cities of Mayer, Watertown, Norwood Young America, and Cologne, plus Camden and Watertown Townships.

Watertown and Mayer, both mapped yellow, also had the same pattern seen in Wright County. Red-mapped Waconia and Chaska were also similar but did show a stronger Democrat performance in 2012 and 2016. The common element again was significant vote gains for both parties in 2020. See the accompanying tables for details.

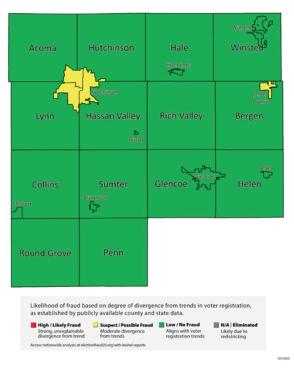
Carver County had 66,712 votes cast in 2020. PMP's estimate of 3,576 fraudulent votes is a 5.4 percent rate.

McLeod County

McLeod County mapped much cleaner coming up green (low/no fraud) everywhere except for Lester Prairie and Hutchinson, which were tabbed as yellow.

With fraudulent votes estimated at 1,663, PMP states: "McLeod contains little statistical indication of election manipulation relative to adjacent suburban Twin Cities counties, with just 4 of 28 precinct equivalents rating even moderate for signs of malfeasance. All precincts appearing in the worst precincts list should be prioritized for canvassing to identify voter registration illegalities, especially those around the county's largest city, Hutchinson, where three of the designated moderate precincts appear."

McLEOD COUNTY, MINNESOTA Precinct Watch Map Presidential Election, November 3, 2020



However, despite appearing mostly "green," PMP's estimate of 1,663 fraudulent votes is 7.9% of McLeod County's 21,031 total in 2020.

Lester Prairie's data showed a different type of variation.

In 2016 and 2020, Lester Prairie had a nearly identical number of people voting in person: 842 and 836 respectively.

With an increase in population, the number of registrations and votes cast was correspondingly higher, however, almost the entire increase was by absentee/mail-in voting; only 15 people registered on election day.

Reader reaction is invited through a letter to the editor or commeting at the end of this article.

Summary of links and references

- Short link for this article: bit.ly/electionWCM
- Download printable version of this article (pdf)
- Download local data files (pdf)
- Complete list of links and references in one location at bit.ly/electionWCM2

Commentary: follow-up questions from election fraud story

March 15, 2024

By Dale Kovar

If someone says he sees smoke near your house, do you want to check if there's a fire?

This week, we present <u>an extensive report about the topic of organized election fraud</u> <u>reaching into our local counties</u>.

Let's get right to the big question: why would you publish such a thing?

We understand some of you are unhappy, even offended, that we give so much attention to the topic of election fraud. It is an unpopular subject, one that we'd prefer didn't exist.

But does election fraud exist? Is there illegal drug trade in our area? How about financial scams? Less likely but not impossible are human trafficking, child porn exchanges, counterfeiting, money laundering, and fencing stolen goods.

All of those involve a coordinated interaction for some type of personal benefit, while sharing a common trait of preferring to not be noticed. Can we honestly say "That doesn't happen here."?

We have the rare opportunity to take a serious national issue and incorporate it with local data so you as citizens can see for yourselves and make your own judgment.

Reporting this is a daunting task, one that many media outlets seem to avoid, for whatever reasons. But society is best served when there can be open, public discussions about the difficult topics. We need to think about them and talk about them if there is to be any hope of making things better.

Based on historical patterns, a national organization is stating that there seem to be parts of our local area that have been affected by election fraud. Like a medical lab test that gives results outside of an expected normal range, it is a signal that, hmmmm, we probably ought to look closer.

We strove to present a balanced report in good old "he said, she said" fashion.

There's a national organization, the Precinct Mapping Project (PMP), that says election fraud probably occurred in our area. Local election officials vouch that their results and procedures are true and valid.

Might they both be right, at least to some degree?

All along, we did not and do not claim any wrongdoing locally. PMP says it appears ballot harvesting activity in Hennepin County spilled into areas of our counties.

Is it possible, or even probable, that fraud can be accomplished within the framework of the current election system, even when local officials follow the laws and procedures flawlessly?

We compiled data tables of population and voting history for each of the local precincts that were called into question. It's a grueling amount of information but it allows you to focus right in to your home area to see if you agree or disagree with what they're talking about.

We ask that you don't just swallow the idea of fraud, but also don't just dismiss it. Please take the time to examine the concept and data to form your own opinion about its accuracy and impact.

Then let's have that open, public discussion – preferably in a respectful manner aimed at finding solutions, not making further enemies.

Here are a few more questions:

- How can elections be improved so everyone can be confident in the validity and trust the reported results?
- How can voting be reasonably accessible to those eligible to vote, yet tightly restricted to only those?
- What are the costs?
- What can be done in time for this year's election cycle?
- What actions can be taken at the county level to protect our votes from potential outside manipulation?
- And the most important question of all: what do YOU think?