

**Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance Technical Committee**  
Tuesday, January 31, 2023 – WebEx by Phone or Computer Connection

**Present:**

Ashley Brenke  
Dave Bucklin  
Andy Geiger  
Al Gleisner  
Laura Quiring  
Carrie Schultz  
Brenda Lageson  
Anna Fairbanks  
Paul Davis

**Representing:**

Martin SWCD  
GBERBA Coordinator  
Jackson County  
Brown SWCD  
Watonwan SWCD  
Watonwan SWCD  
Freeborn SWCD  
Conservation Corps  
MPCA

**Present:**

Kay Gross  
Dan Bartosh  
Allison Kletcher  
Jake Fritz  
Scott Salsbury  
Breanna Wagner  
Chantill Kahler-Royer  
Jill Sackett Eberhart  
Rick Moore

**Representing:**

Cottonwood County  
Jackson SWCD  
Brown County  
Blue Earth SWCD  
Blue Earth County  
Cottonwood SWCD  
Martin SWCD Supervisor  
BWSR  
DNR MN-IT

**Call to Order:** GBERBA Technical Committee was called to order by Vice Chair Ashley Brenke the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m.

**Introductions**

**Election of 2023 Officers**

Nomination of Ashley Brenke as Chair and Andy Geiger as Vice Chair.

Motion by Dave Bucklin, second by Carrie Schultz to cast a unanimous ballot with Ashley Brenke as Chair and Andy Geiger as Vice Chair.

Motion carried, all yes.

**Agenda:** Motion by Al Gleisner, second by Carrie Schultz to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried, all yes.

**Minutes:** Motion by Jake Fritz, second by Dave Bucklin to approve the December 16, 2022, Technical Committee Meeting minutes. Motion carried, all yes.

**INFORMATION ACTION:**

**GBERBA Cost-Share Contract Approval - FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483)**

Chad Lange	83-27(WBIF-WW-21)	Well Decommissioning – 1 no.	Cost \$465.00	C-S \$232.50
Chad Lange	83-28(WBIF-WW-21)	Well Decommissioning – 1 no.	Cost \$995.00	C-S \$497.50
Doug Sieg	83-29(WBIF-WW-21)	Well Decommissioning – 1 no.	Cost \$1,070.00	C-S \$535.00
Doug Sieg	83-30(WBIF-WW-21)	Well Decommissioning – 1 no.	Cost \$1,070.00	C-S \$535.00

Motion by Jake Fritz, second by Carrie Schultz to approve the GBERBA Cost-Share contract - FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483) for Chad Lange (WBIF-WW-21-83-27) Well Decommissioning (\$232.50), Chad Lange (WBIF-WW-21-83-28) Well Decommissioning (\$497.50), Doug Sieg (WBIF-WW-21-73-29) Well Decommissioning (\$535.00) and Doug Sieg (WBIF-WW-21-83-30) Well Decommissioning (\$535.00). Motion carried, all yes.

**GBERBA Cost-Share Contract Amendment - FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483)**

Neil Keitzer 83-26(WBIF-WW-21) Landowner Change to Neil Kettner and Effective Life to Perpetuity

Motion by Carrie Schultz second by Dave Bucklin to approve the GBERBA Cost-Share contract amendment - FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483) for Neil Keitzer (WBIF-WW-21-83-26) landowner change to Neil Kettner and effective life to perpetuity.

Motion carried, all yes.

**GBERBA Cost-Share Payment Approval - FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483)**

Andrew Karau	83-18(WBIF-WW-21)	Well Decommissioning	Cost \$845.00	C-S \$422.50
Paul Bergling	83-19(WBIF-WW-21)	Well Decommissioning	Cost \$500.00	C-S \$250.00
Neil Kettner	83-26(WBIF-WW-21)	Well Decommissioning	Cost \$850.00	C-S \$425.00

Motion by Carrie Schultz, second by Jake Fritz to approve the GBERBA Cost-Share contract final payments FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483) for Andrew Karau 83-18(WBIF-WW-21) Well Decommissioning (\$422.50), Paul Bergling 83-19(WBIF-WW-21) Well Decommissioning (\$250.00) and Neil Kettner 83-26(WBIF-WW-21) Well Decommissioning (\$425.00).

Motion carried, all yes.

**Review GBERBA Cost-Share Grant Balances and Financial Report**

**Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant**

BWSR Work Plan revision request has been completed and approved by BWSR.

**1W1P Le Sueur River Comprehensive Plan**

The Le Sueur 1W1P document is out for 60-day comment. Haley Byron with Waseca County will continue to act as coordinator for the 1W1P effort for implementation and Waseca SWCD will do the fiscal coordination. The group will be working on Joint Powers Collaboration, By-laws, and policy for implementation.

**Watonwan Drinking Water Protection Grant**

Work Plan revision request was sent to BWSR on January 30 (yesterday).

**MDH Accelerated Implementation Grant: Groundwater Protection Initiative**

The MN Department of Health is working on an extension for this grant effective June 30, 2024. First mailing is being sent out as of January 1, with an emphasis on MN Nutrient Management Initiative through the MN Department of Agriculture. Approximately 1,218 letters and brochures were sent out by Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Martin and Watonwan SWCDs/Counties.

**BWSR CWF- GBERBA Soil Health Implementation – Grant 43**

Program start date 11-7-2022. The first training for JAA is being held on Tuesday, February 14 and will focus on Crop Rotation, No-Till, Reduce Till, RUSLE and WEPS. NRCS just announced a cover crop training for JAA, which was sent to all offices yesterday. Please sign up early, our first training filled in 24 hours.

Also working on the Hwy-14 and I90 CLASIC (Crop, Livestock and Soil Innovation Conferences. GBERBA will be assisting with sponsorship of the Heron Lake, Fairmont, Sleepy Eye and Owatonna sites.

**February Meeting Date Change**

Motion by Jake Fritz, second by Carrie Schultz to approve the meeting date change for the February Technical Committee meeting to Friday, February 17 at 9:30 a.m. by WebEx.

**Coordinator Report: Dave Bucklin and Kay Gross**

**★ MN Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program**

Update on progress made in areas 5 and 6 – See Certification Specialist Reports. Over 910,000 acres and over 1250 certified producers statewide! **That is over 1,421 square miles and equals more than Cottonwood and Watonwan counties combined!** The Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program has launched four new endorsements in addition to 10-year certification a farmer or landowner receives in the program. The endorsements are for soil health, integrated pest management, wildlife, and climate smart.

Interviews were conducted on December 9 with Anna Fairbanks accepting the MN Corps MAWQCP 2023 position and she started at the Cottonwood SWCD office on January 18.

**★ Watonwan River Watershed - Implementation Grant**

Working with vendor to update and add pages to the GBERBA website to accommodate the Watonwan River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan and Water Based Implementation Funding grants.

As of December 16, we have encumbered or paid for \$418,193.86 with \$282,283.14 remaining.

<b>Breakdown:</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Funding Allotted</b>	<b>Remaining</b>	<b>Encumbered</b>	<b>Paid</b>
	Administration	\$100,157	\$53,373.89		\$46,783.11
	BMPs	\$510,320	\$157,269.47	\$319,017.62	\$34,032.91
	Tech/Eng.	\$10,000	\$10,000		
	Project Dev.	\$15,000	\$11,790.12		\$3,209.88
	Inventory/Map.	\$5,000	\$5,000		
	Planning/Asses.	\$45,000	\$30,000		\$15,000.00
	Education/Infor.	\$15,000	\$14,849.66		\$150.34
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$700,477</b>	<b>\$282,283.14</b>	<b>\$319,017.62</b>	<b>\$99,176.24</b>
			<b>(40%)</b>		

★ **1W1P Le Sueur River Watershed Comprehensive Plan**

The Le Sueur 1W1P document is out for 60-day comment. Haley Byron with Waseca County will continue to act as coordinator for the 1W1P effort for implementation and Waseca SWCD will do the fiscal coordination. The group will be working on Joint Powers Collaboration, By-laws, and policy for implementation.

★ **CWF 2020 Watonwan Drinking Water Grant**

Will be completing a request to BWSR for a Work Plan Revision.

★ **MDH 2022 Watonwan Groundwater Protection Accelerated Implementation Grant**

First mailing is being sent out as of January 1, with an emphasis on MN Nutrient Management Initiative through the MN Department of Agriculture. Approximately 1,218 letters and brochures were sent out by Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Martin and Watonwan SWCDs/Counties. We are working with the MDH to get an extension for one year.

State grant funds total \$21,898 with a grant start date of July 15, 2022 and ending June 30, 2023. The Cottonwood and Watonwan staff have met and will be working on groundwater education/outreach efforts from the Watonwan Comprehensive Watershed Mgmt. Plan. Displays – Livestock, Irrigation, Nutrient Mgmt., and the purchase of a rainfall simulator. Brochures – Livestock, MAWQCP, Irrigation, Nutrient Mgmt., Groundwater Quality. Mailings – MAWQCP, Groundwater and Irrigation, Well and Water Quality Testing, Field Day.

★ **BWSR Soil Health Grant**

BWSR has awarded GBERBA a Soil Health Implementation Grant totaling \$312,100 with a match requirement of \$31,210.

First training for JAA will be held on Tuesday, February 14 with a focus on Crop Rotation, , No-Till, Reduce-Till and RUSLE & WEPS.

**Staff Report:**

**Area 6 Certification Specialist** – Herman Bartsch – Written Report

**Area 5 Certification Specialist** – Danielle Evers – Written Report

**Conservation Corp Member** – Anna Fairbanks – Written Report

**Agency Reports:**

**BWSR** – Jill Sackett-Eberhart – Grant reporting is here with deadline February 1. Elink will be ending and a new system being implementing with training for staff in the coming months. Three watersheds need to be started this next year in Southern MN of which Blue Earth is included (open April and close in June and awarded at BWSR August Board Meeting). Jill will be going on leave in April and coming back in August, Dave Copeland will be working with Jill's watersheds.

**DNR** – Katie Wigen – Not in Attendance

**MPCA** - Paul Davis – Blue Earth TMDL comments back from EPA and the WRAPS will be reviewed before public comment. Monitoring meeting for Watonwan Cycle 2 this Friday, February 3. Working to see what will be doing for Cycle 2 of the Le Sueur.

**DNR-MNIT** – Rick Moore – MN East and West will be collected this spring for LiDAR, looking for data for leaf on dates. Looking to see how to disseminate the data. Future presentation on high resolution.

**MSU-WRC** – Kim Musser – Not in Attendance

The meeting was declared adjourned at 10:55 a.m. by Vice Chair Ashley Brenke.

**Upcoming Meetings**

Policy Board Meeting	Friday, March 17, 2023	1:00 p.m.
Technical Committee Meeting	Friday, February 17, 2023	9:30 a.m.
Executive Board Meeting	Friday, February 17, 2023	1:00 p.m.

Secretary's signature of approved minutes \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_