

**Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance Technical Committee**  
Friday, February 17, 2023 – WebEx by Phone or Computer Connection

**Present:**

Ashley Brenke  
Dave Bucklin  
Brooke Judd  
Al Gleisner  
Laura Quiring  
Carrie Schultz  
Brenda Lageson  
Jill Sackett Eberhart  
Dave Copeland  
Rick Moore

**Representing:**

Martin SWCD  
GBERBA Coordinator  
Jackson SWCD  
Brown SWCD  
Watonwan SWCD  
Watonwan SWCD  
Freeborn SWCD  
BWSR  
BWSR  
DNR MN-IT

**Present:**

Kay Gross  
Dan Bartosh  
Allison Kletcher  
Jake Fritz  
Scott Salsbury  
Breanna Wagner  
Chantill Kahler-Royer  
Kim Musser  
Danielle Evers

**Representing:**

Cottonwood County  
Jackson SWCD  
Brown County  
Blue Earth SWCD  
Blue Earth County  
Cottonwood SWCD  
Martin SWCD Supervisor  
MSU-WRC  
Area 5 MAWQCP

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

**Introductions**

**Agenda:** Motion by Jake Fritz, second by Brenda Lageson to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried, all yes.

**Minutes:** Motion by Dave Bucklin, second by Al Gleisner to approve the January 31, 2023, 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)**

Jay Grandprey	31-01(WBIF-WW-21)	Critical Area Planting - .012 ac.	Cost \$800.00	C-S \$680.00
Kim & Curt Peterson	31-02(WBIF-WW-21)	Critical Area Planting – 0.05 ac.	Cost \$600.00	C-S \$510.00
Steph & Jim Smith	31-03(WBIF-WW-21)	Critical Area Planting – 0.10 ac.	Cost \$1,200.00	C-S \$1,020.00
Brian & Joan Heger	31-04(WBIF-WW-21)	Critical Area Planting – 0.004 ac.	Cost \$1,300.00	C-S \$1,105.00

Motion by Dan Bartosh, second by Dave Bucklin to approve the GBERBA Cost-Share contract - FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483) for Jay Grandprey (WBIF-WW-21-31-01) Critical Area Planting (\$680.00), Kim & Curt Peterson (WBIF-WW-21-31-02) Critical Area Planting (\$510.00), Steph & Jim Smith (WBIF-WW-21-31-03) (\$1,020.00.00) and Brian & Joan Heger (WBIF-WW-21-31-04) Critical Area Planting (\$1,105.00). Motion carried, all yes.

Consensus to add practice 342 Critical Area Planting to our cost-shore policy for shoreline protection.

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

**Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant**

Motion by Jake Fritz second by Dan Bartosh to increase the cover crop category by \$262.44 to complete a 70 acres single species contract (taking from Urban to Cover Crops).  
Motion carried, all yes.

**1W1P Le Sueur River Comprehensive Plan**

Out for 60-day review. The group will be working on Joint Powers Collaboration, By-laws, and policy for implementation. Wishing Haley Bryon, Waseca County, well in her new position at the DNR. March 3 is the next Policy Meeting and Steering Team is meeting on February 27.

**Watonwan Drinking Water Protection Grant**

Work Plan revision request was sent to BWSR on January 30, with review and submission of work plan revision questions concerning pollution reduction outcomes, permission was given to complete the work plan update through Elink.

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

The MN Department of Health is working on an extension for this grant effective June 30, 2024. Working to set up a committee meeting and put together a planning calendar to map out our objectives and timelines through 2023-2024.

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

The first training for JAA was held on Tuesday, February 14 and will focus on Crop Rotation, No-Till, Reduce Till, RUSLE and WEPS – 11 GBERBA staff members were in attendance. NRCS just announced a cover crop training for JAA with sites in Marshall, MN on Monday, March 27 or Austin, MN on Friday, March 31.

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.

**MAWQCP Agronomist Incentive**

Motion by Dave Bucklin, second by Al Gleisner to approve the request to the Executive Board to include the opportunity to get landowner referrals from local agronomists and pay an incentive if the referral results in a MAWQCP worksheet completion. Incentive would be \$50/referral and worksheet completion or \$100/referral and certification completion. Motion carried, all yes.

**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. Looking to add an incentive for agronomists who give landowner referrals that result in a MAWQCP worksheet completion.

Anna Fairbanks accepted the MN Corps MAWQCP 2023 position and she started at the Cottonwood SWCD office on January 18. She has been a real asset to the office.

**★ 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 January 31, we have encumbered or paid for \$426,419.47 with \$274,057.53 remaining.

<b>Breakdown:</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Funding Allotted</b>	<b>Remaining</b>	<b>Encumbered</b>	<b>Paid</b>
	Administration	\$100,157	\$46,925.78		\$53,231.22
	BMPs	\$510,320	\$155,491.97	\$319,697.62	\$35,130.41
	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>\$274,057.53</b>	<b>\$319,697.62</b>	<b>\$106,721.85</b>
			<b>(39%)</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**

The Work Plan Revision request submitted to BWSR, response received with discussion at GBERBA Technical meeting.

**★ 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. Working on a one year extension from MN Department of Health with end date of June 30, 2024.

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.

**PAGE 3**  
**GBERBA Technical Committee Meeting**  
**February 17, 2023**

☆ **BWSR Soil Health Grant**

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, please sign-up as soon as possible!

Also, working with the I90 and Hwy 14 Soil Health Workshops in Heron Lake, Fairmont, Sleepy Eye and Owatonna.

**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 – Next week is the last week with Elink and then shutting down to move to next generation Elink and training will be forthcoming. January 31 the webinar on RIM-Watershed Plans and is on the BWSR website – Easement Programs, and only for watersheds approved and implementing – RFP, checklist are all located there. Watershed Comprehensive Plan RFP should be coming in the next few months. Planning documents have been updated a few times and the new update will be include amendment process.

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

**MPCA** - Paul Davis – Not in Attendance

**DNR-MNIT** – Rick Moore – MN River LiDAR collection starting this spring.

**MSU-WRC** – Kim Musser – Grant from Fishers and Farmers looking at Soil Health, free seed, and technical advisor for 12 landowners. Reminder need interested farmers for long-term soil health information. Looking for career paths for ag professionals to help train for SWCD positions.

The meeting was declared adjourned at 11:20 a.m. by Chair Ashley Brenke.

**Upcoming Meetings**

Policy Board Meeting	Friday, March 17, 2023	1:00 p.m.
Technical Committee Meeting	Wednesday, March 22, 2023	9:30 a.m.
Executive Board Meeting	Friday, April 14, 2023	1:00 p.m.

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