

Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance Technical Committee
Wednesday, June 28, 2023 – WebEx by Phone or Computer Connection

Present:

Kay Gross
Ashley Brenke
Dan Bartosh
Melanie Krueger
Katia Ostermann
Carrie Schultz
Nathan Harder
Brooke Judd
Russ Hoogendoorn
Dawn Madison
Paul Davis
Katie Wigen

Representing:

Cottonwood County
Martin SWCD
Jackson SWCD
Brown SWCD
Brown SWCD
Watonwan SWCD
Cottonwood SWCD
Jackson SWCD
Southwest Prairie TSA
Southwest Prairie TSA
MPCA
DNR

Present:

Dave Bucklin
Allison Kletscher
Brenda Lageson
Jake Fritz
Scott Salisbury
Laura Quiring
Breanna Wagner
Eric Miller
Dave Copeland
Anna Fairbanks
Ryan Jones
John Shea

Representing:

GBERBA Coordinator
Brown County
Freeborn SWCD
Blue Earth SWCD
Blue Earth County
Watonwan SWCD
Cottonwood SWCD
Waseca County
BWSR
MN/IA Conservation Corps
Area 6 TSA
BWSR

Call to Order: GBERBA Technical Committee was called to order by Chair Ashley Brenke at 9:35 a.m.

Introductions

Agenda: Motion by Jake Fritz, second by Scott Salisbury to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried, all yes.

Minutes: Motion by Kay Gross, second by Carrie Schultz to approve the May 24, 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)

Robbe Carlson 83-32(WBIF-WW-21)	Well Decommissioning – 1 no.	Cost \$1,500.00	C-S \$750.00
Richard & Glennice 17-08(WBIF-WW-21)	Grass Waterway – 3.2 ac.	Cost \$26,554.00	C-S \$18,000.00
Hoek			

Motion by Dave Bucklin, second by Jake Fritz to approve the GBERBA Cost-Share contracts - FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483) for Carlson (WBIF-WW-21-83-32) Well Decommissioning (\$750.00) and Hoek (WBIF-WW-21-17-08) Grass Waterway (\$18,000.00).
Motion carried, all yes.

GBERBA FY2021 BWSR CWF – Watonwan Watershed Drinking Water Protection Grant Agreement (C21-8921)

City of Mt. Lake	17-04(CWF-WWDW-21)	Tree/Shrub Establishment – 89 no.	Cost \$6,002.80	C-S \$5,000.00
Mt. Lake Golf Course	17-05(CWF-WWDW-21)	Tree/Shrub Establishment – 56 no.	Cost \$6,160.00	C-S \$5,020.00
City of Windom	17-06(CWF-WWDW-21)	Tree/Shrub Est – 346 no.	Cost \$6,070.00	C-S \$5,000.00

Motion by Dave Bucklin, second by Dan Bartosh to approve the final payments for GBERBA cost-share contracts FY2021 BWSR CWF – Watonwan Watershed Drinking Water Protection Grant Agreement (C21-8921) for City of Mt. Lake (CWF-WWDW-21-17-04) Tree/Shrub Establishment (\$5,000.00), Mt. Lake Golf Course (CWF-WWDW-21-17-05) Tree/Shrub Establishment (\$5,020.00) and City of Windom (CWF-WWDW-21-17-06) Tree/Shrub Establishment (\$5,000.00).
Motion carried, all yes.

Review GBERBA Cost-Share Grant Balances

Financial Report

July Joint Policy Board/Technical Committee Meeting

Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant

Shoreland Protection Projects

Katie Wigen, DNR Hydrologist

Ryan Jones and Russ Hoogendoorn, Area 6 and Area 5 TSA Engineers

Shoreline

Two Categories

Vegetative Ecological (327) – 10 year – 85% C-S Maximum \$10,000

Enhanced Shoreline Practice (580+) – 85% C-S Maximum \$25,000

Request to move all Urban Practice funding \$9,737.56 to Shoreline Protection

Motion by Melanie Krueger, second by Carrie Schultz to include an additional cost-share category for Shoreline (Enhanced Shoreline Practice (580+) at 85% cost-share with a maximum per contract of \$25,000. Also request to move Urban Practice funding (\$9,737.56) to Shoreland Protection.

Motion carried, all yes.

BEAST – PTMApp Reporting Reductions Program (\$7,500.00)
 Motion by Kay Gross, second by Dave Bucklin to purchase the BEAST PTMApp Reporting Reduction Program from Houston Engineering Inc. for \$7,500.00. and pay out of Project Development.
 Motion carried, all yes.

Second Round of Funding – Request – September
 Sixty percent of WBIF grant is encumbered and paid out at this time. The ask for FY24 funding request will be needed before July 2023. Need to get the Steering Team together to discuss next 3 years. BWSR is not sure if extensions will be given.

1W1P Le Sueur River Planning Grant

The plan is out for 90-day review by State agencies. July Meeting of the BWSR Regional Southern Meeting with projected recommendation for approval by the BWSR Board in August.

Watowan Drinking Water Protection Grant

Working to finalize remaining funds with a Water Testing event in each County.
 Project funding left \$750.82 earmarked for well sealing has not been encumbered, request to move funding to Urban Forestry.

Motion by Dave Bucklin, second by Melanie Krueger to move the Well Decommissioning funding to Urban Forestry (\$750.82). Motion carried, all yes.

MDH Accelerated Implementation Grant: Groundwater Protection Initiative

Working on May 7-13 Drinking Water Week mailing/insert in utility billings and or paid informational advertising. Water Testing Event in each Watowan Watershed County. Second mailing/media project completed with 3,591 participants contacted.

CWF Soil Health Grant RFP Update

Working on grant promotion by SWCDs.

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 920,000 acres and over 1300 certified producers statewide! **That is more than double of all the land in Martin County!** The Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program has endorsements in addition to certification. The endorsements are for soil health, integrated pest management, wildlife, and climate smart.

A new incentive has been approved by the Technical Committee and Executive Board 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.

★ Watowan River Watershed - Implementation Grant

Working with HEI to update plan appendix T and U, changes sent (4-2023). Policy Board approved the purchase of MS4Front from HEI at a cost of \$20,700. Discussion on purchasing the BEAST software (\$7,500) from HEI will be discussed at Executive and Technical meetings, BWSR has stated we can purchase with WBIF grant funds.

As of June 16, we have encumbered or paid for \$523,733.64 with \$176,743.36 remaining.

Breakdown:	Category	Funding Allotted	Remaining	Encumbered	Paid
	Administration	\$120,857	\$32,920.82		\$87,936.18
	BMPs	\$510,320	\$88,423.87	\$385,270.72	\$36,625.41
	Tech/Eng.	\$10,000	\$10,000		
	Project Dev.	\$15,000	\$11,790.12		\$3,209.88
	Inventory/Map.	\$5,000	\$5,000		
	Planning/Asses.	\$24,300	\$9,300		\$15,000.00
	Education/Infor.	\$15,000	\$14,849.66		\$150.34
	TOTAL	\$700,477	\$172,284.47	\$385,270.72	\$142,921.81
			(25%)	(75%)	

★ 1W1P Le Sueur River Watershed Comprehensive Plan

The plan is out for 90-day review by State agencies. Working to schedule a BWSR Regional Southern Meeting with projected recommendation for approval to BWSR Board in August.

☆ CWF 2020 Watonwan Drinking Water Grant

The Drinking Water Grant is in its final year. The grant deadline is 12/31/2023. We are on target to finish the grant and use all funds available. Will focus on a summer event for water testing (testing will be paid for locally) and the grant will focus on advertising the event.

☆ MDH 2022 Watonwan Groundwater Protection Accelerated Implementation Grant

State grant funds total \$21,898 with a grant start date of July 15, 2022 and now ending June 28, 2024. A utility bill stuffer and advertisements (focusing on groundwater) is complete for Drinking Water Week May 7 – 13 with Watonwan County distributing 1849, Cottonwood County 925, Jackson County 125, Blue Earth County 501 and Brown County 191. Priority on completing a Nutrient Mgmt and Groundwater Overview display for the area fairs.

☆ BWSR SOIL HEALTH GRANT

Program start date 11-7-2022. Promotional efforts are now focusing on the available incentives for cover crops, no/strip-till, manure management, and CRP.

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 – Dave Copeland and John Shea – More WBIF funding after BWSR August Board Meeting. Competitive RFPs will be going out after today. NRBG thirty-six percent increase in funding for two years. General funding grants will be coming out in two-year increments – both will end December 2025, so both accessible. All WRAPS completed throughout the state.

DNR – Katie Wigen – Left early.

MPCA - Paul Davis – Blue Earth WRAPS process has been completed.

DNR-MNIT – Rick Moore – Not in attendance

MSU-WRC – Kim Musser – Not in attendance

The meeting was declared adjourned at 11:46 a.m. by Technical Committee Chair Ashley Brenke.

Upcoming Meetings

Policy Board/Technical Committee Meeting	Friday, July 14, 2023	9:30 a.m.
Executive Board Meeting	Friday, August 18, 2023	1:00 p.m.
Technical Committee Meeting	Wednesday, August 23, 2023	9:30 a.m.

Secretary's signature of approved minutes _____ Date: _____