

Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance Technical Committee
Wednesday, August 30, 2023 – WebEx by Phone or Computer Connection

Present:

Kay Gross
Ashley Brenke
Dan Bartosh
Melanie Krueger
Mark Schaetzke
Haley Johnson
Brooke Judd
Kim Musser
Adam Beilke
Katie Wigen
Erynn Jenzen

Representing:

Cottonwood County
Martin SWCD
Jackson SWCD
Brown SWCD
Waseca SWCD
Blue Earth SWCD
Jackson SWCD
MSU-WRC
BWSR
DNR
DNR

Present:

Dave Bucklin
Allison Kletscher
Brenda Lageson
Carrie Schultz
Eric Miller
Nathan Harder
Anna Fairbanks
Jill Sackett Eberhart
Paul Davis
John Shea
Ed Lenz

Representing:

GBERBA Coordinator
Brown County
Freeborn SWCD
Watonwan SWCD
Waseca County
Cottonwood SWCD
MN/IA Conservation Corps
BWSR
MPCA
BWSR
BWSR

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

Introductions

Agenda: Motion by Dave Bucklin, second by Carrie Schultz to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried, all yes.

Minutes: Motion by Carrie Schultz, second by Dan Bartosh to approve the July 14, 2023, Technical Committee Meeting minutes. Motion carried, all yes.

INFORMATION ACTION:

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

Ronald Thiessen 83-13(WBIF-WW-21) Grass Waterway Amendment #2 Increase C-S \$11,117.75 C-S \$29,329.67
New Cost \$34,505.50

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 Thiessen (WBIF-WW-21-83-13) Grass Waterway cost-share increase by \$11,117.75 to \$29,329.67.

Motion carried, all yes.

GBERBA – Cost-Share Contract Approval - FY2022 BWSR CWF – Soil Health Implementation Grant Agreement (C22-6072)

Bob Priebe 81-01(CWF-SH-22) CRP Incentive – 40 ac. 3 yr Incentive \$4,440.00

Motion by Dave Bucklin, second by Mark Schaetzke to approve the GBERBA Incentive Conservation Activity Reimbursement Contract FY22 BWSR CWF – Soil Health Implementation Grant (C22-6072) for Priebe 81-01(CWF-SH-22) CRP Incentive (\$4,440.00).

Motion carried, all yes.

GBERBA – Cost-Share Contract Approval – FY21 - CWF – Watonwan Watershed Drinking Water Protection Grant Agreement (C21-8921)

City of Mountain Lake 17-07(CWF-WWDW-21) Tree/Shrub Est. – 10 no. Cost \$900.00 C-S \$750.82

Motion by Dave Bucklin, second by Carrie Schultz to approve the GBERBA Cost-Share contract - FY21 - CWF – Watonwan Watershed Drinking Water Protection Grant Agreement (C21-8921) for City of Mountain Lake (CWF-WWDW-21-17-07) Tree/Shrub Establishment (\$750.82). Motion carried, all yes.

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

Roger D Schmeissing 83-33(WBIF-WW-21) Grade Stabilization – 1 no. Cost \$22,606.00 C-S \$19,215.10
Living Trust

Motion by Carrie Schultz, second by Dan Bartosh to approve the GBERBA Cost-Share contracts - FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483) for Schmeissing (WBIF-WW-21-83-33) Grade Stabilization (\$19,215.10).

Motion carried, all yes.

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

Dan & Cassie Warwick 83-25(WBIF-WW-21) Well Decommissioning – 1 no. Cost \$1,200.00 C-S \$600.00

Motion by Dave Bucklin, second by Carrie Schultz to approve the final payment GBERBA Cost-Share contracts - FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483) for Dan & Cassie Warwick (WBIF-WW-21-83-25) Well Decommissioning (\$600.00). Motion carried, all yes.

GBERBA Cost-Share Contract Final Payment Approval FY2022 BWSR CWF – Soil Health Implementation Grant Agreement (C22-6072)

Dan Bebernes 46-01(CWF-SH-22) CRP Incentive – 1.61 ac. Incentive \$322.00

Motion by Carrie Schultz, second by Dan Bartosh to approve final payment for GBERBA Incentive Conservation Activity Reimbursement Contract FY22 BWSR CWF – Soil Health Implementation Grant (C22-6072) for Bebernes 46-01(CWF-SH-22) CRP Incentive (\$322.00). Motion carried, all yes.

**Review GBERBA Cost-Share Grant Balances
Request to Move Funding – Grant 41 Policy**

Motion by Carrie Schultz, second by Melanie Krueger to request permission from Policy Board to move funding in the Grant 41 Policy (FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483)) \$13,247.82 from Shoreland Protection to Agricultural Practices.

Motion carried, all yes.

Financial Report

GBERBA 2022 Financial Statement (Audit Report)

Request for use of GBERBA General Funds - Discussion

Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant

Request for Funding

WBIF – 1,136,479 – Review Grant Policy

Bring together a meeting of the SSTS personnel in each County (Watonwan Watershed) before the September 20th Technical Meeting, will also include BWSR staff and SWCD staff – potential date of September 11.

Bring together a meeting for the BEAST roll-out and reductions for staff.

Posters and Banners completed and distributed.

Perch Creek – Discussion (Water Quality Tie - Needed)

If it is a bridge – it would be a no for clean water funds. Is there any cost-share for above and beyond means – fish barrier and connectivity. Funding from other means. Case by case.

1W1P Le Sueur River Planning/Implementation

Approved by the BWSR Board during the August meeting and moving toward implementation. Policy meeting is on September 22 for the Le Sueur in Freeborn County. Total implementation \$1.355 million.

Watonwan Drinking Water Protection Grant

Working to finalize remaining funds with a Water Testing event in each County.

MDH Accelerated Implementation Grant: Groundwater Protection Initiative

Banners completed and distributed to Watonwan Watershed members.

CWF Soil Health Grant RFP Update

Information/Database for Soil Health Farm Activities – Web Based Platform (Committee).

Email Nathan Harder and Kay Gross for committee members.

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 990,000 acres and over 1360 certified producers statewide! **The MAWQCP is just shy of ONE MILLION acres certified. That equals nearly 4% of all farm ground in Minnesota.** 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.

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GBERBA Technical Committee Meeting
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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 on second funding request with partners.

As of August 18, we have encumbered or paid for \$562,781.52 with \$137,695.48 remaining.

Breakdown:	Category	Funding Allotted	Remaining	Encumbered	Paid
	Administration	\$120,857	\$30,368.74		\$90,488.26
	BMPs	\$510,320	\$73,227.67	\$369,804.50	\$67,287.83
	Tech/Eng.	\$10,000	\$9,637.30		\$362.70
	Project Dev.	\$15,000	\$237.31		\$14,762.69
	Inventory/Map.	\$5,000	\$5,000		
	Planning/Asses.	\$24,300	\$9,300		\$15,000.00
	Education/Infor.	\$15,000	\$13,924.46		\$1,075.54
	TOTAL	\$700,477	\$141,695.48	\$369,804.50	\$188,977.02
			(20%)	(80%)	

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

The plan is out for 90-day review by State agencies. BWSR Southern Regional Meeting recommended approval at the full BWSR Board Meeting on August 23- 24.

★ **CBF 2020 Watowan 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 Watowan 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. Groundwater banners have been completed – two related to nutrient management and one focusing on groundwater in general. We will get them out as soon as possible to the respective offices.

★ **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 – Jill Sackett Eberhart, John Shea, Ed Lenz, Adam Beilke – Moving of BWSR staff around to fill vacancies. WBIF funding has been increased by the Clean Water Council. Looking at FY25 and see what is needed for Buffer Initiative. Revisions to the 103C.501 has changed a lot – this policy will look a lot like a competitive grant situation. Summary document will be sent by Jill.

DNR – Katie Wigen – Nothing additional

MPCA - Paul Davis – No Report

DNR – Erynn Jenzen – No Report

MSU-WRC – Kim Musser – Watershed education – 500 students coming to Mankato – September 25–26. Students that want to work with SWCDs please contact Kim. September 11 Soil Health Field Day.

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

Upcoming Meetings

Technical Committee Meeting	Wednesday, September 20, 2023	9:00 a.m.
Policy Board Meeting	Friday, September 22, 2023	1:00 p.m.
Executive Board Meeting	Friday, October 13, 2023	1:00 p.m.

Secretary's signature of approved minutes _____ Date: _____