



# Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance

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**DATE:** MARCH 13, 2020  
**TO:** GBERBA MEMBERS  
**FROM:** KAY GROSS and DAVID BUCKLIN, GBERBA COORDINATORS  
**SUBJECT:** COORDINATOR REPORT GBERBA POLICY and TECHNICAL MEETINGS

## **MN Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program**

Update on progress made in areas 5 and 6 – See Certification Specialist Reports. Over 500,000 acres certified! GBERBA has the Area 5 and 6 MAWQCP administrative contract approved through 2021. The Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program is launching three 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, and wildlife.

## **2017 MPCA 319 Grant - Cover Crops and Alternative Tile Intakes**

An Implementation Policy Paper for the grant titled "Greater Blue Earth River Basin TMDL Implementation" has been developed and reviewed at the Technical meeting. This guidance document will be posted on the GBERBA website. Cover crops: \$50.00 dollars per acre maximum, 50% cost share maximum (\$25.00 ac.), 80-acre size maximum per owner. Prioritization required. Alternative intakes: Rock and pattern tile. \$500.00 maximum and 50% cost share. These are federal dollars and require state or local match. Perforated risers, broom and other water quality intakes: \$200.00 maximum and 50% cost share. These are federal dollars and require state or local match. The grant amendment has been completed and all remaining cost share for projects including Alternative intakes, Side inlets, and Cover crops will be at 50% cost share. **Grant End Date 8-31-2020**  
**For 2020 the cover crop acre limits are removed. At this point the 50% cost share rate will be continued.**

## **2017 CWF Grant- Multipurpose Drainage Management**

Multipurpose Drainage Management - \$301,200: Projects for this Drainage Grant will need to be located in public ditch sheds. **GBERBA member entire counties are eligible.** Priority parameters are developed to identify the eligible ditches. A guidance policy sheet is online.

A grant Work Plan Revision has been approved by the BWSR to allow for CAP 130 Drainage Water Management plans and for Structures for Water Control.

**Grant Amendment Agreement has been approved to extend the expiration date to 12-31-2020.**

## **Potential Grant Submission NCR SARE**

Staff are looking into a potential grant opportunity through the Sustainable Agricultural Research and Education organization.

## **One Watershed One Plan Planning Grants, Watonwan Watershed**

The Watonwan 1W1P Project is in full swing completing the plan language and reviewing plan sections. A meeting with Huston Engineering took place on March 4, 2020 to assist all parties moving forward. The Watonwan Policy Committee voted to further research GBERBA as the fiscal and reporting agent for the 1W1P Watonwan. This will require a revision of the GBERBA Joint Powers Agreement.



# Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program

South Central MAWQCP Certification Specialist

Serving the Counties of: Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, LeSueur, Martin, McLeod, Nicollet, Renville, Sibley, Waseca, Watonwan



Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance



Herman Bartsch  
AREA 6 MAWQCP CERTIFICATION SPECIALIST  
March 12th, 2020

**Workload:**

- Working with producers and SWCDs to complete assessments and certifications
- Assisting producers with MDA Grant Applications
- Cover Crop Plans
- Practice Plans
- Program Promotion
- SW MN Wastewater Operators Association Meeting – Fairmont Feb 5<sup>th</sup>
- I-90 Soil Health Tour – Waseca Feb 27<sup>th</sup>, Fairmont Feb 25<sup>th</sup>
- 13 Program Reviews

AREA 6	Applications	Assessments	Certifications
Blue Earth SWCD	13	12	7
Brown SWCD	10	6	3
Faribault SWCD	21	16	13
LeSueur SWCD	12	7	4
Martin SWCD	10	6	5
McLeod SWCD	9	7	4
Nicollet SWCD	1	1	1
Renville SWCD	15	9	8
Sibley SWCD	3	3	3
Waseca SWCD	11	11	5
Watonwan SWCD	11	8	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>59</b>

Certified producers will be given “high priority” for Conservation Stewardship Program funding through NRCS.

Producers continue to use the MDA \$5,000 grant to install conservation practices that will address water quality concerns and help them gain certification.

MAWQCP is beginning to offer **three new endorsements** in addition to certification. Endorsements will recognize producers who are going above and beyond in the areas of **soil health, integrated pest management, and wildlife.**

The **Regional Conservation Partnership Program** with NRCS has been renewed for another **five years and nine million dollars.** This program offers a pot of EQIP money that producers can use to install conservation practices to help them become certified. Only certified producers, or those seeking certification have access to these funds.

MAWQCP Numbers as of 3-9-20

- 850 producers certified
- 578,531 acres certified
- 1,791 new practices installed or planned to be installed
- Sediment delivery to surface waters reduced by 37,511 tons per year
- Soil loss reduced by 104,595 tons per year
- Phosphorus loss reduced by 46,401 lbs. of P per year

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# Greater Blue Earth River Basin

March 10, 2020



DANIELLE EVERS

AREA 5 MAWQCP CERTIFICATION SPECIALIST

Serving the Counties of: Cottonwood, Jackson, Lac Qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Rock, & Yellow Medicine

**Projects and Workload:**

- Continuing to meet with producers for assessments, mapping, & uploading documents for state verification
- Assisting producers in submitting MAWQCP Cost-Share Grant Applications
- Working on program promotion, and story map participation
- Contacting producers about endorsements
- Working to line up meetings

**Events:**

- **Feb 5<sup>th</sup>** – Soil Health Assessment Results Meeting – Pipestone, MN
- **Feb 11<sup>th</sup>-March 1<sup>st</sup>** – Vacation and International Trip MARL
- **March 6<sup>th</sup>** – Modifying Existing Equipment Soil Health Event – Edgerton, MN
- **March 10<sup>th</sup>** - Soil Health Meeting – Ghent, MN
- **March 18<sup>th</sup>** – Ag Breakfast – Pipestone, MN

**Program Updates and Information:**

- Endorsements for Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Wildlife Habitat, & Soil Health available for certified producers.
- **WRE dollars available** for 30 year & permanent easements. Please contact me if you know of an interested producer.
- The MAWQCP RCPP EQIP has been renewed!!!
- Grant applications still available for up to **\$5,000 75%** cost-share through the MDA for producers
- MAWQCP has certified over **850 farms**, including over **578,531 acres** with **1,791 new BMP's**
- Estimated benefits include: **37,511 tons** of TSS reduced per year, **104,595 tons** soil reduced per year, **46,401 lbs** Phosphorous reduced per year, **37,172 CO<sub>2-e</sub> tons** per year
- **7** Soil Health Endorsements, **9** Integrated Pest Management Endorsements, **6** Wildlife Endorsements

## YEAR TO DATE NUMBERS

<b>Area 5</b>	<b>Applications</b>	<b>Assessments Completed</b>	<b>Actively Pursuing Cert.</b>	<b>Certifications</b>
Cottonwood SWCD	32	31	1	14
Jackson SWCD	33	27	1	17
Lac Qui Parle SWCD	6	6	0	4
Lincoln SWCD	19	17	0	6
Lyon SWCD	15	14	1	7
Murray SWCD	13	13	0	10
Nobles SWCD	14	14	0	10
Pipestone SWCD	42	38	2	18
Redwood SWCD	35	34	1	22
Rock SWCD	20	16	2	10
Yellow Medicine SWCD	27	27	2	11
<b>Totals</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>129</b>

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# Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance

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**DATE:** March 13, 2020

**NAME:** Josh Votruba  
Cottonwood SWCD Watershed Technician

**Working on:**

- *Watonwan River One Watershed, One Plan:* Assisted the Watonwan 1W1P Steering Team with consolidating the Watonwan 1W1P Advisory Committee's comments for sections 1-8 for the Watonwan River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. The Watonwan Advisory Committee had the opportunity to review and comment on all sections of the draft plan. On the March 18<sup>th</sup> Steering Team Meeting the Steering Team will discuss changes need to draft sections of plan review and clarify comments made on the draft sections. April 8<sup>th</sup> Houston Engineering will be sending out the edited full draft of the plan for the Steering Team and State Agency Representatives to review.
- *Grant 37 Cover Crops:* Continue to work with landowners within Cottonwood County on the GBERBA cover crop cost-share. In addition, recently I have attended various cover crop meetings and have met with Cottonwood County landowners to discuss the possibility of starting a cover crop group in Cottonwood County. Lastly, I have been assisting the Watonwan County SWCD with completing their GBERBA cover crop contracts.
- *MDM Grant 39:* Continue to assist GBERBA with MDM Grant Reporting.



# Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program

Agriculture and Water Outreach Corpsmember  
Conservation Corps of MN & IA  
Ashley Broussard



Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance



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March 13th 2020

## **Workload:**

- Assisting Herman and Danielle with mapping assessed fields in the MAWQCP mapping tool and assessment tool
- Attended producer meetings with Herman
- Contact producers to get stories added to the MAWQCP Story Map, 5 stories published, 1 pending MDA approval, and 5 in progress.

## **Projects and Events:**

- Online grant writing workshop (through Conservation Corps) on 2/18
- Producer meeting in Martin County with Herman on 2/21
- Promoted MAWQCP at the I-90 Cover Crop Workshop on 2/24
- Attended Cottonwood WRAPS meeting on 2/25
- Attended Deer Hunter Banquet on 2/29
- NRCS Webinar on Cover Crops 3/3
- Farm Equipment workshop in Rock County on 3/6
- Field visit in LeSeur with Herman 3/10

## **Upcoming Events:**

- Continue work with MAWQCP mapping and assessment tool
- Continue working on writing producer stories and contacting producers

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**2019 and 2020 Storage and Wetland Costs**  
**GBERBA Meeting**  
**March 13, 2020**



2019 Storage Projects				
Project	Type	AC-FT of Storage	Total Cost	Cost Per AC-FT
Jackson County JD 19	Pond	40	\$511,000	\$12,775
	Wetland *	129	\$45,000	\$349
Jackson County Ditch 3	Pond	60	\$630,000	\$10,500
	Two Stage Ditch	22	\$157,000	\$7,136
Wright County 10 Pond	Pond	50.6	\$420,000	\$8,300
Blue Earth County JD 9	Pond	7.5	\$125,000	\$16,667
	Wetland *	71	\$52,071	\$733
Blue Earth County JD 34	Pond	16.55	\$108,000	\$6,526
Nicollet County CD 62A	Pond	40	\$225,000	\$5,625
			<b>Average Cost Per AC/FT</b>	<b>\$6,861</b>

\* received outside funding or easements previously obtained  
Average Cost when Removal of Previously Funded Projects **\$9,647**  
\$2,273,071

2020 Upcoming Projects						
Project	Storage Type	Total Project Cost	Storage Cost	Storage Percentage	Cost Benefit with Storage	Cost Benefit Percentage Without Storage
Martin/Jackson JD 91	Pond	\$2,747,875	\$185,169	6.74%	2.63%	10.00%
Martin/Watonwan JD 9	Pond	\$3,743,200	\$330,000	8.82%	27.00%	39.00%
Watonwan/Brown JD 18	Pond	\$5,430,000	\$405,000	7.46%	1.08%	9.22%
Stevens CD 18	Wetland	\$4,836,900	\$637,636	13.18%	9.54%	26.20%
Jackson JD 13	Ponds	\$10,481,566	\$1,471,000	14.03%	1.30%	12.80%
Jackson JD 9	Pond	\$5,450,000	\$600,000	11.01%	5.30%	18.50%
Martin/Faribault JD 4	Pond	\$1,263,000	\$412,000	32.62%	TBD	TBD
Martin JD 99*	Wetland	\$2,208,000	\$415,000	18.80%	TBD	TBD
Martin/Faribault JD 414	Pond	\$613,000	\$92,100	15.02%	TBD	TBD
Faribault 514 Wetland	Wetland	\$580,000	\$500,000	86.21%	Private	Private
Yellow Medicine CD 9	Pond	\$3,800,000	\$600,000	15.79%	TBD	TBD
Wright CD 10	Pond	\$2,500,000	\$400,000	16.00%	NA	NA
Blue Earth JD 17	Pond	\$1,181,500	\$171,603	14.52%	-12.04%	2.48%
Blue Earth JD 14	Pond	\$735,800	\$147,000	19.98%	-17.20%	2.27%
<b>Total/Average</b>		<b>\$45,570,841</b>	<b>\$6,366,508</b>	<b>20.01%</b>	<b>2.20%</b>	<b>15.06%</b>

# MDM + BMP LOCATIONS

ISG

## LEGEND

BMP Type	BMP Status
ASI	Constructed
Storage	Design
Treatment	
Wetland	
Opportunity Lost	

