



Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance

DATE: OCTOBER 9, 2020
TO: GBERBA MEMBERS
FROM: KAY GROSS and DAVID BUCKLIN, GBERBA COORDINATORS
SUBJECT: COORDINATOR REPORT GBERBA EXECUTIVE MEETING

MN Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program

Update on progress made in areas 5 and 6 – See Certification Specialist Reports. Over 625,000 acres and over 900 certified producers statewide!

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.

For 2020, the cover crop acre limits are removed. At this point the 50% cost share rate will continue. GBERBA staff has requested and received an extension of this grant due to 2019 weather conditions and the Covid-19 outbreak. The new end date of the grant will be August 31, 2021.

This grant funding is now running short. Funding will be awarded as available. Please pass this notice on to new landowners wishing to apply.

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.

GBERBA will not apply for a second grant time extension at this time. GBERBA can pay grant-engineering funds to projects even if not constructed prior to grant deadline.

One Watershed One Plan Planning Grants, Watonwan and Le Sueur Watershed

The Watonwan 1W1P Planning Project has completed the Plan 60 day comment period. The revised draft plan document is complete. After all public hearings are complete; the plan then goes to a state agency review.

The BWSR Board has chosen the Le Sueur Watershed for a 2021 planning grant!

The GBERBA Policy board has agreed to revise the Joint Powers Agreement to allow inclusion of 1W1P duties. A GBERBA committee is working to assist with writing a new GBERBA Joint Powers document. The new document would allow for the Watonwan, Le Sueur, and Blue Earth Watersheds to participate if the individual watersheds 1W1P boards see a benefit to do so.



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



Herman Bartsch
AREA 6 MAWQCP CERTIFICATION SPECIALIST
September 15th, 2020

Workload:

- Working with producers and SWCDs to complete assessments and certifications
- Assisting producers with MDA Grant Applications
- Cover Crop Plans
- Practice Plans
- Program Reviews
- Endorsements
- Field Verifications

AREA 6	Applications	Assessments	Certifications
Blue Earth SWCD	14	13	7
Brown SWCD	13	7	3
Faribault SWCD	28	23	18
LeSueur SWCD	14	9	5
Martin SWCD	14	7	5
McLeod SWCD	9	7	4
Nicollet SWCD	2	2	1
Renville SWCD	16	11	8
Sibley SWCD	3	3	3
Waseca SWCD	12	12	5
Watonwan SWCD	13	10	7
Total	138	104	66

Certified produces 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.**

MAWQCP Numbers as of 9-7-20

- 948 producers certified
- 655,367 acres certified
- 1,948 new practices installed or planned to be installed
- Sediment delivery to surface waters reduced by 37,779 tons per year
- Soil loss reduced by 106,383 tons per year
- Phosphorus loss reduced by 46,885 lbs. of P per year
- 17 Soil Health Endorsements
- 16 IPM Endorsements
- 14 Wildlife Endorsements

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Greater Blue Earth River Basin

September 30th, 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 with a flush of applications driven by the priority ranking it awards to CSP renewal and new contracts
- Only 4 program reviews to finish
- Drafted a new customizable “press release” advertisement for the MAWQCP. Contact me if you would like me to personalize it for your county.

Events:

- September 2nd – New Employee Training – Ivanhoe, MN
- September 10th – Soil Health School - Marshall, MN
- September 17th – Cover Crop Study Field Day – Lakefield, MN
- Oct. 6th – Cottonwood Co. 1W1P cover crop meeting – Windom, MN

Program Updates and Information:

- MAWQCP RCPP EQIP applications will likely be ranked in the spring of 2021
- Grant applications still available for up to **\$5,000 75%** cost-share through the MDA for producers
- MAWQCP has certified over **950 farms**, including over **659,440 acres** with **1,958 new BMP's**
- Estimated benefits include: **37,786 tons** of TSS reduced per year, **106,445 tons** soil reduced per year, **46,903 lbs** Phosphorous reduced per year, **38,544 CO_{2-e} tons** per year
- **17** Soil Health Endorsements, **16** Integrated Pest Management Endorsements, **14** Wildlife Endorsements

TO DATE NUMBERS

Area 5	Applications	Assessments Completed	Actively Pursuing Cert.	Certifications	Endorsements		
					IPM	Soil Health	Wildlife
Cottonwood	35	33	0	15	0	0	0
Jackson	33	32	0	18	2	2	0
Lac Qui Parle	6	6	0	4	0	0	0
Lincoln	21	20	0	7	1	0	1
Lyon	18	16	1	9	0	0	0
Murray	17	17	3	10	0	0	0
Nobles	16	15	0	10	0	0	0
Pipestone	44	43	0	21	0	0	0
Redwood	35	34	1	22	1	1	0
Rock	23	20	3	13	0	0	0
Yellow Med.	29	29	0	17	0	0	0
Totals	277	264	8	146	3	2	1

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Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program

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



Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance



September 14th 2020

Workload:

- Assisting Herman and Danielle with mapping assessed fields in the MAWQCP mapping tool and assessment tool
- Run P-index on MAWQCP farms
- Blogging for the Conservation Corps
 - [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#)
- RIM, ditch, and CRP inspections with Hannah and Becky

Projects and Events:

- Work with MAWQCP and contacting newly certified producers
- Attend producer meetings with Herman and Danielle
- Attend 1W1P, GBERBA, and SWCD meetings
- MN Soil Health Coalition Soil Health School (9/10-9/11)
- Work on educational outreach videos for Cottonwood SWCD Facebook

Upcoming Events:

- Continue work with MAWQCP mapping and assessment tool and running the P-index
- *(Tentative date)* MAWQCP filming for Conservation Corps

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