

# Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance Technical Committee

Wednesday, March 24, 2021 – WebEx by Phone or Computer Connection

## **Present:**

Chad Hildebrand  
Dave Bucklin  
Alan Gleisner  
Mark Schaetzke  
Brenda Lageson  
Wendy Chirpich  
Jill Sackett Eberhart  
Rick Moore  
Tracy Lund  
Steve Soderman

## **Representing:**

Watonwan SWCD  
Cottonwood SWCD  
Brown SWCD  
Waseca SWCD  
Freeborn SWCD  
Martin County  
BWSR  
MNIT – DNR  
MN Dept of Health  
Watonwan SWCD Supervisor

## **Present:**

Kay Gross  
Nathan Carr  
Scott Salisbury  
Jake Fritz  
Ashley Brenke  
Dru Larson  
Paul Davis  
Brooke Hacker  
Amanda Strommer

## **Representing:**

GBERBA Coordinator  
Faribault SWCD  
Blue Earth County  
Blue Earth SWCD  
Martin SWCD  
MN/IA Conservation Corps  
MPCA  
DNR  
MN Dept of Health

**Call to Order:** GBERBA Chairman Chad Hildebrand called the meeting to order at 9:32 am.

## **Introductions**

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

**Minutes:** Motion by Dave Bucklin, second by Alan Gleisner to approve the February 24, 2021 Technical Committee Meeting minutes. Motion carried, all yes.

## **INFORMATION ACTION:**

### **Multipurpose Drainage Grant Amendment**

The Extension Request sent by the Waseca SWCD Board of Supervisors has resulted in the ability to request a grant amendment. The Policy Board has approved sending in a formal request to BWSR (which has been done) and a Grant Agreement has been signed by the Policy Board with a new expiration date of 4-30-2022 and Executed by BWSR. Action needed on April 28 is for a contract amendment request from Waseca SWCD requesting a time extension to April 30, 2022.

Ed Lenz did reach out to Waseca SWCD concerning the new Legislation.

### **GBERBA Cost-Share Contract Cancellation**

Ramont Schrock	319-TMDL-16-17-09	Cover Crops	C-S \$3,875.00
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Motion by Dave Bucklin, second by Jake Fritz to approve the GBERBA Cost-Share Contract cancellation for Ramont Schrock 319-TMDL-16-17-09 (\$3,875.00). Motion carried.

### **GBERBA Contract Approval**

Randy Sorg	319-TMDL-16-81-15	Cover Crops – 144.3 ac	Cost \$7,215.00 C-S \$3,607.00
Randy Sorg	319-TMDL-16-24-04	Cover Crops – 80 ac	Cost \$4,000.00 C-S \$2,000.00
Larry Cowing	319-TMDL-16-46-10	Cover Crops – 125 ac	Cost \$4,500.00 C-S \$2,250.00

Motion by Mark Schaetzke, second by Ashley Brenke to approve the GBERBA Cost-Share Contracts for Sorg (2) 319-TMDL-16-81-15 (\$3,607.00) and 319-TMDL-16-24-04 (\$2,000.00) and Cowing 319-TMDL-16-46-10 (\$2,250.00). Motion carried.

## **Review GBERBA Cost-Share Balances, Projects, and Financial Report**

### **Natural Resources Research Institute**

We will be having the Research Institute present at the April Technical Committee Meeting on Wednesday, April 28.

### **Watonwan Watershed**

Grant agreement has been approved and signed by the Policy Board and returned to the Board of Water and Soil Resources. Work Plan has been submitted and approved by Jill. Would like to present the Work Plan, Grant Policy and Ranking Worksheet at the May Policy Board Meeting on May 14, if I could find some people willing to present the Ranking Worksheet and also people to help write a narrative for the multipurpose drainage management studies. Good discussion on cover crops and if we target new adopters or acres that have not been in cover crops previously. Also questions on septic systems and the ability to use funds to accomplish those upgrades.

**Watonwan Watershed Drinking Water Grant**

Review of grant policy and cost-share rates.

**MN Department of Health – Presentation – Tracy Lund and Amanda Strommer**  
**Source Water Assessment Program and Surface Water Intake Protection Plans**

**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 750,000 acres and over 1000 certified producers statewide!

GBERBA has the Area 5 and 6 MAWQCP administrative contract approved through 2021. The Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program has launched 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 this grant titled "Greater Blue Earth River Basin TMDL Implementation" is found on the GBERBA web site. Cover crops: \$50.00 dollars per acre maximum, 50% c/s (\$25.00 ac.). Prioritization required. Alternative intakes: Rock and pattern tile. \$500.00 maximum with 50% cost share.

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.

For 2020, the cover crop acre limits are removed. 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 low. Funding is awarded as available. Please pass this notice on to 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 to identify the eligible ditches. A guidance policy sheet is online.

At this time, GBERBA has received a second grant time extension. In addition, GBERBA can pay grant-engineering funds to approved projects even if not constructed prior to grant deadline. The current grant end date is April 30, 2021. Waseca SWCD asked BWSR for a project time extension for the Waseca (water storage) wetland restoration. BWSR staff has now approved an extension for the entire grant to April 30, 2022.

☆ **One Watershed One Plan Planning Grants, Watonwan and Le Sueur Watersheds**

The BWSR Budget Request for Implementation has been completed and approved by BWSR. The Implementation Work Plan will be completed by March 31, 2021 to access the 1W1P grant funding this spring.

The Le Sueur River 1W1P group has asked Mark Schaetzke to give 1W1P updates to GBERBA. Currently the Le Sueur group are working on the work plan narrative, timeline and budget. They had the first policy board meeting in March. The consultant selection process will begin soon.

☆ **CWF 2020 Watonwan Drinking Water Grant.** GBERBA Executive board has signed the Grant agreement, and staff has returned to BWSR. GBERBA staff will be completing a grant work plan and budget in Elink. The grant funding should be available this spring.

**Staff Report:**

**Area 6 Certification Specialist** – Herman Bartsch – Written Report

**Area 5 Certification Specialist** – Danielle Evers – Written Report

**Conservation Corp Member** – Dru Larson – Written Report

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**Agency Reports:**

**MPCA** - Paul Davis – Blue Earth WRAPS and TMDL are being developed, will be working with partners individually.

**BWSR** – Jill Sackett Eberhart – March 30<sup>th</sup> Spring Training. April training April 14 for Jill’s presentation – if you can’t participate that day you can get the same training on April 15. State budget is no longer a deficit. Water storage bills are moving through the legislative process, soil health bills – one utilizing general funds – one would be directed to Clean Water Fund. Tree specific bill through legislation – could be connected to Clean Water Fund. MN Office of Soil Health – RFP – soil health demonstration plot - \$8,000 max. – proposals would be due April 30<sup>th</sup> – would need a soil health demonstration plot. SWCDs and WD are eligible to apply. Coordinate with local NRCS Office. Working through grant reporting. Tabor Hoek retired as of March 16.

**OTHER** – Rick Moore – Will give LiDAR update in April.

**DNR** – Brooke Hacker – Working on WRAPS information updating.

The meeting was declared adjourned at 11:42 a.m. by Chair Chad Hildebrand.

**Upcoming Meetings**

Technical Committee Meeting	Wednesday, April 28, 2021	9:30 a.m.
Executive Board Meeting	Wednesday, April 28, 2021	1:00 p.m.
Policy Board Meeting	Friday, May 14, 2021	1:00 p.m.

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