

Beltrami Soil & Water Conservation District

Board of Supervisors Meeting

January 18, 2024

Beltrami County Commissioners' Conference Room

701 Minnesota Ave. NW

Bemidji, MN 56601

**OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SERVICES IN
BELTRAMI COUNTY**

Members Present: Ray Hendrickson – Vice Chair
Ruth Trask – Treasurer
Rachel Gray – Secretary
Sam Christenson – Public Relations

Members Absent: Shane Bowe – Chair

Others Present: Brent Rud – District Manager
Megan FitzGerald – ESD/SWCD
Aly Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
Jody Peek – NRCS

Board Vice Chair Ray Hendrickson called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for January 18, 2024 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Additions/Corrections to the Agenda:

Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the January 18, 2024 agenda. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Rachel Gray to approve the minutes from the December 21, 2023 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Brent is in the process of the end-of-year financial reconciliation. The Treasurer's Report was tabled until the February meeting.

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

- **EQIP:** The area team had 96 applications. The assessment and ranking deadline was extended two weeks. Staff have been working on planning since mid-December.
- **CSP:** The area team has 207 active contracts. Staff have been working on payments most of the fall; so far, 180 landowners have been paid. CSP renewals were due in December. The team obligated 25 renewal contracts. January 12th was the deadline for first signup CSP applications. 169 applications were received. NRCS has changed the way applications are assessed and ranked. January 26th is the ranking deadline; NRCS staff from other counties will assist Beltrami. There will be 11 renewals for 2025 CSP, fewer than usual.
- **Staffing:** There is a non-supervisory DC position open in Bemidji. Reba, the Conservation Engineering Technician in the Bemidji office, left January 8th to take a new position; the Bemidji

office will rely on other counties for engineering until the position can be backfilled. An administrative assistant position in Bemidji was posted last summer, but was not filled; the position will likely be re-posted. A Grazing Specialist will also be posted.

- Upcoming Events: Cow-Calf Days in Bagley on the 23rd at the American Legion. Hubbard Grazing Workshop in Guthrie on March 6th.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- There is currently an open grant opportunity to hire soil health staff. Funding is available to fund a soil health position for four years. While Beltrami County is not ranked as a high priority for percentage of ag lands, the County does have a lot of ag acres, and it was suggested that the SWCD apply for funding. The grant application deadline is February 8th. It was suggested to work with NRCS or other SWCDs to possibly apply for a joint position.
- Staffing: Brent gave an update on staffing and interviewing. Currently working on revising the AIS Technician job description to include Keep It Clean duties.
- Brent provided an overview of 2023 grant activity.
- There are currently many grant applications open, including CWMA (could be used for buckthorn removal), multipurpose drainage management, private well testing and treatment, and wellhead protection.
- Election of Officers: **Motion by Sam Christenson to keep the same slate of officers as 2023. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.**
- MASWCD FY2024 Dues: The SWCD received an invoice for \$7,077.92 for FY2024 dues. This is an \$800 increase from FY2023. MASWCD provides valuable services to the SWCD. **Motion by Rachel Gray to approve and pay MASWCD dues. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
- 2024 SWCD Budget: Brent presented the 2024 Beltrami SWCD operating budget, which is simplified and does not include grant revenue or spending. Total revenue is \$66,034.00 and expenditures total \$62,235.92. **Motion by Rachel Gray to approve and adopt the 2024 SWCD Budget. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**
- 2024 SWCD Workplan: BWSR requires SWCDs to approve and post an annual workplan on their website. Supervisors asked for clarification on the Geologic Atlas, and were supportive of hiring an intern to complete this work. **Motion by Rachel Gray to approve and adopt the 2024 Workplan. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

Staff

- Meier Cost Share Contract Amendment: Final costs for the Meier Grant Creek culvert replacement exceed the original contract. Overruns included costs for riprap, class 5, and topsoil. The total project cost listed in the original contract was \$82,000; actual costs totaled \$84,930.60. The contract lists a 95% cost share for the SWCD, which will be paid from Enbridge grant funds. **Motion by Sam Christenson to amend the contract to reflect total project costs of \$84,930.60 with \$80,684.07 (95%) cost share. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.**
- Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P 2022-23 Workplan Amendment: Beltrami SWCD received \$250,000 in Enbridge grant dollars, which will be used to pay for some projects in the current Mississippi 1W1P Workplan. Because of this, the Mississippi 1W1P Steering Team has requested to move 1W1P Implementation dollars to three new stormwater projects, effectively reallocating \$55,000 from the Water Course to the Urban issue. Additionally, Hubbard SWCD is

requesting to reallocate \$12,000 of their staff dollars from the Agriculture to the Environmental Sensitive Issue. Because these requests total more than \$50,000, a workplan amendment is needed. The 2022-23 Workplan was approved by the Policy Committee on January 8, 2024.

Motion by Rachel Gray to approve the Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P 2022-23 Workplan Amendment. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.

- Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P 2024-25 Workplan: Staff described the workplan and budget for the next round of Mississippi 1W1P Implementation Grant funds. The total grant amount is \$1,013,278, with \$360,000 slated for staff costs, \$588,278 for projects and programs, and \$65,000 for administration. Staff hopes these simplified categories will allow funds to be spent and reallocated more efficiently. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P 2024-25 Workplan. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**

Supervisors:

- Sam: Discussion of possible wastewater treatment/storage ponds east of Bemidji.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

Kelliher Cattle Company Banquet on March 10th – a fundraiser for ag student grants and loans

Grazing Land Coalition GrazeHers Workshop in June

Regular Board Meetings

- February 15, 2024
- March 21, 2024
- April 18, 2024

Motion by Ruth Trask to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved. Meeting adjourned.

Beltrami Soil & Water Conservation District

Board of Supervisors Meeting

February 15, 2024

Beltrami County Commissioners' Conference Room
701 Minnesota Ave. NW
Bemidji, MN 56601

**OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SERVICES IN
BELTRAMI COUNTY**

Members Present: Shane Bowe – Chair
Ray Hendrickson – Vice Chair
Ruth Trask – Treasurer

Members Absent: Rachel Gray – Secretary
Sam Christenson – Public Relations

Others Present: Brent Rud – District Manager
Megan FitzGerald – ESD/SWCD
Aly Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
Strait Idso – NRCS
Chad Severts – BWSR
Jennifer Malinski – Red Lake DNR

Work Session: Chad provided an overview of the new Conservation Contracts grant program from BWSR. The program replaces the Erosion Control and Water Management Program (State Cost Share), and provides increased flexibility and reduced administration. Major changes include expanded eligible activities, technical assistance no longer limited to 20% of the grant amount, no longer a 10-year effective life requirement for all practices, cost share no longer limited to 75%, flat rate cost share no longer limited to certain practices, and incentives can now be utilized. Contracts are still required and technical quality assurances still apply, however there is no requirement for a grant workplan. Chad also provided a broad overview of BWSR's functions and funding sources.

Board Chair Shane Bowe called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for February 15, 2024 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Additions/Corrections to the Agenda:

Motion by Ray Hendrickson to approve the February 15, 2024 agenda. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the minutes from the January 18, 2024 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Brent is in the process of the end-of-year financial reconciliation. He will review the 2023 Treasurer's Report with Ruth when it is complete.

Reports:

NRCS Report – Strait Idso

- CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program): Application acceptance deadline was January 12th. The Bemidji CST obtained 169 CSP applications by the deadline. The Workload Prioritization Worksheet was completed on all applications by January 26th. A total of 84 applications were high priority: 9 in Koochiching; 15 in Lake of the Woods; 15 in Hubbard; 14 in Clearwater; and 31

in Bemidji. These were cut back to 15 per field office by the state office. The deadline to assess and rank applications is April 12th.

- EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program): The deadline to complete assessments and rankings on applications was January 19th. This date was extended to Feb 2nd. The Bemidji CST had 95 applications. In total, 60 of those applications are moving forward. Preapproval of applications will be selected soon. A total of 20 applications were submitted for Beltrami County, and total of 7 applications were preapproved for funding. The goal is to have 50% of EQIP funds obligated by April 5th.
- Upcoming Workload/General Items:
 - Grazing workshop to be held by Lake of the Woods on February 15th.
 - Grazing workshop to be held by Hubbard SWCD/NRCS on March 6th.
 - Area 8 Summit to be held on March 20th.
 - Transitioning to ARC Pro. Training on this to be held on March 4th.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- Brent gave an update on staffing and interviewing. Katelyn Bergstrom was offered and has accepted the Clean Water Specialist position. The Aquatic Invasive Species Technician, whose duties will also include Keep It Clean, closed yesterday.
- Beltrami SWCD will be evaluated through the Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP) in 2024.
- The SWCD received a proposal from Peterson Ltd. for \$4,500 to conduct the 2023 end-of-year audit. Peterson Ltd. has performed audits for Beltrami SWCD for many years. Brent recommended the Board accept the proposal and sign a contract. **Motion by Ruth Trask to hire Peterson Ltd. to conduct the 2023 end-of-year audit. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Still in the process of wrapping up end-of-year financials for 2023. Brent will go over them with Ruth when they are complete and present them to the Board at the next meeting.

Staff

- Aly has been lining up stormwater projects to be installed in the spring and summer.
- Aly has four HELP Grant contracts ready for Board approval. Projects must occur on publicly owned properties or lands dedicated to long-term conservation.
 - Brinkman Park: The City of Bemidji received a \$36,915.00 quote for an 8-acre pollinator planting in Brinkman Park. The City is requesting \$14,457.00 in HELP Grant funds, and will provide \$4,800 in match as well as pay for project maintenance. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve \$14,457.00 in HELP Grant funds for the Brinkman Park project. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
 - Fire Station #2: The City of Bemidji received a \$14,125.00 quote to add vegetation to an existing stormwater basin on the property. The City is requesting \$4,160.00 in HELP Grant funds, and will provide in-kind match. **Motion by Ray Hendrickson to approve \$4,160.00 in HELP Grant funds for the Fire Station #2 project. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
 - Diamond Point Park: Pollinator plantings were installed last year at Diamond Point Park through funding provided by the Leech Lake Band. Many of the plants have seen a low success rate. The City of Bemidji is requesting \$5,075.00 in HELP Grant funds to re-establish the vegetation at the sites. Mulch and edging, not included in the MNL quote, will be utilized to prevent drying. The City will provide labor for installation as in-kind match. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve \$5,075.00 in HELP Grant funds for the**

Diamond Point Park project. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.

- Lake Boulevard Buckthorn Removal: The City of Bemidji is requesting \$1,400.00 in HELP Grant funds to remove buckthorn and replant the area with native species on the stretch of property along Lake Boulevard between 6th and 12th Streets. The area is identified as “gap” on County GIS, so Bemidji will have to work with the City Attorney to assure that the property will be maintained for the required 10-year period. **Motion by Ray Hendrickson to approve \$1,400.00 in HELP Grant funds for the Lake Boulevard Buckthorn Removal project, on the condition that a maintenance agreement can be reached with the City Attorney. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**

Supervisors:

- Ray: The Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P goals are in progress, will be moving onto actions soon.
- Ruth: Gave a recap of the February 1st MASWCD Area VIII planning meeting. Beltrami will be hosting the Area VIII meeting in March, followed by Lake of the Woods in June.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

Area VIII Meeting, March 15th in the Beltrami County Board Room

Area VIII Envirothon, May 1st at Lake Bemidji State Park

Gene Dillon Water Festival, May 23rd (tentative)

Regular Board Meetings

- March 21, 2024
- April 18, 2024
- May 16, 2024

Motion by Ray Hendrickson to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved. Meeting adjourned.

Beltrami Soil & Water Conservation District

Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2024
Beltrami County Board Room
701 Minnesota Ave. NW
Bemidji, MN 56601

OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SERVICES IN BELTRAMI COUNTY

Members Present: Ray Hendrickson – Vice Chair
Ruth Trask – Treasurer
Rachel Gray – Secretary
Sam Christenson – Public Relations

Members Absent: Shane Bowe – Chair

Others Present: Brent Rud – District Manager
Megan FitzGerald – ESD/SWCD
Aly Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
Katelyn Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD

Board Vice Chair Ray Hendrickson called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for March 21, 2024 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Additions/Corrections to the Agenda: Item 5.c.iii. Drought Plan Discussion. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the March 21, 2024 agenda. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.**

Secretary’s Report:

Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the minutes from the February 15, 2024 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer’s Report:

Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the December 2023 Treasurer’s Report. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved. Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the January 2024 Treasurer’s Report. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved. Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the February 2024 Treasurer’s Report. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.

Reports:

District Manager – Brent Rud

- Brent introduced Katelyn Bergstrom, who was hired as the new Clean Water Specialist. The ESD also hired Alec Wilcox to be the AIS/Keep It Clean Technician.
- Brent provided a summary of the 2023 financial report.
- Brent reviewed a PowerPoint of 2023 SWCD activities that was also presented to the County Board.
- PRAP: Brent provided an overview of the PRAP conducted by BWSR, including the review process and performance standards worksheet. Missing elements required by BWSR include a data policy and specified website pages – staff will work on completing these elements.

Staff

- Aly provided an update on planned BSU stormwater and HELP grant projects, and a summary of the Area VIII Summit.
- Birds, Bees, and Butterflies – Bemidji Donation Request: Peter Buessler of Birds, Bees, and Butterflies – Bemidji has reached out to Aly to discuss a possible SWCD donation of plant plug kits to vegetate a newly constructed veterans’ home in Bemidji. The request consists of native plants to provide vegetation underneath 10-20 bird feeders on the veterans’ home campus, with one plant kit (36 plants) per feeder. The projected cost is \$1,100. Due to the small acreage of the planting, the project is ineligible for the HELP grant, however Supervisors discussed the potential use of Conservation Contracts or Increased Local Capacity grants to fund the project. The Board was very supportive donating to the project. Staff will bring recommendations to the Board when they receive more information.
- Ag BMP Loan Program: Aly provided a background on the Ag BMP loan program, which provides borrowers with low-interest loans to purchase eligible agricultural equipment. She described how the program is administered as well as which requests qualify. The program has become more popular in recent years due to rising interest rates. Currently, SWCD staff review and approve requests. Aly asked if the Board would like to provide more direction in authorizing requests, or if they would like to review applications or develop a policy regarding request approvals. The Board advised they would like to see the program proceed as usual, with staff reviewing and approving requests without input from Supervisors.
- Drought Plan Discussion: Supervisors expressed concern over likely drought conditions in the upcoming months, particularly in the wake of the damage done to the local ag industry as a result of the 2021 drought. Rachel suggested holding a drought preparedness workshop for local producers, with a focus on promoting drought tolerant forage and tanks for hauling water to cattle. Centra Sota Cooperative and the Minnesota Grazing Lands Coalition both provide helpful resources to producers, and may be willing to partner with the SWCD on these efforts. Other suggestions included encouraging no-till drill use, providing flyers on available resources and financial assistance, and setting aside funds for assisting with equipment purchases. Staff noted that upcoming grants will aid in addressing watering/grazing issues.

Supervisors:

- Rachel led a discussion about the possibility of Beltrami County hiring a Feedlot Inspector, or including these duties in the potential Grazing Specialist position.
- Ruth provided an overview of the TSA and Area VIII meetings.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

Area VIII Envirothon, May 1st at Lake Bemidji State Park

Gene Dillon Water Festival, May 21st

Regular Board Meetings

- April 18, 2024
- May 16, 2024
- June 20, 2024

Motion by Sam Christenson to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved. Meeting adjourned.

**Beltrami Soil & Water Conservation District
Board of Supervisors Meeting**

April 18, 2024

**Commissioners' Conference Room
701 Minnesota Ave. NW
Bemidji, MN 56601**

***OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SERVICES IN
BELTRAMI COUNTY***

Members Present: Shane Bowe – Chair
Ray Hendrickson – Vice Chair
Ruth Trask – Treasurer
Sam Christenson – Public Relations

Members Absent: Rachel Gray – Secretary

Others Present: Brent Rud – District Manager
Megan FitzGerald – ESD/SWCD
Aly Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
Katelyn Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
Jody Peek – NRCS
Alec Wilcox – ESD/SWCD

Work Session: Brent introduced Alec Wilcox, the new AIS/Keep It Clean Technician.

Board Chair Shane Bowe called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for April 18, 2024 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Additions to the agenda: Item 5.b.ii. Soil Health Grant and Item 5.b.iii. Soil Health Position. **Motion by Ray Hendrickson to approve the April 18, 2024 agenda. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the minutes from the March 21, 2024 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Ruth Trask presented the IFS statement for March 2024. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the March 2024 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program):

- Classic CSP screening occurred in January and the team had 82 applications that screened as high. The state conservationist made the decision to take the top 15 highs per service center as the prioritization still resulted in high numbers of applications to rank. In general, one CSP application can take around 40 hours of staff time to process. Many of the high-15 applications were older (some dated back to 2020). As a result, some of those participants have decided to cancel or defer.

- The CART deadline was last Friday, April 12th. In total, the Bemidji CST had 38 applications submitted. The preapproval list should be out soon.
- CSP Renewals for 2025 were mailed out in February. These would be applications that started in 2020 and expire in December 2024. In 2020 funds were tight and Beltrami only obligated three contracts. As a result, three were eligible to renew but the field office received no applications back.

EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program):

- The area office has been making preapprovals based on available funding. The team had 60 applications submitted as of today; 33 of 60 have been selected for funding. Beltrami applications being selected for funding are primarily for tree plantings, pollinator plantings, soil health practices (no-till and cover crops), some grazing practices, and some forest management practices (brush management for buckthorn).
- Area NE asked for an additional 20 million (mainly for farmstead funding) and the state asked for 42 million. We recently learned that 18 million in additional funds was allocated to MN. This will result in some additional preapprovals.

CRP (Conservation Reserve Program):

- Rental rates appear to have gone up slightly in the county. As a result, Farm Service Agency (FSA) has had some participants interested in applying for this program. FSA is the lead agency for CRP, while NRCS provides the technical assistance.
- NRCS has run suitability and feasibility for 8 tracts of land. Most inquiries have been for interest in applying for a CP23A – Wetland Restoration. To be eligible for this practice the participant must have hydric soils, so soils reports are run to determine feasibility.

RCPP (Regional Conservation Partnership Program):

- New RCPP sign-up was released for 1W1P areas. This RCPP is only for five Watersheds in the state. Red Lake River is one of the eligible watersheds. A small area of the Red Lake River does fall within NW Beltrami and Northern Clearwater counties, so this could result in a couple of applications. Application sign-up deadline is April 26th.

Upcoming Workload/General Items:

- Set a date for the Local Work Group meeting. All meetings for all counties need to occur prior to July 12th. Counties may elect to partner with neighboring counties to do one joint meeting. The group discussed holding a joint Local Work Group meeting with Clearwater SWCD in June. Rankings will be discussed with the Beltrami SWCD Board at their regular June meeting, then staff from Beltrami and Clearwater will meet later in the month to finalize rankings.
- Jim Cramton & Jody Peek will be assisting with the Envirothon event to be held May 1st.
- Strait Idso will be helping with the Gene Dillion Elementary Water Festival on May 23rd. NRCS has the rainfall simulator reserved to bring to the school for that event.
- Jody will assist with the promotion and participation for a FarmHers event at Rachel Gray's Farm June 4th & 5th.
- Potential to host a Grygla Soil Health event July 8th -12th. Ray Archuletta will be assisting with talks and stops along the way. Also involved would be Mark Gutierrez from the MN Soil Health Coalition and Stephanie McLain, NRCS State Soil Health Specialist.

- There will be an SWCD Governance 101 Workshop on July 16th-17th in Alexandria for supervisors and new employees. Those interested in attending should register with Megan.
- The 2024 SWCD election guide was sent out. Staff will update the website with election materials. Both Ruth and Sam are up for election this year; Supervisors must file to run. Filing opens May 21st and closes on June 4th at 5pm. The general election will take place on November 5th.
- BWSR is still conducting their PRAP review of Beltrami SWCD.
- Brent reviewed the draft design of the new tree shack. This building will be shared with the Beltrami County Natural Resource Management Department at the County Highway Department. The County budget process begins in June, so we will need a cost estimate of the building by then. The current estimate is \$400,000. Some funds for construction will come from the Buffer Law grant.
- The BSU stormwater infiltration basin project came in over budget, so the engineering firm applied for additional funding through an MPCA grant. Under the current funding, the project would not meet future reduction goals, however the project could be phased if additional funds are not immediately available.
- At a previous meeting, the Board approved staff to apply for a Soil Health Staffing grant. Beltrami was awarded \$337,000 to fund a 65% full-time employee through the end of 2027. Brent recommended advertising the position with the current Conservation Technician job description, with a few modifications to focus on soil health and Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P implementation. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the Soil Health Staffing grant agreement. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved. Motion by Sam Christenson to post the position with the existing Conservation Technician job description with recommended soil health modifications. Motion seconded by Ray Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

Staff

- Staff presented at the Turtle River Watershed Association meeting on April 16th. They will also attend the TRWA annual meeting in June.
- The Boys and Girls Club of Bemidji are interested in installing pollinator habitats in their former Minnesota biomes project site and existing stormwater basins. The sites are ineligible for HELP grant funding, so B&GC will be applying directly to BWSR for Pollinator Pathways Program funding, which is geared toward smaller-scale plantings with an educational component. Aly is assisting in the application process.
- BSU/DOT Contract: Aly presented a cost share contract with BSU for the installation of a stormwater basin/rain garden along Minnesota State Highway 197. The total project cost is \$30,800, with 100% cost share provided through Enbridge funds. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the contract. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- BSU Solar Basin Contract: Aly presented a cost share contract with BSU for stormwater basins/pollinator plantings beneath a yet-to-be-installed solar array on the BSU campus. BSU is funding the actual solar array through another source. The total project cost for the stormwater basins/pollinator plantings is \$32,459, with 100% cost share provided through Enbridge funds. **Motion by Ray Hendrickson to approve the contract. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

Supervisors' Report:

- Shane Bowe: There will be a public meeting in Kelliher on Upper/Lower Red Lake site-specific eutrophication standards. The standard will go through, and the lakes will not be listed as impaired.
- Ruth Trask: Area VIII needs a new Treasurer; Ruth is acting as the interim Treasurer.
- Supervisors requested that new DNR PFM Lori Barrow attend the June SWCD meeting for a forestry discussion.
- Ray Hendrickson: Beltrami Commissioner Tim Sumner has declined to attend assigned committee meetings; staff should work to find a replacement for his assignments, which include the Thief River and Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P meetings.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

Envirothon – May 1st at Lake Bemidji State Park

Tree Distribution – May 2nd and 3rd

Gene Dillon Water Festival – May 23rd

Regular Board Meetings

- May 16, 2024
- June 20, 2024
- July 18, 2024

Motion by Sam Christenson to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved. Meeting adjourned.

Beltrami Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors Meeting

May 16, 2024

Commissioners' Conference Room

701 Minnesota Ave. NW

Bemidji, MN 56601

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Members Present: Shane Bowe – Chair
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Members Absent: Rachel Gray – Secretary
Sam Christenson – Public Relations

Others Present: Brent Rud – District Manager
Megan FitzGerald – ESD/SWCD
Aly Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
Katelyn Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
Jim Cramton – NRCS
Zach Thoma – Moore Engineering

Work Session: Zach Thoma from Moore Engineering provided updates on the BSU subsurface stormwater infiltration basin project. Installation is predicted to be more than double what was initially expected, so staff have applied for additional funding through an MPCA grant. Zach provided an update on the bidding process. Bids are expected to be advertised in early to mid-June, which will coincide with the additional funding notification if the MPCA grant is awarded.

Board Chair Shane Bowe called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for May 16, 2024 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Additions to the agenda: Item 5.c.iv. BSU/DOT Cost Share Contract Amendment. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the May 16, 2024 agenda. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**

Secretary's Report:
Motion by Ray Hendrickson to approve the minutes from the April 18, 2024 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:
Ruth Trask presented the IFS statement for April 2024. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the April 2024 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**

Reports:
NRCS Report – Jim Cramton
CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program): Starting with 82 high-priority applications for the whole team in January, the workload was reduced to fifteen per service center by the state conservationist, making the team's total 58. After those that cancelled, deferred, or were ineligible dropped off, the team had 38 applications to assess and rank; 32 of these applications of have been preapproved for about \$1.1

million in financial assistance. Beltrami County has eight preapproved applications for about \$375,000 in financial assistance. NRCS estimates that an average CSP application takes a planner about 40 hours from their initial visit with a landowner until becoming a contract. These funded applications have a fair amount of work to be completed on them before they will become obligated contracts, including some site visits, running some planning tools, developing seed mixes with producers, soil testing, and a few other things. No CSP Classic contracts have been obligated.

EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program): Originally, 33 of 60 applications were selected for funding. Since the last board report, two additional applications were selected for funding as a result of an additional \$18 million received by the state. Total financial assistance for those selected is around \$930,000. For the team, 20 applications have become obligated contracts so far, coming in at about \$840,000 in obligated financial assistance. Beltrami had eleven EQIPs selected for funding; four have been obligated for around \$150,000 in financial assistance. Applications being selected for funding are for tree plantings, pollinator plantings, soil health practices (no-till and cover crops), some grazing practices, and some forest management practices (brush management for buckthorn).

CRP (Conservation Reserve Program): As a result of some increased rental rates, as well as some public outreach, there has been increased interest in CRP. FSA is the lead agency for CRP, whereas NRCS is the technical agency, providing participants with their specifications to follow:

- NRCS has run suitability and feasibility for nine tracts of land.
- Most inquiries have been for a CP23A - Wetland Restoration - scenario. To be eligible for this practice, the participant must have hydric soils, so soils reports are run to determine feasibility.
- Most of those interested in CRP have desired putting their whole fields into conservation ranging from 30-80 acres, while many had only a small fraction of that area eligible for wetland restoration. Conversations around these requirements have resulted in explanations about NRCS programs and what landowners might qualify for under one.

RCP (Regional Conservation Partnership Program): The new RCP 1W1P signup, which closed in late April, did not result in any applications.

General Items:

- Jody and Jim assisted with the Envirothon at Lake Bemidji State Park. Jody judged oral presentations and Jim assisted with the soil formation station.
- NRCS would like to set a date for the local work group meeting; all meetings for all counties need to occur prior to July 12th. Counties may elect to partner with neighboring counties to do one joint meeting. Megan spoke with Chester at Clearwater SWCD, and they settled on June 6th at 10am for the meeting to be held at the Beltrami County Administration Building.
- Strait Idso will be helping with the Gene Dillion Elementary Water Festival on May 23rd. NRCS has the rainfall simulator reserved to bring to the school for that event.
- Interest in NRCS programs remains high. They get two to four calls a week from landowners asking what assistance there is for them to change their management, pointed questions about specific problems, and general questions that may or may not be related to an NRCS program.
- Jody will assist with the promotion and participation for a FarmHers event at Rachel Gray's farm on June 4th & 5th.
- The Grygla Soil Health Event will be held on July 8th. Ray Archuleta will be assisting with talks and stops along the way. Mark Gutierrez from the MN Soil Health Coalition and Stephanie McLain, NRCS State Soil Health Specialist, will assist landowners in conducting soil health assessments and interpreting their results.

- Aly has accepted a Soil Health Conservation Technician position at Cass SWCD. Her last day will be Friday, May 31st. Brent may use the list of applicants for the Beltrami Soil Health Conservation Technician position, which closed yesterday, to fill her position.
- There will be an SWCD Governance 101 Workshop on July 16th-17th in Alexandria for supervisors and new employees. Those interested in attending should register with Megan.
- There is a need to revisit and update the no-till drill rental agreement for the drill housed at the Blackduck Co-op.
- The Mississippi High Banks shoreline restoration projects require two pre-construction meetings, and will require an additional contract with Karvako. Brent estimates the cost of these meetings to be below \$5,000. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve a contract with Karvako up to \$5,000 for them two host the pre-construction meetings. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- BWSR has conducted their PRAP review of Beltrami SWCD. Brent presented key findings and required actions and recommendations, including the materials required to be featured on the SWCD's website and a data practices policy. Brent needs to send a response letter to BWSR. Don Bajumpaa from BWSR will be at the June 20th meeting to discuss the PRAP findings.
- The SWCD is in the process of completing a Geologic Atlas for the county, however staff do not have enough time to complete the work. Brent suggested hiring a temporary worker through Always There Staffing to expedite the process of hiring and getting the Geologic Atlas done. He suggested hiring the worker at \$17 per hour for twelve weeks with an overall pay cap of \$15,000. Staffing funds will come from the Increase Local Capacity and Mississippi 1W1P Implementation Grants. **Motion by Ray Hendrickson to contract with Always There Staffing to hire the temporary worker at \$17 per hour for up to twelve weeks with a cap of \$15,000. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
- Staff have been getting requests to write forest stewardship plans for landowners as the private sector plan writers are in short supply. Brent suggested that the SWCD adjust their rates to match the DNR plan writing rates, which are deliberately set higher to avoid competing with private businesses. **Motion by Ruth Trask to match forest stewardship planning rates with those of the DNR. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Lori Barrow, the area DNR PFM, and Don Bajumpaa from BWSR will both attend the June 20th SWCD meeting.

Staff

- BSU/DOT Contract Amendment: The Board approved the BSU/DOT cost share contract at the April meeting, however the contract did not include prevailing wages for Hill's Country Greenhouse. Aly presented a cost share contract amendment that includes prevailing wages, which raises the total project cost from \$30,800 to \$35,530. Project costs are covered 100% through Enbridge grant funds. **Motion by Ray Hendrickson to approve the contract amendment. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
- Megan presented a donation request from the Indigenous Environmental Network for 75 chokecherry trees for their Roots, Shoots, and Seeds event. The event encourages the public to plant native seeds and plants. The SWCD has leftover chokecherry trees from the tree sale that were not purchased. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the donation request for 75 chokecherry trees. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**

- **BSU Subsurface Infiltration Basin: Motion by Ray Hendrickson to approve and move forward with the construction bidding process for the project as outlined by Zach Thoma during the work session. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**

Supervisors' Report:

- Shane Bowe: Red Lake DNR is hiring for two positions. Shane also provided information about the upcoming restoration of a rock dam on the Red Lake River.
- Ruth Trask: Ruth provided an update on the results of the Envirothon.
- Beltrami Commissioner Tim Sumner has declined to attend assigned committee meetings. His committee assignments have been reassigned to other commissioners.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

Gene Dillon Water Festival – May 23rd

SWCD Candidate Filing Period Ends June 4th at 5pm

Area VIII Quarterly Meeting, June 7th in the Beltrami County Board Room

SWCD Governance 101 Workshop, July 16-17th in Alexandria

Regular Board Meetings

- June 20, 2024
- July 18, 2024
- August 15, 2024

Motion by Ray Hendrickson to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved. Meeting adjourned.

Beltrami Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors Meeting

June 20, 2024

Commissioners' Conference Room

701 Minnesota Ave. NW

Bemidji, MN 56601

**OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SERVICES IN
BELTRAMI COUNTY**

Members Present: Shane Bowe – Chair
Ray Hendrickson – Vice Chair
Ruth Trask – Treasurer
Rachel Gray – Secretary
Sam Christenson – Public Relations

Others Present: Brent Rud – District Manager
Megan FitzGerald – ESD/SWCD
Katelyn Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
Jody Peek – NRCS
Lori Barrow – MN DNR
Don Bajumpaa – BWSR

Work Session: Lori Barrow, DNR Private Forest Manager, provided an overview of the DNR's Private Forest Stewardship Program. A major component of this is the cost share program, which has been growing recently due to drought response and the Governor's reforestation efforts. The program provides financial assistance for forestry-related practices. Lori described how the program works as well as eligible landowners and practices. Eligible practices fall into the categories of reforestation and tree planting, forest improvement, forest health and protection, wildlife habitat enhancement, soil and water protection and improvement, and forest recreation. The program can provide 100% reimbursement of costs for drought-killed seedlings through 2027. Lori and the Board expressed interest in hosting a joint public education forestry event with the SWCD.

Board Chair Shane Bowe called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for June 20, 2024 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the June 20, 2024 agenda. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Rachel Gray to approve the minutes from the May 16, 2024 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Ruth Trask presented the IFS statement for May 2024. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the May 2024 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

- Jody provided an update on the local working group meetings and shared changes in Beltrami's resource concern rankings from 2023 to 2024. The Board is invited to comment on these rankings; please have your comments to Jody by July 12th.
- There are currently 95 vacancies for soil conservationist positions in the Midwest; openings in our area include Bagley, Baudette, and Park Rapids.
- Jody will attend a Soil Health Field Day on July 8th in Grygla.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- Hiring Updates: Dan Gackle has accepted the new soil health Conservation Technician position; his first day will be July 1st. Interviews are being held for the Environmental Resource Specialist position, and the other Conservation Technician position has been reposted. The SWCD will also be hiring a temporary worker to complete the Geologic Atlas.
- Browse Blocker will be attempting to expand their sales to other SWCDs.
- Brent has been working on the County's cannabis ordinance. There will be a public meeting held on July 2nd.
- Brent provided an update on the plans for the new tree shack/storage building. Brent is working on getting cost estimates as the county budget is due in mid-July.
- Discussion on whether to screen Greener Pastures, a film about farmers' mental health, at the County Fair. Rachel suggested sharing it with the medical staff at Sanford.
- Data Practices and Retention Policies: These were identified as missing in the PRAP. These policies cover data maintenance, access, and retention. Brent will reach out to other SWCDs to get examples of their policies. The policies will need to be reviewed by the County Attorney.
- Beltrami County Fair: Staff will not have a booth at the County Fair this year. They will update their kiosk that was set up at the fairgrounds last year.

Staff

- Megan provided updates on the Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P implementation and Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P planning process as well as easement work. Katelyn provided updates on the BSU stormwater and Mississippi High Banks restoration projects.
- Water Festival: Megan gave an update on the Gene Dillon Water Festival, which was held in May. The school would like to consider moving the event to the fall.
- Graefe Contract Amendment: Katelyn presented an amended cost share contract for the Graefe shoreline restoration project on Turtle Lake. The contract was amended to include the costs of maintenance, and now totals \$12,075. Funds will come from the Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P implementation grant. **Motion by Rachel Gray to approve the amended contract. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**

Don Bajumpaa – BWSR

- Don presented the results of the PRAP Organizational Assessment Reviews of the Beltrami SWCD and Environmental Services Department that were conducted in the spring.
- Findings: The County met seven of eight basic standards, while the SWCD met 13 of 15 basic standards. The SWCD is missing required information on their website and a data policy. The SWCD also met 14 of 22 high-performance standards. The review also identified organizational strengths and difficulties in programs, survey results from partners, WCA reports, and recommendations.

- Action Items: The SWCD will work to update the website and develop a data policy.
- BWSR offers the opportunity for the SWCD to respond to the review; Brent will draft and submit a response letter.

Supervisors' Report:

- Rachel will be hosting an MNGCLA GrazeHers event at her farm on August 13th and 14th.
- Ruth provided an overview of the Area VIII Quarterly Meeting. At the meeting, the group appointed a new Treasurer and set aside \$3,000 as a scholarship for area staff to attend Leadership Training.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

SWCD Governance 101 Workshop, July 16-17th in Alexandria

Regular Board Meetings

- July 18, 2024
- August 15, 2024
- September 19, 2024

Motion by Rachel Gray to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved. Meeting adjourned.

Beltrami Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors Meeting

July 18, 2024

Commissioners' Conference Room

701 Minnesota Ave. NW

Bemidji, MN 56601

**OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SERVICES IN
BELTRAMI COUNTY**

Members Present: Shane Bowe – Chair
Ray Hendrickson – Vice Chair
Ruth Trask – Treasurer
Sam Christenson – Public Relations

Members Absent: Rachel Gray – Secretary

Others Present: Brent Rud – District Manager
Megan FitzGerald – ESD/SWCD
Katelyn Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
Dan Gackle – ESD/SWCD
Jody Peek – NRCS

Work Session: Brent introduced Dan Gackle, the new Conservation Technician. His work will focus on soil health. Dan previously worked at a Soil Conservation District in North Dakota. The Board introduced themselves, and Brent explained how the Board is structured.

Board Chair Shane Bowe called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for July 18, 2024 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Approval of the Agenda:

Addition to the agenda: Item 5.b.ii. Auditor's Office Shared Staff Position. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the amended July 18, 2024 agenda. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the minutes from the June 20, 2024 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Ruth Trask presented the IFS statement for June 2024. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the June 2024 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

- Staffing Updates: Soil Conservationist positions in Bagley, Park Rapids, and Baudette were open from June 17th-24th. A posting for an Administrative Assistant in the Bemidji office opened July 11th and is already closed; unlike past Administrative Assistant positions in the office, this would be a federal employee. Soil Conservation Technician positions will be opening soon. The

Bemidji office will be short-staffed over the next few weeks; staff will be working on field checks in August and September. Jody will work with Dan on getting JAA for soil health practices.

- CSP: 33 CSP applications have been pre-approved; they must be obligated by August 30th.
- EQIP: Nine contracts are left to be obligated; staff is working on planning.
- CRP: Six CRP applications have been accepted in Beltrami County.
- Events: Jody attended a tour of the Plant Materials Center as well as Lincoln Oakes Nursery in Bismarck, ND. She also attended the Soil Health Field Day in Grygla on July 8th. The Area Program Specialist will be visiting August 6th-8th. The MNGCLA GrazeHers event at Little Timber Farms has been rescheduled for August 13th-14th.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- The County is in the middle of their budget process; Brent has submitted the Department's budget request.
- Storage Building Update: A preliminary quote for the construction of a storage building to be shared by ESD/SWCD and the Natural Resource Management Department came in at \$1.4 million. A second quote by another firm came in at \$700,000. The proposed building would be 50x120 ft, or 6,000 sq. ft, and will be located at the Beltrami County Highway Department. NRM has agreed to contribute \$100,000, while \$300,000 would come from County Aid and an additional \$300,000 from American Recovery Act funds. The SWCD would be asked to pay for the finishings (shelving, etc.).
- Auditor's Office Shared Staff Position: The Auditor's office is considering hiring a new shared staff position to help manage grants. They are asking that the SWCD contribute 25% of the position's cost due to the large workload associated with the SWCD's many grants. The SWCD's contribution is estimated at \$20,000-\$25,000 annually over five years. Funds would come from SWCD grant administration funds, mainly from the Mississippi Headwaters and Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P implementation grants. **Motion by Sam Christenson to support the new Auditor's office shared staff position. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson.** Sam mentioned it would be helpful for Board members to have a written summary of existing grants and eligible projects.
- Brent provided an update of the grant tracker.

Staff

- Staff Updates: Katelyn attended the Governance 101 training in Alexandria.
- County Fair: SWCD will not have a booth at the Beltrami County Fair this year. Staff will update the kiosk at the Fairgrounds, and plan on having both the no-till drill and Keep It Clean wheelhouse on display.
- Ericksson Shoreline Restoration: Katelyn proposed a shoreline restoration project for the Ericksson property on Cass Lake. The project would restore 150 feet of shoreline and is located on a priority lake as identified in the Mississippi Headwaters Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. Total project costs are estimated at \$13,120. Funding would come from the 2022/23 Mississippi Headwaters WBIF. **Motion by Ruth Trask to provide 75% cost share for the project, not to exceed \$9,840. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Thompson Shoreline Restoration: Katelyn proposed a shoreline restoration project for the Thompson property on Gull Lake. The project would restore 150 feet of shoreline and is located on a priority lake as identified in the Mississippi Headwaters Comprehensive Watershed

Management Plan. Total project costs are estimated at \$19,900. Funding would come from the 2022-23 Mississippi Headwaters WBIF. **Motion by Sam Christenson to provide 75% cost share for the project, not to exceed \$14,925. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**

- Bids are out for the BSU stormwater infiltration basin construction. Bids will close next week, and installation is planned for the fall.
- The internal review of the Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P closes July 19th.
- HELP Grant: Pollinator plantings are planned for multiple City of Bemidji parks, Kummer's landfill, and the Beltrami County Fairgrounds.
- Snow fencing and native plantings are being planned for the PMA 25 project site.
- The Mississippi High Banks West shoreline restoration and staircase have been successfully installed.
- The Mississippi High Banks East shoreline restoration project was installed, but was vandalized shortly after. The original project cost was \$32,000, and damages are estimated to be \$20,000. The vandals were apprehended by the police, and the case is still open. It is unclear whether they will be forced to pay restitution. Katelyn and Brent will update the Board as the case proceeds.

Supervisors' Report:

- Red Lake DNR has hired a new employee; approximately 50% of their work will be off-Reservation, and they will work closely with the SWCD on ag-related projects.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

MNGLCA GrazeHers Event, August 13th and 14th at Little Timber Farms

BWSR Academy, October 29th-31st at Cragun's in Brainerd

Regular Board Meetings

- August 15, 2024
- September 19, 2024
- October 17, 2024

Motion by Sam Christenson to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved. Meeting adjourned.

Beltrami Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors Meeting

August 15, 2024

Commissioners' Conference Room
701 Minnesota Ave. NW
Bemidji, MN 56601

**OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SERVICES IN
BELTRAMI COUNTY**

Members Present: Ray Hendrickson – Vice Chair
Ruth Trask – Treasurer
Rachel Gray – Secretary
Sam Christenson – Public Relations

Members Absent: Shane Bowe – Chair

Others Present: Brent Rud – District Manager
Megan FitzGerald – ESD/SWCD
Katelyn Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
Dan Gackle – ESD/SWCD
Jody Peek – NRCS
Chad Severts – BWSR
Zach Thoma – Moore Engineering

Board Vice Chair Ray Hendrickson called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for August 15, 2024 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the August 15, 2024 agenda. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the minutes from the July 18, 2024 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Ruth Trask presented the IFS statement for June 2024. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the June 2024 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

- CSP & EQIP: The obligation deadline on contracts is August 30th. So far, the Area Team has 33 obligated EQIP contracts. The Area Team will receive around \$600,000 in EQIP and \$1.5 million in CSP.
- Staffing Updates: There were six applicants for the Administrative Assistant position in the Bemidji office; interviews will happen soon. There were vacancies for Soil Conservationists in Park Rapids, Bagley, and Baudette. The Baudette applicants turned down the position, there were no applicants for Bagley, and there were only a few applicants for Park Rapids. A

Conservation Technician for the Bemidji office will be posted shortly as well as a non-supervisory DC position.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- Megan has resigned from the SWCD; her last day will be August 16th. Claire Hansen has been hired as the Conservation Technician; her first day will be August 27th.
- The SWCD received an MCIT dividend notice, and will be receiving \$93 back.
- Dan will be attending the MASWCD Leadership Institute instead of Megan.
- Soil Health Grant Workplan: Dan is in the process of creating a workplan for the Soil Health Cost-Share Grant. Unlike previous BWSR grants the SWCD has received, this one is very broad in terms of eligible activities, so staff would like guidance and input from the Board on which practices to focus on. The current workplan offers a flat rate cost share for cover crops, no-till, and tree/shrub establishment at \$40/acre, following the cost share rates established in the Mississippi River Headwaters Watershed-Based Implementation Fund Policy. According to this policy, there is a cap of 120 acres per landowner. Chad recommended adopting a county-wide cost share rate policy for these practices, and to include an outreach event in the workplan. Since total grant is just \$40,000, the Board advised operating on a first-come, first-served basis for contracts.
- Staff met with DNR to discuss the creation of a cooperative week management area (CWMA), mainly to address buckthorn. This would make the area eligible for invasive species project funding. They also discussed partnering with Hubbard or other surrounding counties.

Staff

- Blackduck No-Till Drill: Dan met with Terry at Blackduck Co-op to discuss the SWCD's Truax no-till drill housed at the Co-op. The drill hasn't been properly maintained and is difficult for renters to use. The drill was brought to Rachel Gray's farm for maintenance. Dan discussed selling the drill and upgrading to an Esch once Upper/Lower Red Lake WBIF funds become available in 2025.
- BSU Stormwater Infiltration Basin: Zach Thoma from Moore Engineering discussed the results of the contractor bidding process for the infiltration basin. Bids were obtained from three companies; each one submitted a base bids and alternative bid for the full project in the event that the SWCD receives additional MPCA grant funds. The lowest base bid was \$430,132, which far exceeds the current budget amount of \$286,000. The Board and staff discussed looking at remaining funds in existing grants or approaching other counties in the Mississippi 1W1P to see which funds could be transferred to the project. Zach stated that he could also approach the lowest bidder to see if they could simplify the project further. Brent suggested that because the project must be completed by October 31st, the Board should decide to award the construction contract before the next scheduled meeting.
- Red Lake/Beltrami Water Festival: Katelyn talked about the possibility of hiring the Headwaters Science Center to give a presentation at the Water Festival as they've done in the past. The cost is around \$600 for the day and would be covered by Increase Local Capacity funding. **Motion by Ruth Trask to pay for the Headwaters Science Center presentation at the Red Lake/Beltrami Water Festival out of Increase Local Capacity funds. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.**
- The Esch no-till drill and the Keep It Clean wheelhouse were displayed at the Beltrami County Fair.

- Katelyn provided an update on the HELP grant. Multiple native plantings are planned or in progress at City of Bemidji parks, Kummer’s landfill, and the Beltrami County Fairgrounds.
- PMA 25: A snow storage/native planting project is planned for October.
- The Upper/Lower Red Lake Watershed Plan is in the 60-day formal review period. A summary of the plan was included in the agenda packets.
- Wadena SWCD will be hosting the Area VIII Fall Tour and Meeting on September 4th and 5th. Let Katelyn know if you would like to attend.
- Katelyn and Dan have been working with NRCS to obtain JAA on a number of practices.
- There are a series of sidewater inlet projects being discussed and planned along the Moose River in the northwest part of the county. The projects would involve four landowners and be paid for through Thief River 1W1P and Red Lake Watershed District funds. Dan will attend the Thief River 1W1P planning meetings and keep the Board updated.

Supervisors’ Report:

- Rachel Gray provided an update of the MNGLCA GrazeHers event at Little Timber Farms. She will be working with two Red Lake DNR staff people on grazing practices. Rachel also showed a video of drone seeding at her farm.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

Area VIII Fall Tour and Meeting, September 4th-5th in Wadena County
 Woodlands for Wildlife Workshop, September 7th in Walker
 Red Lake/Beltrami Water Festival, October 10th at Concordia Language Villages
 BWSR Academy, October 29th-31st at Cragun’s in Brainerd
 Regular Board Meetings

- September 19, 2024
- October 17, 2024
- November 21, 2024

Motion by Sam Christenson to recess the meeting until Monday, August 26 at 9am. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved. Meeting recessed.

Resumed recessed board meeting on Monday August 26th at 9am.

Members present at resumed board meeting: Ray Hendrickson (Vice Chair), Sam Christenson (Public Relations), and Ruth Trask (Treasurer)

Others Present at resumed board meeting: Brent Rud (District Manager), Katelyn Bergstrom (ESD/SWCD), and Zach Thoma (Moore Engineering)

Bemidji State University Basin Infiltration Project

- It was learned over the recess that Beltrami SWCD was not selected to receive additional funds from MPCA, so SWCD investigated using other funds including 1W1P Headwaters funds, Enbridge funds, and Conservation Contract funds in addition to the project specific funds already awarded for this project. Lowest project bid came in from RL Larson excavating company at \$430,132.00. Using 1W1P Headwaters funds were discussed and approved by all the 1W1P Headwaters Steering Team members by August 21st. Brent provided a detailed breakdown of funds that would be used to cover the project costs. **Motion by Sam Christenson to use combination of 1W1P Headwaters, Enbridge, Conservation Contract, and any other necessary funds to cover the cost of completing the BSU Infiltration Basin Project as proposed by**

Beltrami SWCD member's plan. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Motion by Ruth Trask to have RL Larson excavating company construct the BSU Infiltration Basin project. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.

Motion by Sam Christenson to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved. Meeting adjourned.

Beltrami Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors Meeting

September 19, 2024

Commissioners' Conference Room

701 Minnesota Ave. NW

Bemidji, MN 56601

**OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SERVICES
IN BELTRAMI COUNTY**

Members Present: Shane Bowe – Chair
Ray Hendrickson – Vice Chair
Ruth Trask – Treasurer
Rachel Gray – Secretary
Sam Christenson – Public Relations

Others Present: Brent Rud – District Manager
Claire Hansen – ESD/SWCD
Katelyn Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
Jody Peek – NRCS

Board Vice Chair Ray Hendrickson called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for September 19, 2024, officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the September 19, 2024, agenda. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Rachel Gray to approve the minutes from the August 15, 2024, SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Ruth Trask presented the IFS statement for August 2024. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the August 2024 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

- Office is currently on soft closure due to security issues. People must call ahead to be let into the building and the building will remain in soft closure for the rest of the week and most likely into next.
- CRP & EQUIP: Office staff is extremely busy with 185 items which are due to be completed in 2024. 8 CRP offered in the County all for wetland restoration, 849 acres going CRP. EQIP finalized

and obligated acres go into CSP which are mainly plantings, no-till, and cover crops. Letters have been sent out to landowners asking when they would like CSP payment.

- Staffing Updates: A tentative offer has been made to someone to fill an Administrative Assistant position in the Bemidji office. People have been calling expressing interest in the Soil Conservationists positions in Bemidji, Bagley, and Baudette. The Civil Engineer in Baxter is leaving and since Bemidji does not have a Civil Engineer, staff has been having to go to Waite Park for engineering assistance. In Bemidji a non-supervisor DC position is expected to open in the fall. Two Internships are planning to open as well, a Soil Conservationist Intern in Bemidji and a Forestry Intern in Bagley.
- NRCS is planning to attend Water Fest on October 10th, 2024.

District Manager—Brent Rud

- Claire Hansen has started with Beltrami SWCD.
- Updated Board Members on all the grants SWCD currently has; 2022 Local Capacity fund will be spent out with staff time. 2024 Conservation Delivery fund was spent on engineering. Enbridge fund is almost all spent, the only project remaining is BSU Basin project. KIC fund is still going well and on track. MFRC fund is almost all spent out, just need to add staff time. Both 2022 and 2023 HELP funds are on track to be spent. Red Lake Forest Stewardship Plan fund is still available but when the ULR 1W1P funds are available this fund will go away. 1W1P ULR Planning fund still has around \$90,000 left and we are currently in the process of deciding how to best allocate those funds and spend it. 2022 Buffer Law fund Dan has been in the process of spending. Future discussions will be needed to talk about the best use of funds, the possible idea of purchasing a drone to use for projects could be discussed in future meetings. The Joint Counties Board fund was for Megan, but now that is being passed over to NRM. 1W1P Thief River fund is spent just need to have invoices sent over. Soil Health fund Dan has been in the process of spending it, 2024 Soil Health fund will pay Dan's salary for the next three years. 2023 Local Capacity fund expires next year and has not yet been spent. After this year it will switch to being referred to as SWCD AID. 2023 Buffer Law fund expires in 2024 and 2024 Buffer Law fund expires in 2026, both have not yet been spent. 2024 SWCD AID fund was just received and has not been spent yet.
- Reviewed the SWCD AID Contract from last year (August 2023) as a new contract will have to be in place for 2024. Brent suggested adopting the same policy as last year. **Motion by Rachel Gray to adopt the same policy for the 2024 SWCD AID Contract as the 2023 SWCD AID Contract. Motions seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motions carried and approved.**

Staff

- Katelyn provided updates on HELP grant projects. Diamond Point Park project is completed, and other HELP projects are on track to be completed soon. Dan and Claire have been working complete the Kummer's Landfill project. Katelyn has been included in discussions about a culvert replacement off Grant Creek Rd. Culvert has been filled in by beavers and is pulling apart. As of now NRM is looking to cover the costs of replacing this culvert and is working with ATV club.

- Rako PMA 25 Snow Storage: Katelyn provided conservation contract for the Rako PMA Snow Storage project. Project will be installed by Prairie Restoration in late October/early November. Project estimated cost is \$7,260 and would be paid for using 1W1P Mississippi Headwaters funds. **Motion by Rachel Gray to pay for 75% cost-share for the PMA 25 Snow Storage project. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
- Katelyn provided an update on the BSU Basin project. Currently waiting for conservation contract to be signed but since the project amount is so great BSU does not have the authority to sign the contract and has since passed it onto their state office in St. Paul and are awaiting feedback.
- Lake Boulevard Project: Katelyn provided an updated conservation contract for the Lake Boulevard native planting project. This planting is scheduled to occur after the removal of Buckthorn along the shoreline of Lake Bemidji. The new cost estimate is \$1,753.80 and would be paid for using HELP grant. **Motion by Sam Christenson to pay for update budget of the Lake Boulevard project. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Beltrami County Fair Grounds Project: Katelyn provided a conservation contract for pollinator planting at the County Fair grounds. Project will be installed by MNL in late October/early November. Project cost is \$4,162.50 and would be paid for using the HELP grant. **Motion by Sam Christenson to pay for Fair Pollinator Planting project. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
- Katelyn provided an update on behalf of Dan who attended the TSA Area 8 meeting recently with Ruth. TSA needs a supervisor present from each county to vote and if a supervisor is not present then a staff member can be appointed to attend. **Motion by Ruth Trask that either a staff member or board member that is available to attend the Area 8 meetings then they have authority to vote on behalf of Beltrami County. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Dan has been working on a Cost-Share policy to work with agricultural producers in the county and to spend Soil Health funds. Dan has written a flat rate contract following NRCS specifications and needs approval from the board to be authorized to sign these contracts. **Motion by Rachel Gray to give authorization to sign flat rate cost-share contract with producers in the county. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson.**
- Katelyn also provided a brief update that a cost estimate has been determined for having the Headwaters Science Center attend the October 11th Water Festival. The cost estimate is \$605.05 and the motion for the SWCD to pay for Headwaters Science Center to attend the Water Festival was made and approved in the August 2023 meeting. **Motion made by Sam Christensen to have any supervisors who are willing and available to attend the Water Festival and volunteer for the event. Motion Seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**

Supervisor's Report

- Ruth Trask went to Area 8 Fall tour in Wadena enjoyed seeing all the projects Wadena SWCD has been doing.
- Ray Hendrickson heard the Thief 1W1P team is planning to do some work in Beltrami next year along Moose River.

- Shane Bowe informed everyone Red Lake DNR has hired two new staff members.

Upcoming Meetings/Events

Monarch Festival, September 21 at Rail River Folk School

1W1P Headwaters Policy Committee Tour, September 23

Red Lake/Beltrami Water Festival, October 10th at Concordia Language Villages

BWSR Academy, October 29-31 at Cragun's in Brainerd

Regular Board Meetings:

- October 16, 2024
- November 21, 2024
- December 19, 2024

Motion by Sam Christenson to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved. Meeting adjourned.

Beltrami Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors Meeting

October 16, 2024

Commissioners' Conference Room
701 Minnesota Ave. NW
Bemidji, MN 56601

**OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SERVICES
IN BELTRAMI COUNTY**

Members Present: Shane Bowe – Chair
Ray Hendrickson – Vice Chair
Ruth Trask – Treasurer
Sam Christenson – Public Relations

Others Present: Brent Rud – District Manager
Claire Hansen – ESD/SWCD
Katelyn Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
Rose Moore – ESD/SWCD
Dan Gackle -ESD/ SWCD
Strait Idso – NRCS

Board Vice Chair Ray Hendrickson called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for October 16, 2024 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Approval of the Agenda:

Katelyn Bergstrom changed the agenda code on Beltrami Shores Contract from BA to I. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the October 16, 2024, agenda. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the minutes from the August 15, 2024, SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Ruth Trask presented the IFS statement for September 2024. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the August 2024 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

Reports:

- NRCS Report - Strait Idso
- Staffing Update
 - Administrative Assistant for Bemidji – This was advertised in July. A tentative offer was extended and accepted. Hoping for a final job offer to come through soon.

- Soil Conservation Technician (SCT) Jobs for Bemidji Bagley and Baudette opened in USA Jobs on 09/03/24 and closed on 09/17/24.
- No panel has been provided for this yet, but 4 local people (all BSU graduates) reached out to Jody and informed her they applied.
- It might be possible to hire more than 1 person in the Bemidji Office.
 - Agronomist – A direct hire agronomist position opened on 10/07/24 and closed 10/11/24 for Park Rapids. This hire would service the whole Bemidji CST. Jody had 1 local person reach to her and indicated they planned to put an application in.
 - NRCS Forester – Joash Pfeiffelman, Bemidji Forester announced his last working day in Bemidji is Nov 8th.
- The field office was notified by the area office that we should have a direct hire forester vacancy coming open in Bagley soon (maybe next 30 days). Location might be negotiable (we might be able to move that person to Bemidji if there is a bigger need/better space)
 - Non-Supervisory DC Position is expected to be posted soon on USA Jobs.
- CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program):
 - First application batching date is Nov 15th. This is moved up from January last year.
- All applicants who were not funded last year were sent letters this year asking if they want there application to stay active.
 - Field checks and certifications are occurring on active contracts.
 - CSP payment will start to be issued in November.
- EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program):
 - First batching date was September 6th. Application workload is being divided amongst team members.
- Field office will be putting more pressure on applicants in 2025 to better manage our workload. Letters will be issued with periodic deadlines to applicants to ensure application info is submitted in a timely manner.
- If producers fail to submit info by set deadlines applications may be deferred to the next sign-up period.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- Rose Moore has started with Beltrami SWCD
- Updated Board Member about staff absences in the office and the Solid Waste Operations Specialist 1 had not been filled. Update on the MPCA Conservation Award recipient, paid for reservations and meals for recipient with funds coming out of the SWCD Keep It Clean grant. Updated on a BWSR resolution in 2023 that eliminates the match requirement for TSA starting in 2024.
- Brent asked for board approval for a budget of \$1,200 to buy SWCD/ESD logoed office apparel such as polo's, hats, and quarter zip sweatshirts since there has been a total office turnover and no one has official SWCD/ESD logoed apparel, and this would help the office staff to look more organized and professional. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve \$1,200 budget for SWCD/ESD logoed office apparel. Motions seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motions carried and approved.**

Staff

- Katelyn provided updates on the Water Festival and that it was a great event and good turnout. Updated that the HELP grant is going well and asked for a grant extension on the BSU basin but no response. Informed board that there was a landowner in Keller wants to do a well sealing and that is much larger than most and would like to do a cost share to use funds. Katelyn also informed board that she requested the other 40% of ULR funds and would like to do a storm fit analysis. She will be reaching out to local companies for an estimate. Met with Zac for an update on the 319-grant program. Informed board members about the Beltrami Shores project with a homeowner's association contacting Katelyn about unhealthy shoreline on Lake Bemidji. The association wants to restore shoreline. Katelyn has sent out a contract to the homeowner's association to restore the community area in the area for the project to be cost shared.
- Claire updated the board on the tree sale with official dates opening May 1st and 2nd 2025, and that order forms will be very similar and trees the same as 2024. Noted that online tree sale order purchasing is in the works, but issues raised through needing to open a new bank account with county. This online tree sale orders would save on staff time and assuring customers correct amounts of trees. Claire noted that she had been working on the SWCD website and social media.
- Dan updated the board on the condition of current no till drill the SWCD owns and that it is not in great condition anymore and suggested to sell the current drill. **Motion by Ruth Trask to sell the current No Till Drill. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Dan suggested to buy a new No Till Drill to replace the one being sold. His suggestion was to use 1W1P funds to buy the new one. In addition, there needs to be a downpayment on the new drill to secure the bid for 2025 prices. Actual implementation in February or March of 2025. Dan notes that the drill is great for pollinator planting and planting cover crops. The new no till drill could be stored at the county fairgrounds. Board member Ruth Trask specifically supports paying the fairgrounds rent for storage of the new drill. **Motion by Sam Christenson to buy a new No Till Drill and put a downpayment to secure the bid for 2025 prices. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motions carried and approved.**
- Dan updated the board on the Thief River Inlet project and noted the landowner of this project would like to cost share, and this would be coming out of 1W1P. Collaboration with the Water District for this project as well and starting work in the spring. Then Dan updated the board on the Buffer Program, he called landowners who were not in compliance and individual plans have been made to support the landowners to be in compliance with the Buffer Law. He noted that the 2022 Buffer Law grant money is coming to an end and would like to use the rest of the funds to purchase a drone as well as GIS programs in addition to the drone to save on staff time. Lastly, he reminded everyone that the 2023 and 2024 Buffer law grants still has funds left and needs a plan to be used.

Supervisors Report

- All board members present discussed the MASWCD Resolutions in detail and voted on each resolution. Votes were recorded on the 2024 MASWCD Resolution From.
- Ruth Trask updated board on the TSA area 8 Fall tour, highlighting different topics from the meeting such as Central Lake College has weather stations and hosting sites for more weather stations are being explored through Dept of Agriculture. Beltrami County is targeted for targeted

expansion area for new weather stations. Another note and suggestion for Beltrami County Fall Tour was to have the ending location of the tour at a restaurant or easy space to those attending Fall tour to congregate.

Upcoming Meetings/Events

TSA 8 meeting on October 23rd held at Beltrami County starting at 9am.

BWSR Academy, October 29-31 at Cragun's in Brainerd

MASWCD Annual Conference, December 2-4, 2024 in Bloomington

Regular Board Meetings:

- November 21, 2024
- December 19, 2024
- January 16, 2025

Beltrami Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors Meeting

November 21, 2024

Commissioners' Conference Room

701 Minnesota Ave. NW

Bemidji, MN 56601

**OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SERVICES
IN BELTRAMI COUNTY**

Members Present: Shane Bowe – Chair
Ray Hendrickson – Vice Chair
Ruth Trask – Treasurer
Rachel Gray – Secretary
Sam Christenson – Public Relations

Others Present: Brent Rud – District Manager
Claire Hansen – ESD/SWCD
Dan Gackle – ESD/SWCD
Rose Moore – ESD/SWCD
Katelyn Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
Alec Wilcox - ESD
Jody Peek – NRCS

Shane Bowe called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for November 21, 2024, officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Approval of the Agenda:

Changes to the original agenda were added by Brent Rud. Changes were to add board approval of a Clearwater Soil Health contract and HR Green Contract. In addition, adding discussion and board approval for Keep It Clean wrapped portable trailer.

Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the November 21, 2024, agenda. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Rachel Gray to approve the minutes from the October 19, 2024, SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Ruth Trask presented the IFS statement for October 2024. She noted specifically about BWSR academy expenses, water festival, new No Till Drill and the sale of Old No Till Drill. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the October 2024 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

- Staff update: Forester in the NRCS office left and a forester position opened in Bageley with direct hire authority to make the process faster. There are vacancies in the soil conservationist positions, in Bagley, Baudette and Bemidji. There are tentative offers in Bemidji and Bagley. An agronomist position opened in Park Rapids. Non-supervised EDC in Bemidji position is open, and a tentative offer has been sent out.
- EQUIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) & CRP (Conservation Reserve Program): Open until September 6th to accept applications and deferral letters have been sent out for contracts. There are 108 EQUIP applications and on January 3rd those plans are due. There is a potential pasture grazing system project coming up.
- CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program): there was no renewals in Bemidji and CSP batching date moved up. Modification to existing contracts have been taking up time with over 30 noncompliance contracts.
- There was a partnership with Lake of The Woods, a workshop called Soil Health Coffee Shop Talk and it went well. Producers felt heard. Jody noted some producers were in conservation programs and others were not.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- Final Audit: Audit is approved by BWSR and Sam Rux noted that there was nothing of concern. Brent showed the audit to all Board members and specific items in the audit were discussed.
- Keep It Clean: Alec and Brent presented the Keep It Clean budget and discussed plans for billboards. The plan is wrapped portable trailer to act as a moveable billboard. Brent and Alec asked the Board for a grant amendment and board approval for this wrapped portable trailer. The Board asked where this trailer would be put and how much it would cost to wrap. Alec and Brent noted it would be put at different shops along popular driving routes to Red Lake, Lake of the Woods, and Lake Mill Lacs. It would be a 7 by 14 square foot for trailer, and it would be 17\$-15\$ per foot for it to be wrapped. Lastly they noted buying the trailer and wrapping it costs less than renting a billboard. **Motion by Rachel Gray for a grant amendment and approval for the portable trailer. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Upper Lower red BWSR Submittal: Discussion from Board about the UPLR 1W1P resolution to submit plan to BWSR. Katelyn noted it is contingent on BWSR approval to adopt and implement plan. **Motion by Rachel Gray to approve the Upper Lower Red BWSR Submittal. Motion Seconded by Sam Christensen. Motion carried and approved.**
- ULRL Implementation MOA: Board discussed the memorandum of agreement and collaboration of all partners included in 1W1P. **Motion by Ruth Trask to sign the ULRL Implementation MOA. Motion Seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- HR Green Contract: HR Green gave a quote for storm water retro analysis. The Board discussed to add the cities of Little Rock and Ponemah to analysis. Shane Bowe noted that Red Lake could cover the addition of Little Rock and Ponemah as match. Boarded asked why HR Green was chosen. Katelyn noted that their quote was less expensive, and HR Green said they would send a representative to meet with community members of all cities and

towns receiving the Storm Water Retro Analysis to help explain what the process would be. Board discussed changes that need to make with contract before accepting. After changes were made the board discussed different funding sources. **Motion by Rachel Gray to approve to sign the HR Green Contract. Motion Seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**

- Clearwater Soil Health Contract: The Board had a conversation regarding the remaining soil health cost-share funds and reviewed a request for those funds from a landowner in Beltrami County that has been working with Clearwater SWCD on soil health practices. The request would authorize Clearwater SWCD to enter into an agreement with Nathan Wiegman to complete 400 acres of cover crop in Beltrami County. The Beltrami SWCD is asked to commit the remaining \$7,615.61 in soil health cost-share funds for this agreement which will be paid to the landowner by Clearwater SWCD and reimbursed by Beltrami SWCD. The remaining funds for this soil health practice will be coming from 1W1P Mississippi Headwaters soil health funds. The Board and staff discussed the proposal. **Motion by Rachel Gray to approve the use of the remaining Soil Health Cost-Share for the Nathan Wiegman project that will be contracted with Clearwater SWCD. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

Staff

- Katelyn updated the Board on about grant reporting, closing two HELP grants, how she is working on ULRRL planning and implementation, she was a guest speaker at BSU and noted the BSU Basin Contract has finally been signed. In addition, Katelyn updated the Board about the temporary well technician hired and has officially started. Claire updated the Board about two easements she has been working on, that she and Katelyn went to a presentation at BSU about the solar project as well as completed pollinator planting at the Boys and Girls Club. She applied for a grant to add pollinator gardens in logging sites, she had been working with landowners with tree sales, went to a training on SMART salting and had her 90 day check in as a Beltrami County employee. Dan updated the board he has completed some JAA trainings. The Board then discussed the issues and benefits of the current JAA process. Rose updated the board that she has been learning how to process septic permits, learning how to process wood ash permits, working with landowners on tree sale and learning how to report grants. Brent updated Board on a peatland restoration project and ditch abandonment in the peatland area with DNR near Upper Red Lake.
- Graefe Contract: Katelyn described the shoreline restoration contract with MNL, and noted MNL did not finish the planting this year and needs an extension to next summer to finish. Funds are coming out of 2022 1W1P for the project. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve extension of the Graefe contract. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- BNSF Railroad Well Sealing: Project is in Kelliher and Katelyn noted the money for the cost share are expiring at the end of the year, and this project would be perfect to finish out the funds. The Board discussed who was getting the cost share, where in Kelliher this is taking place and a breakdown of how the cost share fund would be used. The board discussed changes to the contract that needed to be made. **Motion by Ray Hendrickson to approve**

**the BNSF Railroad Well Sealing contract. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson.
Motion carried and approved.**

Supervisors Report

- Rachel: Farm to school grant/food in schools' program, Kelliher Cattle Company started the processing of cattle as a class, farm to table process. All meat processed in class is served to students in the school.
- Ruth: TSA 8 met talked about shoreline contract training, establishing host district for next year, grant match, GIS contract, discussion of AgBMP program.
- Shane: applied for another, 319 – ULRW watershed coupled with 1W1P.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

MASWCD Annual Conference – December 2-4, 2024

Regular Board Meeting:

- December 19, 2024, **Lazy Jack's at 10am**
- January 16, 2025
- February 20, 2025

Beltrami Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors Meeting

December 19, 2024

Lazy Jack's

6735 Fairgrounds Rd NW

Bemidji, MN 56601

**OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SERVICES
IN BELTRAMI COUNTY**

Members Present: Shane Bowe – Chair
Ruth Trask – Treasurer
Rachel Gray – Secretary
Sam Christenson – Public Relations

Others Present: Brent Rud – District Manager
Claire Hansen – ESD/SWCD
Katelyn Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
Dan Gackle – ESD/SWCD
Rose Moore – ESD/SWCD
Ian A. - NRCS
Jody Peek – NRCS

Board Chair Shane Bowe called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for December 19, 2024, officially to order at 10:00 a.m.

Approval of the Agenda:

Additions to the agenda: Item 5.c.iv. “Reed Contract” that needs board approval. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the December 19, 2024, agenda. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**

Secretary’s Report:

Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the minutes from the November 21, 2024, SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer’s Report:

Brent Rud presented the IFS statement for November 2024. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the August 2024 Treasurer’s Report. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

- Update on staffing: Jody introduced Ian A. who is working full time at NRCS. Ian noted he went to BSU for college, served in the military and used to work for Forest Service in Grand Rapids. Jody then noted that the forester position Bagley is filled, and the offer has been accepted for the non-supervisory DC position and he will be starting before January 20th. Michal S. is moving to work in Hallock so Bemidji will be covering his position, Jody is requesting to hire another position in

Hallock. Jody noted the State office has an agreement with Duck's Unlimited to hire a staff as a grazing specialist. Lastly a tentative offer for a summer intern has been accepted.

- CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program) & EQUIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program): Staff have been working on CSP payments and are more than halfway done. Other staff have been working on EQIP and the deadline is Friday December 20th. Beltrami had 42 applications and in total about 100 EQUIP applications. Jody noted a government shutdown possible, and her office is preparing if it happens. Brent asked if the NRCS definition of socially disadvantage changed. Jody said it has not changed. Brent asked if NRCS has been approached from landowners about growing cannabis. Jody said they have not been lately. Board discussed the legalization of cannabis throughout Minnesota and if there are any policies NRCS had to follow.

District Manager—Brent Rud

- Brent asked the Board if there could be an annual planning meeting put in place. He noted Lazy Jack's and regular Board meetings don't allow for as much team building and goal setting. The Board agreed this would be a good idea.

Staff

- Katelyn Grant updated the Board that she has been working on grant reporting and tracking, working with Chad Sieverts, officially closing out HELP grant, preparing for the ULRL Jan 6th meeting, noted there was an extension for cost share dollars for another year and noted the storm retro analysis has been going well. Rose updated the Board that tree sales are going well, she has been updating the SWCD website and adding extra information under Forest Lands with an incentive page as well as extra forest related information from UofM Extensions. Claire updated the board, she has been wrapping up field work, went with Katelyn to open manhole covers for storm retro analysis and has been helping with grant tracking and trainings. Dan noted he is helping Hubbard County with their annual grazing workshop on February 12th.

Beltrami Shores Contract

- 400 feet of shoreline restoration for a community playground on lake Bemidji. Project is being paid through cost share and the work will be done by MNL. **Motion by Ruth Trask to sign the Beltrami Shores Contract. Motion seconded by Sam Christensen. Motion carried and approved.**

Envirothon

- Claire confirmed the date for Envirothon for May 7th, 2025, at Lake Bemidji State Park. She noted in the past we asked different businesses to sponsor and contribute 300 dollars to help run the event. Claire also noted that the letters we had sent to businesses was in Megan's old. Ruth noted she help with the food and with asking for different sponsors. Ruth also noted Area 8 might be able to help sponsor the event.

Reed Contract

- Dan presented this contract and noted this Project is putting side water inlets for landowner and funds are coming out of 1W1P. Board discussed details of the contract. **Motion by Sam Christensen to sign the Reed Engelstad Contract. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.**

Supervisors Report

- Ruth: went to MASWCD convention, she noted it was good convention and brought brochures from convention to show everyone. 2024 MASWCD Resolutions were discussed.
- Shane: Not available to meet on March 20th. Discussed with everyone and *moving March's Board Meeting to March 27th!*
- Rachel: Might not be available for February's Board meeting.

- **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve to buy lunch at Lazy Jack's for SWCD members. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray.**

Upcoming Meetings/Events

Regular Board Meetings:

- January 16, 2025
- February 20, 2025
- **March 27, 2025**

Motion by Sam Christenson to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved. Meeting adjourned.