

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

January 19, 2023

**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
Zach Gutknecht – ESD/SWCD
Jody Peek – NRCS
Aly Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD

Board Chair Shane Bowe called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for January 19, 2023 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Addition to the agenda: Item 5.c.ii. Colin Meier Stream Crossing Cost Share. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the amended agenda. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the minutes from the December 20, 2022 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Ruth Trask reviewed the annual per diem report and the IFS statement for December 2022. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the annual per diem report and the December 2022 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

NEW BUSINESS

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

- CSP: Annual payments are continuing to be issued. As of today, 201 of 206 payments have been approved. A total of 41 contracts were obligated in December. In total, the Bemidji CST obligated \$722,101.00. Of the applications going forward, 8 (20%) of the contracts are AgLand and 33 are NIPF (80%). Beltrami County had 27 new contracts obligated for a total of 7,593 acres and \$449,594.00. Signup #1 for CSP Classic Applications is February 10th.

- EQIP: FY 2023 application processing deadline was released to field offices. Timelines are listed below:

Signup Number	Date	Activity
1	November 18, 2022	Application Deadline
1	February 3, 2023	Assessment/Ranking Deadline
1	March 17, 2023	Application Approvals
1	April 28, 2023	Obligation Deadline
2	TBD	Application Deadline

The Bemidji CST took a total of 91 applications. Bemidji – 33 applications; Bagley – 23 applications; Park Rapids – 16 applications; and Baudette – 19 applications. Field offices are starting to gather eligibility information, complete site visits, and complete assessments.

- Other Discussion: iPhone/Survey 123/Survey Field Tools Training was held on 01/18/2023. All planners now have work-issued cell phones. As a result, all staff have a tool to take points, lines, and polygons while in the field to allow for quicker checkouts of practices.
- Upcoming Workload/General Items:
 - Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Tribal Grant – Distributed information to tribal POCs regarding the grant. Deadline to apply is Feb 21st, 2023. Met with Red Lake on January 4th to discuss the grant opportunity. Red Lake DNR was present, as well as staff that assist with Red Lake Farms, and the Red Lake Ag Department.
 - Contract Management: Contracts with items behind schedule in 2022 and prior are being reviewed and mods and non-compliance agreements are being completed.
 - RCPP Land Management deadline was December 16th. Beltrami County has 3 ABC applications. These participants are looking to do some thinning to create golden wing warbler habitat.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- Brent provided an overview of 2022 grant spending.
- Election of Officers: **Motion by Sam Christenson to maintain the current slate of officers for 2023. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- 2023 Audit Proposal: Brent presented Peterson Company Ltd.’s cost proposal for the 2023 audit. The audit fee will be \$3,100. **Motion by Ruth Trask to hire Peterson Company Ltd. to complete the 2023 audit. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Brent presented the 2023 budget. Total revenue is \$62,034 and expenditures total \$55,908. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the 2023 budget. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
- Staff reviewed the proposed 2023 workplan. New additions include the Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P and management of multiple new grants. **Motion by Ray Hendrickson to approve the 2023 workplan. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Brent described the liquidation process for TSA 8 assets.
- The SWCD is required to give a presentation of recent/current activities to the Beltrami County Board. Staff will likely be presenting at the February meeting. Supervisors are welcome to attend.
- MASWCD is looking for committee volunteers.

- Upcoming MASWCD Events: January 25 legislative advocacy webinar discussing SWCD aid funding; March 7 legislative briefing and March 8 SWCD Day at the Capitol.

Staff

- Eikhoff Cost Share: Aly presented a potential shoreline restoration project. The project consists of regrading, installing coir logs, and planting on 150 feet of shoreline that have been eroded and undercut due to ice and wave action. Minnesota Native Landscapes has prepared a design, and will be contracted to install and maintain the project for three years. The total project cost is \$29,475, and the requested cost share is \$22,106.25. **Motion by Sam Christenson to use \$22,106.25 in Cost Share Funds to restore the shoreline of the Eikhoff property. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Grant Applications: Staff is working with the Red Lake Tribe on a BWSR Clean Water Fund application for four grazing management practices, watering systems, and access control. The Tribe will be the applicant, but work will be off-Reservation and the SWCD will be the fiscal agent. Staff is also planning to apply for funding for the Keep It Clean program from the Red Lake Watershed District.
- Colin Meier Stream Crossing: Zach presented a potential culvert replacement project. Existing culverts at the site are undersized which leads to flooding and erosion. The total project cost is \$32,000, and the requested cost share is \$24,000. Funds would come from a combination of Cost Share and Mississippi River 1W1P Implementation grants. **Motion by Ruth Trask to use \$24,000 in Cost Share/1W1P Implementation funds to replace the culverts. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Tim Terrill will be giving a short presentation during the work session at the February SWCD meeting.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

Regular Board Meetings

- February 16, 2023
- **March 23, 2023 – date changed**
- April 20, 2023

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

Recording Secretary

Date

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

February 16, 2023

**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
Zach Gutknecht – ESD/SWCD
Jody Peek – NRCS
Chad Severts – BWSR
Tim Terrill – Mississippi Headwaters Board

Work Session Guest: Tim Terrill – Executive Director, Mississippi Headwaters Board
Tim presented a video on the history and purpose of the Mississippi Headwaters Board. Bob Lessard created the MHB in an effort to provide local control of the Mississippi River. The MHB is a regulatory organization with jurisdiction over county zoning in the shoreland zone. The Board also focuses on public education, protection and risk analysis, AIS awareness, signage, and recreation events. MHB has partnered with Beltrami SWCD on the Mississippi River Headwaters 1W1P and PMA 25. Their objective is to enhance the work of counties and SWCDs in the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River.

Board Chair Shane Bowe called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for February 16, 2023 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Addition to the agenda: Item 5.c.iv. Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P grant agreement. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the amended agenda. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**

Oath of Office: Ray Hendrickson was sworn in by Beltrami County Auditor JoDee Treat.

Secretary's Report:
Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the minutes from the January 19, 2023 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:
Ruth Trask presented the IFS statement for January 2023. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the January 2023 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.** Ruth and Brent also reviewed a revised version of the December 2022 IFS statement. The original report was approved at the January meeting, however the report has been amended to account

for end-of-year transfers. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the amended December 2022 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

- EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program): The assessment/ranking deadline was February 13th. The team would need \$1.5 million to fund all proposed projects, but will only receive \$325,000. Some projects will be moved to different funding pools. The preapproval list will be available next week. Inflation Reduction Act funding will start in March: Minnesota will receive \$11 million in additional funds for EQIP. It is unknown how the funding will be distributed.
- CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program): The batching deadline was February 10th. February 17th is the screening deadline. The assessment/ranking deadline is mid-May. Bemidji has 20 renewals. The deadline for renewals is March 10th.
- Trainings: Jody attended the Hubbard Grazing Workshop in Guthrie. There were 40 participants, 30 of which were landowners. NRCS staff also attended a virtual Nitrogen Management Conference on February 7th, and will attend a virtual Nutrient Management Conference on the 21st. Lake of the Woods SWCD is organizing a Grazing Workshop which will be held on March 29th.
- Staffing: Audrey Mays, NRCS Forester, has accepted a new position and her last day will be March 7th. Bagley is getting a Soil Conservationist, and Bemidji is getting a Rangeland Specialist.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- Brent went over the TSA 8 asset liquidation list. Beltrami SWCD may bid on one or two survey rods, 2-way radios, a game camera, and office furniture for a potential future employee. Any money spent would come from the General Fund. **Motion by Sam Christenson to bid on listed items, with bids not to exceed 50% of the retail price. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Brent presented the 2023 BWSR Clean Water Fund Competitive Grant agreement for subsurface stormwater treatment on the Bemidji State University Campus. The grant total is \$228,300. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the grant agreement. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Brent provided a detailed report on all grant activity in 2022.
- Clearwater River – Wilton Trail: The first stakeholder meeting for the Clearwater River stream restoration project was held on February 9th. Brent provided an overview of the meeting, which included a description of the location issues, planning process, potential alternative solutions, funding, and discussion of alternatives. The SWCD currently has \$2.65 million in grant funds to fund the project but will need to secure additional funding in order to fully fund the potential project and meet grant requirements. There was discussion of who should attend future stakeholder meetings. Brent and Zach will meet with local landowners concerned with the project to discuss the planning process and garner feedback before the next stakeholder meeting on March 9th. Ruth Trask will represent the SWCD at upcoming stakeholder meetings.
- The Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P planning grant agreement will be available soon. The grant total is \$242,000. Due to the eLINK remodel, the SWCD will have a short period of time to upload the signed agreement. **Motion by Sam Christenson to authorize the District Manager**

to sign the grant agreement. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.

Staff

- Staff presented the 2022 Annual Report, detailing activities performed by the SWCD over the past year.
- Grant Applications: Zach described a number of upcoming grant application opportunities. They include:
 1. **Notice of Funding Opportunity – USDA:** Looking for \$1 million applications to fund approximately four projects relating to forestry/grazing. The deadline is the end of April. Zach will form a subcommittee to discuss potential projects.
 2. **Minnesota Glacial Lakes Partnership:** The SWCD will not apply for this round of funding.
 3. **Legacy Partners Grant – Red Lake DNR:** Application submitted to fund four to five grazing/watering systems on the Blackduck and Cormorant Rivers. Requested funding is \$250,000. Approval will occur before the end of June.
 4. **Legacy Partners Grant – Upper Red Lake Area Association:** Application submitted to continue funding the ULR Keep It Clean Program until 1W1P funds become available. Requested funding is \$92,600. Approval will occur before the end of June.
 5. **2023 Habitat Enhancement Landscape Program:** This grant will continue to fund habitat improvement/restoration projects in the Lake Bemidji corridor. It is intended to fund larger projects on public lands. Potential project sites include Gene Dillon School, City of Bemidji property, Bemidji High School, and the Beltrami County Fairgrounds. Staff intends to apply for this grant. The application is due February 22nd.
 6. **LCCMR/Others:** The LCCMR grant could be used to cover additional funds needed for the Clearwater River stream restoration. The application period opens April 1st. Other potential grants/funding sources for this project include the Red River Management Board, Red Lake Watershed District, and 1W1P.
 7. **MDA Equipment Grant:** Intended to purchase or improve equipment. The Blackduck Co-op is interested. The application is due at the end of March.
- Staff is working with Mark Gutierrez of the Minnesota Soil Health Coalition to plan two soil health tours in Beltrami County – one in Blackduck, and one in Fourtown at the end of July. The Soil Health Coalition will cover expenses (excluding staff time).

Supervisors' Report:

- Sam Christenson provided an update on the legislative webinar he attended.
- The Mississippi River Headwaters 1W1P Policy Committee will meet on February 28th.
- The Thief River 1W1P Policy Committee will meet on March 7th.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

Regular Board Meetings

- March 23, 2023 – Date changed
- April 20, 2023
- May 18, 2023

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**

March 23, 2023

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
 Zach Gutknecht – ESD/SWCD
 Aly Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
 Anna Baltisberger – NRCS
 Rashelle Brown – Conservation Minnesota

Work Session Guest: Rashelle Brown, Conservation Minnesota

- Rashelle Brown is working at Americorps Climate Impact Corps as a facilitator. She has been reaching out to groups dealing with conservation and the environment. Her work area includes Hubbard County, Bemidji, Cass County, and the Leech Lake Reservation. She will be facilitating two or more environmental activities in the area: a high tunnel for the Leech Lake Band this summer and Bemidji State University stormwater awareness. Other activities include outreach to student groups, pollinator plantings and giveaways, and community engagement. She maintains mailing lists to recruit volunteers. The SWCD is willing to work with Rashelle if the opportunity arises.

Board Chair Shane Bowe called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for March 23, 2023 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the March 23, 2023 agenda. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Ray Hendrickson to approve the minutes from the February 16, 2023 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Ruth Trask presented the IFS statement for February 2023. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the February 2023 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.**

Reports:

NRCS Report – Anna Baltisberger
Staffing Update:

- NRCS has lots of vacancies opening across the state. Staffing caps for the agency have increased and with knowledge of the IRA money that will be coming in the future, the short-term plan is to hire as many people as possible so they are able to get that money out the door when it arrives. Audrey Mays, Bemidji Forester, transferred to the Forest Service. Her last working day in Bemidji was March 7th. A recent graduate vacancy to backfill that position opened in USA Jobs on March 1st & closed March 14th. Jody Peek & Steve Cole will be reviewing applications from that vacancy soon. A Soil Conservationist position opened in the Bagley Field Office for a recent graduate on March 1st. That position closed on March 14th. Jody Peek & Steve Cole will be reviewing applications from that vacancy soon. On March 9th a Soil Conservationist position opened for the whole state. It is a unique posting as it listed 16 vacancies and location is negotiable. This is not a recent graduate position so anyone with education requirements for that series is eligible to apply. That position closes March 23rd.
- Proposed Future Vacancies: Jody attended a strategic planning meeting with Steve Cole and other Team Leads from the Northeast Area on March 13th & 14th. Below is a list of vacancies that might be coming out in the next year.
 - Non-supervisory DC position located in Bemidji. This would be a GS-11 position and would allow the Team Lead to focus more on attending meetings, partnering, and managing staff.
 - Rangeland Management Conservationist in the Bemidji Field Office. A person in that position would primarily function as the team's Grazing Specialist.
 - 3 Soil Conservation Technician Positions – It is expected that this vacancy may come out in USA Jobs sometime in June. Any field office that does not currently have a sitting Technician may receive one. For the Bemidji Team that would be a vacancy for the Bemidji, Bagley, and Baudette Field Offices. If you know of anyone who may be interested in those positions, please have that person get in touch with Jody.
 - Administrative Assistant for the Bemidji Field Office – This person will likely cover 3 teams but Steve is looking to place them in locations where workload is the highest (Bemidji & Little Falls).

CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program): Deadline to take CSP renewal applications was March 10th. The team received 41 applications: Bemidji – 18; Park Rapids – 17; Bagley – 2; and Baudette – 4. Field offices are beginning to work on assessing and ranking CSP applications. Deadline to complete assessments is May 19th. The team has 75 applications that need to be completed by that deadline. Work is being shuffled so deadlines can be met. Bemidji has 33 of the 75. Park Rapids and Bagley staff will be assisting in planning 8 of those 33 in Bemidji.

EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program): The Bemidji CST currently has 24 applications preapproved. Bemidji – 10 preapprovals. Practices include: 1 Lake Access, 4 Pollinators, 5 Tree Plantings, 1 Brush Management, 1 Structure for Wildlife, 1 Herbaceous Weed Treatment, 1 Cover Crop, 1 Forage & Biomass Planting, 2 Forest Stand Improvements, and 2 Woody Residue Treatment. All applications are currently approved and are being reviewed prior to obtaining signatures. Obligation deadline is April 28th. EQIP 2nd signup ends March 24th. Area will be receiving \$675,000.00 in IRA Funds that can be used as part of the 2nd signup. Applications for this signup are being prioritized, and the deadline to have all apps prioritized is March 31st.

RCPP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program): The Bemidji CST currently has 3 applications preapproved. Bemidji has 3 American Bird Conservancy applications preapproved – all 3 are for Early Successional Habitat Management.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- GreenCorps Intern Emily Wollenweber has accepted a full-time position out of state and will be leaving the SWCD.
- Sam Rux in the Auditor’s Office is setting up a miscellaneous grants department in the IFS system to separate small grants from the general fund.
- Brent went over the SWCD presentation that was given to the Beltrami County Board on March 21st.
- Beltrami County Fair: Zach will work with Dain Erickson to design and build a kiosk for the fair.
- TSA 8: Brent discussed the results of the auction. There will be a TSA 8 Board Meeting on March 29th. Funding: Each SWCD will pay in about \$4,000 for the match requirement, and will receive \$38,000 per district on a reimbursement basis. Area Resolution: Proposal to have MASWCD lobby BWSR to eliminate the match requirement for SWCDs.

Staff

- Staff participated in the Area 8 Interagency Summit on March 22nd.
- MPCA Keep It Clean Grant: The \$198,600 grant application for a wheelhouse and education/outreach will be funded. **Motion by Sam Christenson to authorize the District Manager to sign the grant agreement when it is available. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.** There are currently two bills in the Minnesota Legislature regarding the Keep It Clean Program: one would create a law requiring waste on frozen waters be contained, and the other advocates for creating a winter water patrol similar to the existing summer water patrol through the Department of Public Safety.
- NOFO Grant: \$4 million is available through NRCS for water management systems and grazing/livestock assistance. They are looking to provide four awards funding roughly 4 projects each. The grant is due April 30th, and the estimated start date is July 3rd. There was discussion of the different project opportunities available under the grant. Staff will provide a more solidified proposal at the April meeting.
- Water Festival: The Water Festival will be held on May 18th at Gene Dillon Elementary. Presenters have been scheduled. The estimated cost is \$2,000 (Increased Local Capacity funding), which will provide t-shirts and food for presenters. Staff are planning on holding the Red Lake Water Festival in the fall.
- Envirothon: The Envirothon will be held on May 3rd at Lake Bemidji State Park. Beltrami does not have any schools attending – suggestion to approach 4-H groups and FFAs for participation in future years.
- Clearwater River – Wilton Trail Project: The steering team had their second meeting, where they went into more detail on options. Shawn Tracy, AECOM, is doing a draft feasibility report, which will be available at their next meeting in April. Future meetings will include a public open house as well as meetings with township, county, and SWCD boards.
- Tree Program: Sales have been slower than in previous years. Staff had to reduce the number of trees ordered, but will continue to advertise the program. Tree distribution will be held on April 27th and 28th.

Supervisors’ Report:

- Sam Christenson discussed adding Browse Blocker, a netting designed to prevent deer browse of conifers, as an available product in the tree sale. Staff will consider adding it to the 2024 sale.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

TSA 8 Meeting – March 29

ULRL Steering Team – April 6

Clearwater River Wilton Trail Steering Team Meeting – April 13

ULRL Policy Committee – April 17

Envirothon – May 3

Gene Dillon Water Festival – May 18

Regular Board Meetings

- April 20, 2023
- May 25, 2023 – **Date changed due to Water Festival**
- June 15, 2023

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

Beltrami Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors Meeting

April 20, 2023

Commissioners' Conference Room

701 Minnesota Ave. NW

Bemidji, MN 56601

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BELTRAMI COUNTY**

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

Members Absent: Ray Hendrickson – Vice Chair

Others Present: Brent Rud – District Manager
Megan FitzGerald – ESD/SWCD
Zach Gutknecht – ESD/SWCD
Jody Peek – NRCS
Dylan Nistler – Karvakko Engineering

Board Chair Shane Bowe called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for April 20, 2023 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Additions/Corrections to the Agenda:

Item 5.c.5. Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P Engineering Contract; Item 5.c.6. Upper/Lower Red Lake Policy Committee Alternate Member; Item 5.c.7. LCCMR Keep it Clean Grant Fiscal Agent Agreement; and Item 5.c.8. Aurora Waasakone Tree Donation Request. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the amended April 20, 2023 agenda. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Rachel Gray to approve the minutes from the March 23, 2023 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Ruth Trask presented the IFS statement for February 2023. Edits to the IFS statement: \$12.49 reimbursement to Megan FitzGerald on 3/30/2023 should be charged to the Joint Counties Natural Resources Board, not the SWCD; \$761.48 reimbursement to Connie and Kevin Barsness on 3/3/2023 should be charged to the Mississippi River 1W1P Implementation Grant, not the Red Lake Watershed. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the March 2023 Treasurer's Report with edits. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

- Jody Peek provided an NRCS update for the month of April.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- Staff have been working on a building plan for a new tree shack. The property where the current tree shack is located is being rezoned, and will eventually be sold.

- Minnesota SWCD Forestry Association: The SWCD received a request to become a member of the Association. The group provides education and networking opportunities regarding forestry. Dues are \$60/year. Discussion on the pros and cons of joining the group. **Motion by Sam Christenson to join the MN SWCD Forestry Association for a 1-year trial period. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
- Clearwater SWCD Soil Health Payments: Beltrami SWCD has an agreement with Clearwater SWCD to implement agricultural soil health practices in the Mississippi Watershed. Clearwater SWCD is requesting that they can pay landowners directly for practices, then request reimbursement from Beltrami SWCD. Consensus approval to allow Clearwater SWCD to pay landowners directly. Rachel Gray suggested advising agricultural producers about an assistance grant through the Minnesota Soil Health Coalition, which offers producers \$10/acre for soil health practices.
- Engineering Contracts: The SWCD sought bids for three projects from three different engineering firms. The projects include addressing erosion on the PMA 25 project site and two high banks stabilizations along the Mississippi River: the west high banks site will require the installation of stairs; the east site will require stabilization of the toe of the slope. Brent recommended contracting with Karvacko Engineering for the two Mississippi high banks projects and Moore Engineering for the PMA 25 site. **Motion by Sam Christenson to authorize staff to sign these engineering contracts. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.**
- MASWCD TSA Area 8 Match Resolution: Brent presented a MASWCD resolution from TSA Area 8 that would eliminate the 10% base grant funding match requirement for TSAs. No action – the resolution will be shared with other SWCDs for their input and brought back before the Board at the May meeting.
- MPCA Keep It Clean Grant: Beltrami SWCD has been awarded a grant from the MPCA to purchase a promotional fish house and cover staff time for educational events for the Keep It Clean program. Due to short timelines, staff may not have the chance to bring the purchase to the Board before it is made. **Motion by Rachel Gray to authorize staff to enter into a purchase agreement for the Keep It Clean fish house. The purchase must align with the grant workplan/budget. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

Staff

- Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P Policy Committee Alternate: Rachel Gray was appointed as the alternate Policy Committee member for the ULR 1W1P.
- Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P Engineering Contract: Staff received a quote from Houston Engineering for \$124,600 to provide consulting services for the ULR 1W1P. **Motion by Rachel Gray to authorize the SWCD to enter into a contract with Houston Engineering for the quoted amount. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
- America the Beautiful Grant: Staff will aid Red Lake DNR in applying for funding for implementing grazing and watering systems in the Upper/Lower Red Lake Watershed. The pre-application is due by midnight on April 20th, and the full application is due July 20th. If the proposal is funded, there is the possibility of hiring a grazing specialist.
- Meier Cost Share Agreement: Zach presented a contract with Colin Meier to replace an undersized culvert on his property on Grant Creek. The total project cost is \$32,000, and the SWCD would provide \$24,000 in cost share. Funding sources include the Cost Share and Mississippi River Headwaters Implementation Grants. **Motion by Sam Christenson to provide**

up to \$24,000 in cost share for the project. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

- LCCMR Keep It Clean Grant Fiscal Agent: The Upper Red Lake Area Association received a \$200,000 grant to install septic tanks at resorts on Upper Red Lake. Zach presented a letter stating that Beltrami SWCD agrees to serve as the fiscal agent for the grant. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve staff to serve as the fiscal agent. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Headwaters Science Center Tree Donation: Headwaters Science Center submitted a donation request for 200 trees for an Arbor Day event. **Motion by Rachel Gray to approve the donation. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Aurora Waasakone Tree Donation: Aurora Waasakone Community of Learners has requested a donation of one upland tree pack and one lowland tree pack, 40 trees in total, to plant during Earth Week. They did not have a chance to complete the donation request application before the meeting. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the donation contingent on Brent approving the application. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.**
- Clearwater River – Wilton Trail Project: The steering team had their third meeting on April 13th. Shawn Tracy, AECOM, presented a draft of the feasibility report, including scoring/metrics and recommendations. Alternative 3 was the suggested option, and the estimated project cost is \$4.5 million including contingency. Next steps include presenting at the May 15th Buzzle Township Board meeting and the May 16th Beltrami County Board meeting, holding an open house in Buzzle Township, applying for additional funding, and completing the feasibility report.
- Soil Health Cost Share Grant: The SWCD received over \$14,000 from BWSR for soil health practices. Staff is planning to use part of the funding for tree plantings. Landowners would be required to have a planting plan and sign cost share agreements with the SWCD. **Motion by Sam Christenson to authorize staff to sign cost share agreements with landowners. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.**

Supervisors' Report:

- Ruth Trask described a pinecone collecting event she attended in Lake of the Woods County. Discussion of whether Beltrami SWCD should host a similar event.
- Sam Christenson provided an update on SWCD aid funding and discussed small acre forest management.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

Envirothon – May 3

Gene Dillon Water Festival – May 19

Regular Board Meetings

- May 25, 2023 – **Date changed**
- June 15, 2023
- July 20, 2023

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

May 25, 2023

Commissioners' Conference Room

701 Minnesota Ave. NW

Bemidji, MN 56601

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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
Zach Gutknecht – ESD/SWCD
Aly Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
Strait Idso – NRCS
Chad Severts – BWSR

Board Chair Shane Bowe called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for May 25, 2023 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Additions/Corrections to the Agenda:

Item 5.b.ii. MASWCD Funding Update; Item 5.b.iii. Annual Audit; Item 5.b.iv. Clearwater 1W1P Resolution; and Item 5.b.v. Roseau 1W1P Resolution. **Motion by Ray Hendrickson to approve the amended May 25, 2023 agenda. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.**

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Rachel Gray to approve the minutes from the April 20, 2023 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the April 2023 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.

Reports:

NRCS Report – Strait Idso

- Staffing Updates: Anna Baltisberger's last day will be Friday. An intern from Red Lake Nation started Monday.
- CSP: 23 applications are moving forward for ranking and assessment.
- EQIP: 11 applications are moving toward obligation. The estimated total cost is \$160,000.
- \$800,000 for socially disadvantaged applicants – estimated \$500,000 for Red Lake high tunnels.
- Updates on Inflation Reduction Act funding for CSP and EQIP through 2026. Funds will triple to quadruple the budget for these programs.
- Local Workgroup Meeting; Scheduled to follow the June 15th SWCD Board meeting. Will begin at 11am.

- Keep it Clean: A Yeti fish house has been ordered for the Keep it Clean promotional campaign. Delivery is expected by the end of June. Robyn Dwight has been working with the State Fair Board and the DNR on event planning. The SWCD Board can expect to see expenses associated with the program on upcoming treasurer's reports.
- MASWCD Funding Update: Brent provided an overview of the BWSR funding/policy changes as a result of the legislative session. SWCDs will lose Increase Local Capacity funding, which will be replaced by program aid. The new funding will include two direct payments per year, one in June and one in December, from the Department of Revenue. Funding amounts will be similar to those of Increase Local Capacity, however SWCDs will not have to report spending and progress to BWSR. The Beltrami SWCD Board will have to pass a resolution to establish spending guidelines. Brent provided updates on Conservation Delivery, Cost Share, and Natural Resource Block Grant funding. More information will be presented at the June 23 Area 8 meeting, and staff/Board members are encouraged to attend.
- Annual Audit: Brent reviewed questions received by Ruth from the auditing firm.
- Clearwater 1W1P Resolution: BWSR has approved the Clearwater River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. **Motion by Rachel Gray to adopt and implement the Plan for the area of the county identified in the Plan. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Roseau 1W1P Resolution: BWSR has approved the Roseau River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. **Motion by Rachel Gray to adopt and implement the Plan for the area of the county identified in the Plan. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
- Rainy/Rapid 1W1P Resolution: BWSR has approved the Rainy/Rapid River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. **Motion by Rachel Gray to adopt and implement the Plan for the area of the county identified in the Plan. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
- MASWCD Area 8 Match Resolution: Brent presented a resolution to eliminate the match requirement for TSAs. The resolution can be modified at the upcoming Area 8 meeting. **Motion by Ruth to approve and submit the resolution to Area 8. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

Staff

- America the Beautiful Grant Application: Zach is working on the full application for the America the Beautiful grant. A pre-proposal was already submitted, and the review/ranking period runs from April to May. The deadline for the full proposal submission is Tuesday, May 30th. Beltrami's proposal is requesting \$1.1 million for cattle exclusions and grazing/watering systems in the Upper/Lower Red Lake Watershed. \$700,000 would go toward installing grazing systems (20-30 systems in total), and \$400,000 toward hiring a grazing specialist for the next three years.
- Outdoor Heritage Fund Application: Zach is seeking support from the Board to apply to the Outdoor Heritage Fund for the Clearwater River Stream Restoration project. If awarded, the grant would cover the remainder of funds needed for the estimated \$4.9 million project. The application is due tomorrow. **Motion by Sam Christenson to apply for the funding. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved. Ruth Trask abstained from voting.**
- Meier Cost Share Contract Cancellation: A cost share contract for \$24,000 for a culvert replacement at the Meier property was approved at the April meeting. Labor estimates were

returned at double the expected amount, so the landowner has decided not to proceed with the project at this time. **Motion by Rachel Gray to cancel the cost share contract with Colin Meier. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**

- HELP Grant Agreement: The SWCD has received a \$45,150 grant to install pollinator habitat on public lands. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the grant agreement. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.**
- Health and Wellness Expo: The Beltrami County Wellness Committee is hosting a Wellness Expo for Beltrami County employees on June 21st. The SWCD has been invited to have a booth at the Expo. Staff would like to donate a rain barrel and a plant plug kit for a raffle. **Motion by Rachel to donate a rain barrel and plant plug kit, costs not to exceed \$200. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Peterson Cost Share Contract: Aly described a potential project at the Peterson property on Lake Bemidji. The project would remove an existing retaining wall and restore 160 feet of shoreline with a native vegetative buffer. Funds would come from the Mississippi Headwaters 1W1P Implementation grant. The project is estimated to cost \$26,985; 75% cost share amount is \$20,238.75. **Motion by Rachel Gray to approve of the \$20,238.75 cost share contract. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
- Headwaters Science Center Thank You Letter: The SWCD donated 200 red pines to the Headwaters Science Center for an Arbor Day event. Staff presented a letter sent by the Headwaters Science Center thanking the SWCD for their donation.
- Envirothon Update: Staff provided an update on the Area 8 Envirothon, which was held at Lake Bemidji State Park on May 3rd. Eleven teams participated, and the Grand Rapids senior team came in first place. Waubun High School won the statewide competition.
- Water Festival Update: Zach gave an update on the Bemidji Water Festival, which was held at Gene Dillon Elementary on May 19th. The weather was cold and rainy, but overall the students and teachers enjoyed the event. Costs for the event are estimated at \$1,200, which will be paid out of the Increase Local Capacity grant. Zach is currently doing outreach for the Red Lake/Beltrami Water Festival, which will be held at Concordia Language Village on October 10th.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

MASWCD North Central Area 8 Meeting in the Beltrami County Board Room on June 23rd at 9am

Regular Board Meetings

- June 15, 2023
- July 20, 2023
- August 17, 2023

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

June 15, 2023

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
Zach Gutknecht – ESD/SWCD
Jody Peek – NRCS
Christopher Day – NRCS Intern

Board Vice Chair Ray Hendrickson called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for June 15, 2023 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Additions/Corrections to the Agenda:

Motion by Rachel Gray to approve the June 15, 2023 agenda. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Rachel Gray to approve the minutes from the May 25, 2023 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the May 2023 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

- Jody provided the NRCS report.
- Upcoming Trainings: Grazing and Grasslands Workshop, Tuesday, June 20th from 4:30pm-6:30pm at the Clearwater County Fairgrounds; How to Determine if Your Soil is Functioning, Wednesday, July 5th from noon-3pm in Williams.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- Brent presented a BWSR spreadsheet that displays how much funding each SWCD will receive as a result of legislative changes made to SWCD funding. Beltrami will receive \$171,506.91 for the first biennium; that amount will decrease to \$137,000 for subsequent funding cycles. SWCDs

will receive two payments per year. These funds will be reflected in the General Fund. Under the new rules, SWCDs will not have to report spending or progress to BWSR.

- Giziibii Membership: Zach is currently the SWCD and County representative on the Giziibii Board. The group's activities have diverged from the SWCD's mission in recent years, and staff feel the SWCD should no longer be a member of Giziibii. The SWCD will not appoint a member to sit on the Giziibii Board in 2024.
- The SWCD has arranged to put up a Keep It Clean billboard on the Nistler property along the road to Upper Red Lake.
- Brent will attend an upcoming Tribal Relations Training in Cass Lake.

Staff

- The SWCD did not receive the NRCS NOFO grant that staff applied for. The grant would have provided funding to hire a grazing specialist. The America the Beautiful grant, which could also be used to hire a grazing specialist, has yet to be awarded. Staff will continue to look into other funding opportunities.
- Aly is at leadership training in Lanesboro.
- An open house for the Clearwater Stream Habitat Restoration project will be held on June 28th at the Buzzle Town Hall. A public service announcement was sent to Beltrami residents. The open house will consist of an in-depth presentation and a question-and-answer session. The project will be brought before the Buzzle Township, Beltrami County, and Beltrami SWCD Boards at their July meetings.

Supervisors

- Rachel wants to encourage the SWCD to keep an eye on the drought monitor. Parts of central Minnesota have already hit D2 levels (severe drought). The SWCD should consider finding funds for wells and livestock feed, and bring in experts to educate producers on drought management should the need arise.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

MASWCD North Central Area 8 Meeting in the Beltrami County Board Room on June 23rd at 9am

Regular Board Meetings

- July 20, 2023
- August 17, 2023
- ***September 21, 2023 – Date change needed, reschedule at next meeting***

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

Meeting followed by the NRCS Local Workgroup meeting.

Beltrami Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors Meeting

July 20, 2023

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
Sam Christenson – Public Relations

Members Absent: Shane Bowe – Chair
Rachel Gray – Secretary

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

Board Vice Chair Ray Hendrickson called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for July 20, 2023 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Additions/Corrections to the Agenda:

Addition to the agenda: Item 5.b.v. SWCD Program Aid Resolution. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the amended July 20, 2023 agenda. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the minutes from the June 15, 2023 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the June 2023 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

- Jody attended a grazing workshop in Bagley on June 20th. The workshop was not well advertised or attended.
- Jody attended and assisted with a Hubbard summer teacher tour on June 21st. About 35 educators attended. The workshop was an effort to introduce agriculture into the classroom. Two teachers have since reached out to Jody for assistance with education outreach in the schools.
- Jody attended the MASWCD Area 8 meeting in Bemidji on June 23rd. The main takeaway from the meeting is that agencies are seeing an influx of funding, and may find themselves short-staffed in the near future.

- CSP Preapprovals: 42 selected for funding on the Bemidji CST. Due date for approvals is the 28th.
- Jody will attend the Supervising for Excellence training next week in Spokane.
- Jody attended a soil health field day July 5th in Williams. The event was well-attended.
- Jody has been working with tribes on NOFO grant applications, due July 15th.
- Received additional EQIP funds from the Inflation Reduction Act.
- Soil Health Equipment Grant is open for applications again. The grant is available to individuals, and can fund 50% of equipment upgrades and purchases up to \$50,000.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- Clearwater River Habitat Restoration: The Buzzle Township Board voted not to move forward with the restoration project at their last meeting. Staff will calculate final expenses and return the remainder of the grant funds to BWSR. Ruth requested copies of invoices from AECOM.
- Reimbursement Policy: Brent discussed the need for the Board to approve Supervisors' meeting attendance for all non-regular meetings. This is a BWSR requirement for compensation. Whenever possible, travel and attendance should be approved prior to the meeting, but can be done retroactively if needed. Board approval of meeting attendance is not required for staff. Approvals must be authorized through board action and recorded in the meeting minutes. The Board can approve blanket authorizations for regularly scheduled meetings, such as Area 8 meetings and the MASWCD Annual Conference – these should be authorized annually at the January SWCD Supervisors Meeting. **Motion by Ruth Trask to provide a blanket authorization for all Supervisors to attend and be compensated for Area 8 meetings and the MASWCD Annual Convention. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved. Motion by Sam Christenson to retroactively approve attendance and compensation for Ruth Trask to attend the June 28th Clearwater River Habitat Restoration public information meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
- Keep It Clean: Staff and volunteers will be at the Minnesota State Fair showcasing the Keep It Clean Program and new wheelhouse. This requires Board authorization to provide a \$40 per diem for volunteers to staff the event, and well as Board approval for event apparel. Staff apparel was not included in the original grant application. Estimated costs for 75-80 t-shirts (including shirts for 50 paid volunteer slots) are \$1,500. The shirts will feature the Keep It Clean and Beltrami SWCD and County logos. Staff would also like to purchase a few winter jackets and perhaps upgrade t-shirts to polos. **Motion by Sam Christenson to authorize the purchase of up to \$3,500 for Keep It Clean apparel using Increase Local Capacity funds. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.** MCIT is requiring volunteers to sign a volunteer form to represent Beltrami SWCD and the Keep It Clean Program (volunteers would be under the SWCD's insurance during their shifts). The draft volunteer form will be sent to MCIT for the addition of a liability waiver. **Motion by Ruth Trask to authorize volunteers to sign form and represent Beltrami SWCD and Keep It Clean at the Minnesota State Fair. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.** Other Keep It Clean: Brent showed the Board a mock-up of the wheelhouse wrap and talked about other education outreach opportunities including the St. Paul Ice Show and the MASWCD Annual Convention.
- Resolutions: Match elimination resolution was passed at the Area 8 Meeting. Brent presented a resolution template from BWSR outlining how SWCDs will allocate SWCD Aid Funds. Brent suggested a simpler resolution stating that funds will be spent according to the SWCD mission. A resolution will be presented and voted on at a future SWCD meeting.

- Staff has decided to stop selling rain barrels as part of their annual tree sale.
- Brent asked the Board if they would be interested in doing a field trip of projects installed across the county. He suggested a shortened August or September meeting in the morning followed by a tour in the afternoon – could replace the holiday meeting in December. The Board was open to the idea.

Staff

- Beltrami County Fair: The SWCD will not have a booth in the commercial building this year. Instead, they will be doing a 2-hour presentation at the Shutter Stage on Saturday the 12th. It will be a joint presentation with NRCS staff, and will showcase forestry, shoreline, and grazing. The SWCD will also have a kiosk near the forestry building – Dain is close to being done with the posters. He is also designing three pull-up banners centered on forestry, shoreline, and agriculture.
- Mississippi River Headwaters 1W1P Workplan/Budget: The amended workplan and budget were included in the packet. Funds were adjusted based on feedback from the Steering Team, and have been recommended for approval by the Policy Committee. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the amended Mississippi River Headwaters 1W1P workplan/budget. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
- BSU Stormwater Projects: Brent described two upcoming stormwater projects on the Bemidji State University campus. The first is an installation of a rain garden and greenspace at the Oak Hall parking lot. The estimated cost of the project is \$40,000, and will be 100% funded through the Mississippi River Headwaters 1W1P Implementation Grant. The Policy Committee authorized 100% reimbursement as BSU's only available matching funds are state dollars and are ineligible as match. Contractors would like to install the project this year and are on a short timeline. **Motion by Ruth Trask to authorize staff to sign the cost share contract authorizing 100% reimbursement of project costs not to exceed the \$40,000 budget. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.** The second project is an installation of a 5,500 sq. ft. rain garden along Highway 197 to reduce parking lot runoff. The SWCD is working with BSU's environmental project management class and engineering/design companies on the project. The estimated project cost is \$20,000, and the Policy Committee authorized 100% reimbursement from the Mississippi 1W1P Implementation Grant. **Motion by Ruth Trask to authorize staff to sign the cost share contract authorizing 100% reimbursement of project costs not to exceed the \$20,000 budget. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**
- NACD Technical Assistance Grant: Zach is working with Jody to apply for the grant, which would fund a grazing specialist position for one year. **Motion by Sam Christenson to complete and submit the grant application. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

MAWD Administrators and SWCD Managers Joint Meeting, September 27th and 28th in Baxter Area 8 Fall Tour and Meeting in Hubbard County, October 12th and 13th

Regular Board Meetings

- August 17, 2023
- **September 19, 2023 – Date changed**
- October 19, 2023

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

August 17, 2023

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
Zach Gutknecht – ESD/SWCD
Megan FitzGerald – ESD/SWCD
Aly Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD
Jody Peek – NRCS

Board Chair Shane Bowe called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for August 17, 2023 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Additions/Corrections to the Agenda:

Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the August 17, 2023 agenda. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Ray Hendrickson to approve the minutes from the July 20, 2023 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the July 2023 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

General Business:

- Local Workgroup Meeting minutes and worksheet were finalized and submitted to the State Office on 7/20.
- Attended Supervising for Excellence Training in Spokane, WA July 24th – 28th.
- Forester Joash Pfeiffelman started working in Bemidji on 8/14/2023.
- Technician positions were posted on USA Jobs. Those vacancies include one position for the Bagley Field Office and one for the Bemidji Field Office.
- Updated employee telework agreements. All staff are on situational ad hoc agreements. No regular reoccurring telework is occurring.
- Met with Zach to finalize the NACD grant submittal on August 1st.

- Team Meeting/Summer Outing was held at the Big Bog State Recreation Area on 8/15. It focused on team building, technology, and efficiencies.
- Attended the Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P Public Kickoff Event in Kelliher on 8/15.
- Christopher Day's (Intern) last working day in Bemidji is 8/18.

CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program):

- All staff are working to bring applications to contracts. A total of 48 have been pre-approved. All offices are working on obtaining signatures. The deadline to get the applications obligated is September 1st.

EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program):

- A total of 10 applications have been obligated. Practices include the following: 512 – Forage and Biomass Planting; 327 – Conservation Cover; 666 – Forest Stand Improvement; 384 – Woody Residue Treatment; 490 – Tree/Shrub Site Prep; 612 – Tree/Shrub Establishment; 340 – Cover Crop; 314 – Brush Management; 561 – Heavy Use Area Protection; and 342 – Critical Area Planting.
- Certification of completion of practices: Two tree plantings and two pollinator plantings.

CRP (Conservation Reserve Program):

- Team has five General CRPs that were accepted and three continuous applications, four in Beltrami County. Need to get planning completed and back to FSA by 8/18.

Upcoming Workload/General Items:

- September 19th & 20th Northeast Area All-Employee Meeting in Grand Rapids.
- September 20th & 21st Soil Health Field Days.
- Field Checks on completed CSP enhancements need to be conducted so payments can be processed in a timely manner. Prescribed Grazing Checkouts.
- CSP Renewals will start being assessed in September.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P Public Kickoff: Brent summarized the public kickoff meeting for the ULRL 1W1P, held in Kelliher on August 15th. Approximately 15 members of the public attended. The group had a conversation with First Nations United.
- County Fair: Brent and Zach shared photos of the SWCD kiosk and demonstration area at the County Fair. The no-till drill was also on display at the Fair. The Fair Board would like to set up more fairground maps around the grounds – the SWCD could sponsor the maps, or provide a map template to the Board and they can find additional sponsors for display costs. There were only a handful of visitors to the SWCD demonstration area during the Fair. Staff are considering doing a rainfall simulator or river table demonstration at future County Fairs.
- Audit Representation Letter: Peterson Company, Ltd. has requested an audit representation letter from the SWCD. Brent provided a draft. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the audit representation letter. Motion seconded by Sam Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**
- SWCD State Aid Resolution: Brent provided a draft resolution outlining the SWCD's intended use of SWCD Aid funding. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the resolution. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
- Keep It Clean: Staff are planning a run-through of the wheelhouse display at the County campus courtyard following the meeting. County staff from all departments have been invited to visit and provide feedback. SWCD Supervisors are encouraged to stop by. Board action is needed to officially authorize the use of volunteers at the State Fair; Brent is working to finalize the

volunteer agreement form. **Motion by Ruth Trask to authorize the use of volunteers at the Keep it Clean wheelhouse at the Minnesota State Fair. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.** Brent shared the staff and volunteer schedule for the State Fair. There are still slots available if volunteers are interested; Brent will email a copy of the schedule to the Board.

- Soil Health Cost Share Policy: Brent and Aly discussed the need for a policy for the use of Soil Health Cost Share funds. There is approximately \$12,000 remaining in the current grant. Staff has determined that these funds should be used to cost share tree plantings for landowners. Some of the proposed projects are quite expensive (\$6,000+), so staff discussed the need to put limitations or caps on funding individual projects. Discussion of whether to put a maximum limit on cost share contributions to projects, to allow staff to approve contracts vs. seeking Board approval, and whether funds might instead be used to fund grazing plans/cover crops. Jody mentioned that larger tree plantings could be funded through NRCS. SWCD staff are currently offering a 75% cost share reimbursement rate with costs not to exceed the price of materials; in addition, tree plantings require an NRCS-approved tree planting plan. Staff will work to create a Soil Health Cost Share Policy and bring it before the Board at a future meeting.
- Minnesota Campaign Finance Board: Supervisors must update their information for the Minnesota Campaign Finance Board.

Staff

- BSU Stormwater Contract Updates: Zach provided information on the Bemidji State University stormwater projects. BSU has requested a change in the agreement terms: a reduction from BWSR's standard 150% landowner reimbursement to BWSR for non-maintenance of projects to 100% landowner reimbursement; and the ability for BSU to audit the SWCD and require compliance with data practices.
- NACD Technical Assistance Grant: Zach submitted an application to fund a grazing specialist position for one year. If awarded, the grant contract will be available November 1st.
- Eickhoff Shoreline Restoration: Aly shared photos of the restoration installation. Once completed, the project will restore 150 feet of shoreline. A cost share contract amendment is needed: Minnesota Native Landscapes plans to install native plugs and stakes in spring 2024. Request to have the contract end date extended to July 1, 2024. **Motion by Sam Christenson to extend the contract. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.**

Supervisors' Report

- Sam requested that staff work toward developing a forestry-themed field day like the upcoming ag-focused field days in Grygla and Blackduck. The intent would be to provide the public with information and education on forest management. Aly will work with private foresters as well as NRCS to develop an event.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

MAWD Administrators and SWCD Managers Joint Meeting, September 27th and 28th in Baxter

Soil Health Tours, September 20th in Grygla and September 21st in Blackduck

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

Area 8 Fall Tour and Meeting in Hubbard County, October 12th and 13th – *let Megan know if you would like to attend.*

Regular Board Meetings

- **Tuesday, September 19, 2023 – Date changed**
- **Wednesday, October 18, 2023 – Date changed**

- November 16, 2023

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

September 19, 2023
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
Sam Christenson – Public Relations

Members Absent: Shane Bowe – Chair
Rachel Gray – Secretary

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

Board Vice Chair Ray Hendrickson called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for September 19, 2023 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Additions/Corrections to the Agenda:

Additions to the Agenda: Item 5.b.iii. Keep It Clean Mural; Item 5.c.iv. Water Festival Budget; and Item 5.c.v. Community Conservationist Award Nomination. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the amended September 19, 2023 agenda. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the minutes from the August 17, 2023 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the August 2023 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

- Jody introduced Joash Pfeiffelman, the new NRCS Forester in the Bemidji office.
- All staff attended the Working Effectively with American Indians Training in Grand Marais.
- Nearing the end of the fiscal year (September 30). Staff are very busy with reporting.
- There is a chance of a federal government shutdown on October 1.
- Jody attended a Team Lead meeting. Topics included concern over JAA training and timely JAA approvals.

- CSP: 43 applications have been pre-approved. The September 1 pre-approval deadline was met. There are 207 active CSP contracts in the service area. Planners are conducting site visits and working on renewals.
- EQIP: October 6 batching date for first signup.
- CRP: 5 general and 3 continuous contracts.
- Jody announced upcoming meetings and field days.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- Staffing: Bill Best, Beltrami County Environmental Resource Specialist, is retiring. His position has been posted. Beltrami County is in their budgeting process. The budget committee is in the process of recommending a new budget; they plan to recommend approval of the SWCD's request to fund a grazing specialist position. Currently working on developing a job description and finding funding.
- Keep It Clean State Fair Recap: Staff shared photos of the ice house display at the Minnesota State Fair. Many higher-up positions from state agencies visited the display, and staff had a lot of contact and visibility with the public. The cell phone tether lanyards were a very popular giveaway item. Extra shirts are available if Supervisors would like one.
- Brent provided an in-depth look at the grant tracker.
- Audit Report: The 2022 SWCD audit has been completed; Brent has copies of the audit if Supervisors would like to review it. **Motion by Ruth Trask to accept the completed audit. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Keep It Clean Ice House Use Agreement: The SWCD is in the process of developing a use agreement for other SWCDs and organizations to rent the Keep It Clean ice house to use at educational events. Zach has developed a draft agreement and sent it to the County Attorney for review. Mille Lacs SWCD is planning to pick up the ice house on Thursday, September 21 to use at an event, so an agreement will have to be in place by then. **Motion by Sam Christenson to authorize Brent to work with the County Attorney to finalize a use agreement ensuring that the SWCD can be made whole in the case of an accident or loss. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.** The agreement will be brought to the Board for future rentals. Further discussion about staff time costs for rental coordination, creation of a rental walk-through checklist, and rental and cleaning fees.
- Keep It Clean Mural: The SWCD owns a vinyl Keep It Clean mural used at the State Fair, along with the original artist painting and the rights to reproduce and sell copies of the image. SWCDs and other organizations in the area have shown interest in purchasing the vinyl mural as well as reproductions of the image. Robyn Dwight from the Upper Red Lake Area Association has shown an interest in expanding the use of the artwork. Sam Christenson questioned the legal ramifications of allowing another entity to profit from government dollars; Brent will follow up with the County Attorney about this. **Motion by Ruth Trask to authorize the Upper Red Lake Area Association to administer marketing and reproduction of the mural image for a 12-month period, contingent on County Attorney approval. Proceeds raised through reproduction must go to the Keep It Clean Program. Beltrami SWCD will retain the original artwork. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson.** Sale of the vinyl mural was tabled.

Staff

- Soil Health Cost Share Policy: Aly reviewed a draft policy dictating funding use and rates associated with the current Soil Health Cost Share Grant. It is the staffs' intent to use the

current grant to provide cost share for tree plantings, which will increase tree sales and help landowners plant with intent. Cost share will be available to cover 75% of total project costs, not to exceed 75% of the cost of materials. Tree plantings under this program will require a grant-ineligible planting plan, costs for which are: \$100 for 25-200 trees, \$150 for 201-500 trees, and \$250 for 501+ trees. Tree plantings with total costs exceeding \$2,500 will require Board approval. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the Soil Health Cost Share Policy. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**

- Beltrami/Red Lake Water Festival Budget: Staff are planning for the Beltrami/Red Lake Water Festival at Concordia Language Villages on October 10. Zach requested a \$1,200 budget for presenter shirts and the Headwaters Science Center presentations based on expenses from previous Water Festivals. Costs for meals and facility rental will be paid by Red Lake DNR. **Motion by Sam Christenson to budget \$1,200 of Increase Local Capacity funds for Water Festival costs. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
- Community Conservationist Award: Zach suggested the Board nominate Robyn Dwight for the Community Conservationist Award at the MASWCD Annual Convention for her work with the Keep It Clean Program. Brent suggested nominating just Robyn individually, but acknowledging the whole Keep It Clean Committee in the nomination. **Motion by Ruth Trask to nominate Robyn Dwight for the MASWCD Community Conservationist Award. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**
- Easement Update: Aly provided an update on two conservation easements in progress: one on Little Turtle Lake (approved by the RIM Wild Rice Committee) and one on the Mississippi River (under consideration by the Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project Committee).

Supervisors' Report

- Ray provided an update on the Thief River 1W1P implementation.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

Soil Health Tour, September 20 in Grygla. (September 21 tour in Blackduck has been cancelled)

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

Area 8 Fall Tour and Meeting in Hubbard County, October 12 and 13 – *let Megan know if you would like to attend.*

BWSR Academy October 24-26 in Brainerd

Regular Board Meetings

- ***Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at the NRCS meeting room – Date changed and location changed***
- November 16, 2023
- December 21, 2023

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

October 18, 2023
NRCS Conference Room
3217 Bemidji Avenue N
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
Sam Christenson – Public Relations

Members Absent: Ruth Trask – Treasurer
Rachel Gray – Secretary

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

Board Chair Shane Bowe called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for October 18, 2023 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Additions/Corrections to the Agenda:

Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the October 18, 2023 agenda. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the minutes from the September 19, 2023 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ray Hendrickson. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurer was absent; September IFS report was tabled until the November meeting.

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

- The new fiscal year began on October 1st.
- Jody and Jim Cramton demonstrated the rainfall simulator at the Red Lake-Beltrami Water Festival on October 10th.
- CSP: Preparing for renewals – must be assessed and ranked by October 20th. December 15th is the payment deadline for existing contracts – must be approved by November 17th.
- Staff are currently completing field visits to installed practices for 2023 CSP and EQIP contracts.
- Federal Government Shutdown: The possible October 1st shutdown was avoided through the passing of a 45-day Continuing Resolution to fund the federal government. A shutdown is possible at the end of the 45-day period, which would affect payments to landowners.

- Area 8 Tour and Meeting: Jody attended the Area 8 fall tour and meeting on October 12-13th. The main takeaway from the meeting is that there is a lot of funding coming in from both federal and state sources, including \$30 million in soil health state grant funds statewide in 2024. The state has also submitted a \$23 million application for RCPP funds for counties with 50% agricultural land use. Simultaneous funding increases from federal (Inflation Recovery Act) and state (Soil Health) sources will likely result in staffing shortages due to rapidly increasing workloads.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- Conservation Contracts Grant Program: BWSR’s new Conservation Contracts Program is replacing the Erosion Control and Water Management Program (State Cost Share) in fiscal year 2024. The new program is designed to empower SWCDs to make local program decisions through increased flexibility and reduced administration. It allows funds to be directed toward a number of practices, not just those that improve water quality. Supervisors suggested directing funds to fill gaps in current 1W1P programs (low-priority projects, forestry and agriculture practices for small landowners, pollinators, and shoreline restoration). A policy for the new program is not necessary as long as projects fit within the statute. Staff will bring projects before the Board for approval.
- Keep It Clean Mural Sale: Robyn Dwight has spoken with the owner of Beacon Harbor Resort in Waskish, who is interested in purchasing the vinyl Keep It Clean Mural used at the Minnesota State Fair. The stand for the mural is broken, and the mural itself is too large and inconvenient for the SWCD to display at future Keep It Clean events. The SWCD intends to purchase a smaller print of the mural for those events. The SWCD originally paid \$467 for both the vinyl print and stand. The resort owner had offered to purchase the vinyl print for \$600. **Motion by Ray Hendrickson to sell the vinyl mural print to Beacon Harbor Resort for \$600. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**
- 2023 MASWCD Resolutions: The Supervisors discussed the 2023 MASWCD resolutions, which will be voted on at the MASWCD Annual Convention in December. Supervisors will email their votes to Megan to be entered online by November 1st.

Staff

- Red Lake-Beltrami Water Festival: The SWCD and Red Lake DNR hosted the Red Lake-Beltrami Water Festival at Concordia Language Villages on October 10th. The event ran smoothly and was well-received. Staff discussed ideas for future Water Festivals, including the potential purchase of a water table or watershed model for demonstrations.
- NACD Grant: Zach applied for an NACD grant for \$125,000 to fund a grazing specialist position for the county for one year for outreach and implementation of EQIP and CSP programs. There were five applications in Minnesota; NACD would like to fund them all, but currently only has enough funding to cover 75% of the requests. They are reaching out to NRCS for additional funding.
- Area 8 Tour and Meeting: Aly, Megan, and Ruth attended the Area 8 Tour in Hubbard County. The tour covered forestry, pasture, pollinator plantings, and other sites. Ruth attended the Area 8 Fall Meeting.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

BWSR Academy October 24-26 in Brainerd

MASWCD Annual Convention December 11-13 in Bloomington

Regular Board Meetings

- November 16, 2023
- December 21, 2023
- January 18, 2024

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

Beltrami Soil & Water Conservation District

Board of Supervisors Meeting

November 16, 2023

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
Zach Gutknecht – ESD/SWCD
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 November 16, 2023 officially to order at 9:30 a.m.

Additions/Corrections to the Agenda:

Addition to the agenda: Item 5.c.v. Colin Meier Cost Share Contract. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the amended November 16, 2023 agenda. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Rachel Gray to approve the minutes from the October 18, 2023 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the September 2023 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved. Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the October 2023 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.

Reports:

NRCS Report – Jody Peek

- Staffing: The Bemidji office had an opening for a Rangeland Specialist, which closed on November 1st. The position was open to recent graduates. The Engineering Technician in the Bemidji office has taken a new position in Washington. Her position will likely be backfilled, although this may take some time.
- Will be receiving \$1.5 million in EQIP dollars statewide for high tunnels. \$7 million in IRA funds and a few million for farmsteads in northeast MN.
- CSP/EQIP Management: Working on project completion and payments as well as renewals. October 20th was the renewal ranking deadline for CSP; several applications were ineligible; 25

were assessed, ranked, and preapproved – deadline is November 17th. Must be obligated by December 15th. October 6th was the batching date for EQIP; must be assessed and ranked by January 19th. The area team received 95 applications, 35 of which were in Beltrami County.

- Jody provided a recap of state funding increases for SWCDs.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- The ESD has hired a new Environmental Resource Specialist; their first day will be the Monday after Thanksgiving.
- There is spot reserved for a Keep It Clean booth at the St. Paul Ice Show. Zach, Brent, and Robyn and Brian Dwight will be attending.
- Update on Keep It Clean billboards.

Staff

- BSU Engineering Contract: Zach provided an overview of the plan for a stormwater retention and infiltration basin on the BSU campus, which will be connected to the existing pipe system. The project ranked high in the Mississippi 1W1P stormwater retrofit analysis. Zach solicited bids from five engineering firms; four replied by the deadline. Staff recommends the Board select Moore Engineering for the project based on project costs and scope. Moore's \$39,500 proposal includes stormwater modeling, which will aid in grant reporting as well as project design. \$50,000 in Clean Water Funds are available for the project, and the grant match will be provided by Enbridge. The project installation time is estimated to be four weeks, and will take place in summer 2024. **Motion by Rachel Gray to hire Moore Engineering for the BSU stormwater infiltration basin project. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**
- RLWD Forest Stewardship Funds: Aly provided an overview of forest stewardship plans completed in 2023 using funding provided by the Red Lake Watershed District. Overall, plans were completed for 580.81 acres of private forest lands. Aly recommended requesting \$4,000 from the Red Lake Watershed District for forest stewardship plans in 2024. Additionally, she recommended that \$1,632.91 in unused RLWD 2023 funds be rolled over into next year. **Motion by Rachel Gray to approve funding request and roll unused funds into 2024. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.**
- Soil Health Discussion: Staff is looking for Board input on how to prioritize projects for the upcoming soil health grant. The actual grant amount is unknown, but is estimated to be around \$100,000. The SWCD will receive soil health funds every two years. Unlike other BWSR grant funds, these dollars will not be tied to water quality, which will allow staff to pursue projects that otherwise would not be funded. Funds can be used for forest health practices such as reforestation of farm fields, but not forest regeneration. Jody suggested directing funds toward cover crops, no-till, and hay plantings. Rachel suggested dedicating some of the funds to ag education opportunities for landowners to learn about innovative practices. Other suggestions included buckthorn management, licensing pesticide applicators, watering systems, windbreaks, and developing a soil sampling program. The Board suggested prioritizing implementation-ready projects. Staff will have to decide payment rates and specific eligible practices. They will bring their recommendations to the Board at a future meeting when they have more information on the actual grant amount and program guidelines.

- Beltrami SWCD Fall Tour: Staff is looking for recommendations for a Board project tour in fall 2024, which will be used as a dry run for the SWCD's 75th anniversary tour in fall 2025. Suggestions included the BSU stormwater project, PMA 25, and highlighting old SWCD projects.
- Colin Meier Cost Share Contract: Zach provided an overview of a proposed culvert replacement at the Meier property on Grant Creek. The project would replace an existing culvert underneath a driveway with a properly sized one. The total project amount is \$82,000, 95% of which will be covered by grant funds from Enbridge and the remaining 5% will be covered by the landowner. The DNR has approved the project. **Motion by Sam Christenson to approve the Meier culvert replacement contract. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.**

Supervisors:

- Ruth: Ruth recapped the TSA 8 meeting. The group re-upped their contract with Dain Erickson and discussed finances. The group has \$260,000 in reserves above their operating budget, and decided to purchase three CDs at \$50,000 each.
- Rachel: Landowners are eligible for a \$10/acre reimbursement for cover crops through Archer- Daniels-Midland; the application is due November 17th. Rachel also provided an update on the RIPE program, which is undergoing restructuring.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

MASWCD Annual Convention December 11-13 in

Bloomington Regular Board Meetings

- December 21, 2023 – Will meet at another location for the holiday meeting.
- January 18, 2024
- February 15, 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

December 21, 2023

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: 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
Zach Gutknecht – ESD/SWCD
Megan FitzGerald – ESD/SWCD
Aly Bergstrom – ESD/SWCD

Board Vice Chair Ray Hendrickson called the Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting for December 21, 2023 officially to order at 10:30 a.m.

Additions/Corrections to the Agenda:

Motion by Rachel Gray to approve the December 21, 2023 agenda. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.

Secretary's Report:

Motion by Rachel Gray to approve the minutes from the November 16, 2023 SWCD meeting. Motion seconded by Ruth Trask. Motion carried and approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Brent provided an in-depth look at the Keep It Clean grant and associated expenses. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the November 2023 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.**

Reports:

NRCS Report – No NRCS staff present.

District Manager – Brent Rud

- Brent reviewed a memo from the Minnesota Campaign Finance Board reminding Supervisors to submit their financial disclosures between January 1st and the 29th. Megan will email the memo to the Supervisors.
- Giziibii Board Seat – Giziibii sent an annual reminder to update the contact information for the SWCD's member on the Giziibii board. Supervisors voted at a previous meeting not to continue their involvement on the Giziibii Board.

- Rachel Gray's family was honored as the University of Minnesota Extension's Farm Family of the Year. An article about the family and their cattle operation was included in the Beltrami County newsletter.
- Board action is needed to authorize Brent to purchase and be reimbursed for food for today's meeting. Additionally, Brent is requesting the purchase of lunch for the three ESD/SWCD employees currently covering the office during this meeting. **Motion by Ruth Trask to authorize Brent to purchase and be reimbursed for today's meals plus 20% gratuity. Motion seconded by Sam Christenson. Motion carried and approved.**

Staff

- Zach is leaving the SWCD to take a position with MPCA. Zach outlined the plan for delegating work and projects to other SWCD staff until his position can be filled. Due to the additional resignation of Beltrami County's AIS Specialist, certain programs Zach has been working on such as Keep It Clean may be combined into the AIS Specialist duties. This position could be partially funded through state funds. Brent suggested that a Supervisor participate in the interview process for the Clean Water Specialist (Zach's) position. Rachel said she would be interested.
- Colin Meier Stream Crossing Update: Installation of the new culverts should be completed by Friday or next week. The landowners will be reimbursed soon. The project contractors are utilizing the SWCD's silt curtain.
- MASWCD Convention: Zach and Aly summarized the MASWCD Annual Convention. Ruth also attended. Beltrami's resolution to eliminate the TSA match passed, and the SWCD had a Keep It Clean exhibit at the tradeshow.
- Aly provided an updated on two conservation easements in progress. She is currently working with the landowners to develop forest stewardship plans on the properties.
- Megan provided a preview of the new website developed by Dain Erickson from TSA 8. The site can easily be edited by SWCD staff and users will have the option to purchase trees online directly through the site. The site will also be more mobile-friendly. In order for the site to go live, staff must choose a service plan. Plan services range from very basic to beyond what the SWCD requires for daily operations. Rachel suggested choosing the \$32/month Business option, which is a low cost but also offers more advanced features than the more basic options. **Motion by Ruth Trask to approve the website and purchase of the Business service plan. Motion seconded by Rachel Gray. Motion carried and approved.**

Supervisors:

- Rachel: Applications are open for the Alliance to Advance Climate-Smart Agriculture (formerly the RIPE Partnership). She suggested that the SWCD apply, but acknowledged they may not have the capacity to administer the program due to staff turnover. Suggestion to submit a joint application with other SWCDs. Brent went over the program FAQs.
- Agriculture Scholarship: Rachel discussed a scholarship/donation request from a local landowner attending the Ranching for Profit online educational program. The program teaches students about regenerative agriculture and other environmentally responsible farming practices. The cost of tuition for the program is \$3,000 for a 2-week course in January plus additional fieldwork. While the Board was supportive of the program, they have not funded such requests in the past and declined the scholarship request.
- The Minnesota State Cattlemen's tour is coming to Thief River Falls on June 25, 2024. Approximately 400 producers attend annually.

Upcoming Meetings/Events:

Regular Board Meetings

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

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