

**BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES  
520 LAFAYETTE ROAD NORTH  
LOWER LEVEL BOARD ROOM  
ST. PAUL, MN 55155  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 2022**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Joe Collins, Jill Crafton, Jayne Hager Dee, Kathryn Kelly, Gerald Van Amburg, Ted Winter, LeRoy Ose, Kelly Kirkpatrick, Eunice Biel, Todd Holman, Ronald Staples, Mark Zabel, Katrina Kessler, MPCA; Joel Larson, University of Minnesota Extension; Thom Petersen, MDA; Steve Robertson, MDH; Sarah Strommen, DNR

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Neil Peterson, Rich Sve

**STAFF PRESENT:**

John Jaschke, Rachel Mueller, Tom Gile, Travis Germundson, Bill Penning, Julie Westerlund, Sumbal Rana, Sharon Doucette, Singer Macrae, Michelle Jordan, Karli Tyma, Jeremy Olson, Annie Felix-Gerth, Barb Peichel, Angie Becker Kudelka, Tara Perriello, Jenny Gieseke, Marcey Westrick, Ryan Hughes, Ed Lenz, John Voz, Dan Shaw, Suzanne Rhees, Ed Lenz, Ann Wessel, Mary Juhl, Dave Weirens

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Jeff Berg, MDA; Brian Martinson, AMC; Emily Javens, MAWD; Jan Voit, Amanda Bilek

**Chair Gerald VanAmburg called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM.**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Executive Director Jaschke noted on the updated agenda the Clay Soil and Water Conservation District Nomination Districts Resolution was removed and will be accomplished administratively as previously delegated.

**\*\***  
**22-09** Adoption of the agenda as presented was passed on a voice vote.

**\*\***  
**22-10** **MINUTES OF JANUARY 26, 2022 BOARD MEETING**

The January 26, 2022, board meeting minutes were approved as circulated by a voice vote.

**PUBLIC ACCESS FORUM**

No members of the public provided comments to the board.

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF**

Jeremy Olson introduced Singer Macrae, Contracts Accountant and Sharon Doucette introduced Sumbal Rana, Office and Administrative Specialist.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION**

**Chair Van Amburg read the statement:**

*“A conflict of interest, whether actual, potential, or perceived, occurs when someone in a position of trust has competing professional or personal interests, and these competing interests make it difficult to fulfill professional duties impartially. At this time, members are requested to declare conflicts of interest they may have regarding today’s business. Any member who declares an actual conflict of interest must not vote on that agenda item. All actual, potential, and perceived conflicts of interest will be announced to the board by staff before any vote.”*

**REPORTS**

**Chair & Administrative Advisory Committee** – Chair Gerald Van Amburg reported the committee has not met. Stated they met with Executive Director John Jaschke on the results of his performance review and thanked board members and senior staff for providing feedback. Chair Van Amburg attended the March 16 joint meeting of the Climate Change subcabinet and EQB. Climate Action Framework was presented by Frank Kolasch, Climate Director for MPCA.

Chair Van Amburg stated MAWD held their legislative event on March 16 and 17. March 22 was the start of the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual joint meeting of the Red River Watershed Management Board and Flood Damage Reduction Workgroup.

Angie Becker Kudelka stated she accepted a new position at the University of Minnesota and thanked BWSR board members for their leadership. Board members thanked Angie for her work with BWSR. John Jaschke stated there is an event on April 6 and information will be emailed out.

**Executive Director’s Report** - John Jaschke reported they are working to fill vacancies. Thanked Chair Van Amburg and Vice Chair Collins for reviewing his performance evaluation and stated a confidential paper copy of the document will be mailed to board members.

John gave a legislative update. Stated the Governor's recommendations are now in bills that have been introduced. There is an effort going on to build climate framework through the Advisory Council and the Climate subcabinet with an outreach effort to get ideas and input on the draft framework. Stated there are two items in bonding, the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program and the Local Road Replacement.

Day at Capitol events were hosted by AMC, MAWD, MASWCD were completed in person.

John stated some additional information was added to the guidance document related to watershed based implementation funding that notes the existing opportunity to amend metro watershed plans to include provisions identified by partner organizations. Stated the Clean Water Council is holding meetings on suggestions and recommendations for next year's legislative session.

BWSR Board summer meeting and tour in August will be held in the East Grand Forks area in the river valley. Tour will be done jointly with the RRWMB, MAWD, Red River Basin Commission, and the Northwest SWCD group.

John stated there is pipeline mitigation funding being handled through an administrative process. It will work a lot like a grant program but the funding source is not legislative appropriations but an inter-agency transfer from the MPCA to BWSR that has to do with pipeline mitigation. Local governments that are part of that geography would be eligible to use those funds for certain water quality type projects. Local governments will be implementing it.

BWSR is working on a return to the office/telework policy for staff.

Joe Collins stated he appreciates the work of BWSR and MAWD with the watershed based implementation funding program guidelines.

**Audit and Oversight Committee** – Joe Collins reported the committee has not met.

**Dispute Resolution and Compliance Report** – Travis Germundson reported there are presently seven appeals pending. All the appeals involve the Wetland Conservation Act. There has been one new appeal filed since the last Board Meeting.

File-22-2 (2-16-22) This is an appeal of a WCA Restoration Order in Kanabec County. The appeal regards the excavation of a ditch and placement of spoil material in a wetland. The project and alleged wetland impacts affects multiple property owners. No decision has been made on the appeal.

File 21-1 (8-16-2021) This is an appeal of a WCA Notice of Decision involving a no-loss determination in Kittson County. A pre-hearing conference took place on February 23, 2022 and was unable to settle the dispute, thus a schedule of filing a written briefs has been determined. Working on scheduling a DRC hearing.

Buffer compliance status update, the only notable change is to the map. Corrective action notices have been started for Marshall and Wilkin counties.

Thom Peterson from the Department of Agriculture left the meeting and Jeff Berg joined at 9:47 a.m.

**Grants Program & Policy Committee** – Todd Holman reported the committee met on February 14 and March 7. Their next meeting is scheduled for March 28. Stated there are action items on the agenda.

**RIM Reserve Committee** – Jayne Hager Dee reported they met in early February with two action items on the agenda.

**Water Management & Strategic Planning Committee** – Joe Collins reported the committee has not met.

**Wetland Conservation Committee** – Jill Crafton reported the committee has not met. Their next meeting is scheduled in April.

**Buffers, Soils & Drainage Committee** – Mark Zabel reported the committee has not met.

**Drainage Work Group (DWG)** – Tom Gile reported the committee has not met. Stated there was a bill introduced in House File 4274 that establishes a drainage registry and information portal. The bill was introduced in the house and was laid over for possible inclusion in the house Omnibus Environment bill. Stated it was not a bill that came out of the Drainage Work Group and that they will be sending out an email to the Drainage Workgroup providing some backdrop on how the hearing went and where it's at.

Chair Van Amburg thanked Jenny Gieseke for preparing the Executive Director review.

#### **AGENCY REPORTS**

**Minnesota Department of Agriculture** – Jeff Berg reported Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program is approaching 1,200 producers and 835,000 acres enrolled in the program.

Jeff stated the drought relief bill for farmers passed the House and is scheduled to be heard on the Senate floor. Also stated agency bills are starting to come out. The Senate Agriculture Committee met Monday and this afternoon is the House Agriculture Committee.

**Minnesota Department of Health** – Steve Robertson reported MDH accelerated implementation grants. These are grants that accelerate implementation of groundwater projects across the state to address concerns at a local level.

Steve gave an update on the infrastructure funding and coordination with the implementation of the new and revised lead and copper rule.

Jeff stated EPA had a workshop in early March on Nitrogen Reduction for groundwater.

**Minnesota Department of Natural Resources** – Sarah Strommen reported she facilitated a panel climate conversation last week with EQB, the Climate Subcabinet and the Governor's Climate Advisory Council. Sarah also attended a couple sessions at the North American Fish and Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference.

Sarah stated the Governor's drought relief package also included resources for water and tree impacts.

Stated on Monday DNR released a notice that they have completed their investigation of three aquifer breaches that occurred during construction of the Line 3 replacement project. They provided an outline of the results of the investigation, the status of the restoration, the work at each site, and the location of each site. Information is available on the Line 3 replacement project website.

Stated they found a deer with Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in the city limits of Grand Rapids. Will be having more enhanced statewide surveillance. Also stated today is the DNR Commissioners Office Hours and will be highlighting the contributions of DNR volunteers and volunteer opportunities.

Jill Crafton stated there is an Izaak Walton chapter in Grand Rapids and they are concerned with the two deer farms in the area and would like to know where they are located. Sarah stated under the Board of Animal Health the specific location of deer farms is considered private and not public. Stated that DNR's wildlife staff and wildlife health staff have access to that information and will be looking into it.

Mark Zabel asked if they have any initiative to try and communicate with people that might be artificially concentrating deer at feeding stations in the area. Sarah stated that current protocols for the CWD response plan is that if there is a positive CWD, feeding bans are put into place.

**Minnesota Extension** – Joel Larson reported on a couple of extension programs. Nitrogen Smart focuses on providing information and how nitrogen moves through the environment. A similar program they're working on is called Carbon Smart, and it's modeled on Nitrogen Smart. It's designed to help farmers and ag professional understand how carbon moves through the environment and how to manage carbon as a potential resources.

Stated they are still in process in searching for an Extension Educator to focus on climate resilience among agricultural and natural resource communities.

Jill Crafton asked if pulling nitrogen out of the atmosphere using legumes is going to be part of the curriculum. Joel stated it is part of that curriculum and talks about how to incorporate nitrogen fixing plants or legumes as part of a holistic crop rotation.

**Minnesota Pollution Control Agency** – Katrina Kessler reported bills related to climate, PFAS and bonding have been introduced. Stated they released an update of the PFAS blueprint and put out a PFAS monitor plan statewide. Stated they are following guidance of the bipartisan infrastructure law, or the infrastructure and jobs act, and believe that there are opportunities for the state of Minnesota. They are looking to hire a grant writer within the MPCA to take advantage of the competitive funds.

MPCA staff are planning to return to buildings starting on April 21.

Jill Crafton asked if there is a legislation need for the EV chargers. Katrina stated a number of the federal allocations requires a state match and they are asking for \$13 million in their budget proposals for bonding that would unlock almost \$70 million of federal dollars. It can go to expand EV charging corridors across the state.

Gerry asked if MPCA is involved with the proposed carbon pipeline. Katrina stated she recently heard about it and has reached out to other agencies to learn more.

## **ADVISORY COMMENTS**

**Association of Minnesota Counties** – Executive Director John Jaschke provided a report emailed by Brian Martinson.

Brian stated they believe that continuing their work to secure Federal CWA 404 permitting authority is the right course of action, given the recent report findings. Legislation has been introduced in both

bodies appropriating \$740,000 to finish collecting the necessary information and to complete an application for assumption. Senate File 3509 introduced by Senator Eichorn has been heard and laid over for possible inclusion in Senate Environment Finance Bill. In the House, Representative Ecklund has introduced House File 3311. They are still waiting on a hearing in that body. They would encourage others to offer their support to the others and to Chairs, Senator Ingebrigtsen and Representative Hansen to support this request.

Brian stated House File 4274 establishing a drainage registry information portal was heard in the House and laid over for possible inclusion in the House Omnibus Environment bill. Counties, as drainage authorities, have concerns with the proposal, including the cost of extra reporting, the need for new or additional notice on top of current requirements, restrictions on necessary repair and maintenance work for 30 days from posting.

They also have held to the understanding that all drainage stakeholders respected the Drainage work group (DWG) process and that new legislation would be reviewed by the DWG in order to reach mutual understanding and consensus on a path forward. This change to 103E ignores that practice and indicates that perhaps drainage stakeholders should bring issues directly to the legislature, which we feel is not a good idea.

**Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees** – No report was provided.

**Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts** – No report was provided.

**Minnesota Association of Townships** – Eunice Biel reported March 8 was Minnesota Township Day where there was an audit meeting, an election for township officers, and an annual meeting. Following that election, Minnesota Association of Townships offered trainings to township officers throughout the week.

Eunice stated in 2021 townships received American Rescue Plan Funds with specified uses for funds in townships. A report on how the funds were spent is due by April 30th to the Department of Treasury. Stated they will be putting bids out for rock and services on township roads. Eunice also stated they will be having a special election primary on May 21 in the first congressional district and then August 9 there will be a special election.

**Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts** – Emily Javens reported she is at the Red River conference today. Emily thanked Angie Becker Kudelka for her time at BWSR. Emily reported last week they had their legislative event that went well. Stated the levy bill passed out of the Environment Committee and is headed to the Tax Committee.

Emily stated some good things have happened between BWSR and their members in the last year and is hoping they continue.

**Natural Resources Conservation Service** – No report was provided.

Jill Crafton stated she attended the Sustainable Farming Association meeting where Troy Daniel was a speaker. Troy spoke about the importance of soil health for farming operations on his own farm; he did an amazing job.

Chair Van Amburg recessed the meeting at 11:00 a.m. and called the meeting back to order at 11:08 a.m.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

### Grants Program and Policy Committee

**FY 22/23 Clean Water Fund Soil Health Grants** – Tom Gile presented FY 22/23 Clean Water Fund Soil Health Grants.

The Minnesota legislature passed a law in 2021 appropriating funding to BWSR from the Clean Water Fund for farmers who own or rent land to enhance adoption of cover crops and other soil health practices in areas where there are direct benefits to Public Water Supplies. Staff has spent the last 9 months developing and implementing an outreach effort to gain information and feedback from various stakeholders regarding overall Soil Health program development. Over that time an internal staff team also was in development of two Soil Health grant delivery processes (one for these Clean Water Funds and a parallel track for other General Fund dollars appropriated in 2021). What is before the Board now is a culmination of those efforts to deliver the Clean Water Fund portion of these dollars. Staff will provide an overview of the outreach efforts conducted in preparing the recommended program and current Request for Proposal (RFP). Due to the time commitment of the outreach efforts and program development to date both FY 22 and FY 23 funds are proposed for distribution in a single RFP.

Noted that the board is asked to approve the RFP criteria only, not the full RFP document included in the packet.

Jill Crafton stated in the survey there was an almost 70 percentage of farmers who felt more comfortable working with other farmer mentors and asked if that was going to be part of this. Tom stated that it is an eligible expense under the grant RFP and is something that can be requested for funding.

Tom stated the RFP is scheduled to release on March 28.

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22-11 Moved by Jill Crafton seconded by Todd Holman, to approve the FY 22/23 Clean Water Fund Soil Health Grants. ***Motion passed on a roll call vote.***

**2022 Request for Proposals for One Watershed, One Plan Planning Grants** – Julie Westerlund presented 2022 Request for Proposals for One Watershed, One Plan Planning Grants.

The purpose of this agenda item is for the Board to approve the 2022 Request for Proposals for One Watershed, One Plan Planning Grants. This is the sixth year BWSR is offering planning grants. The RFP has evolved over time to encourage more discussion among prospective planning groups during proposal development and to refine BWSR selection criteria. Only small changes have been made relative to the 2021 RFP. This grant program continues to operate under the policy adopted by the Board in 2018.

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22-12 Moved by Jill Crafton, seconded by Ted Winter, to approve the 2022 Request for Proposals for One Watershed, One Plan Planning Grants. ***Motion passed on a roll call vote.***

**Lawns to Legumes Phase 2 Demonstration Neighborhood Grant Program Funding Recommendation** – Dan Shaw presented Lawns to Legumes Phase 2 Demonstration Neighborhood Grant Program Funding Recommendation.

The Lawns to Legumes Phase 2 Demonstration Neighborhoods involve the establishment of residential pollinator habitat within neighborhoods in important pollinator corridors/pathways and building overall

interest in ecological landscaping. These projects can involve educational and community spaces in addition to residential landscapes. A total of \$1,066,000 was made available for this RFP from two Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) appropriations that have different grant end dates. Through the application process applicants were asked if they can complete their projects by May 1, 2023, or if they would benefit from an extra year and final decisions about grant periods will be made by the program's advisory team.

A total of 21 applications were submitted requesting a total of \$715,345. A program advisory team made of BWSR staff, along with staff from other organizations working on pollinators, met on March 2, 2022 and finalized funding recommendations. The Grants Program and Policy Committee reviewed the recommendations on March 7, 2022 and made a recommendation to the full Board. A draft Order is attached based on that recommendation of the Grants Program and Policy Committee.

Jill Crafton is looking forward to seeing it implemented. Kelly Kirkpatrick stated she is excited to see this go through.

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22-13 Moved by Todd Holman, seconded by Jayne Hager Dee, to approve the Lawns to Legumes Phase 2 Demonstration Neighborhood Grant Program Funding Recommendation. ***Motion passed on a roll call vote.***

#### **Central Region Committee**

**Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed Management Plan** – Michelle Jordan presented Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed Management Plan.

#### *Background*

In 1981, the Carnelian-Marine Watershed District was formed to address property damage being caused by fluctuating water levels on area lakes. In 2001, the Marine on St. Croix Water Management Organization proposed a merger with the Carnelian-Marine Watershed District due to the large number and diversity of water-related natural resources, significant high value resources, heavy use of the resources for recreational and aesthetic purposes, recharge of drinking water supplies, increased development pressures, and fiscal capacity. In 2007, the Carnelian-Marine Watershed District was expanded to encompass the Marine on St. Croix Watershed Management Organization and renamed the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District (CMSCWD). The CMSCWD covers 81.4 square miles in northeastern Washington County, in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. Included in the CMSCWD are the City of Scandia, the City of Marine on St. Croix, May Township, Stillwater Township, and small parts of the Cities of Hugo, Grant, and Stillwater. The CMSCWD is bound by the St. Croix River to the east, into which the entire watershed drains. To the west are the Comfort Lake-Forest Lake and Rice Creek Watershed Districts, and the Brown's Creek Watershed District to the south. The major land uses in the CMSCWD are hay/pasture and deciduous forest. Among the CMSCWD's water resources are 31 lakes, 21 streams (including 10 with brook trout populations), hundreds of acres of wetlands and over 17 miles of St. Croix River shoreline. The vision of the CMSCWD is to protect and improve these water resources through coordination with local units of government, citizens, and other government agencies.

#### *Plan Process and Highlights*

On March 11, 2020 CMSCWD sent notification of initiation of the planning process for the 2022-2031 Watershed Management Plan (Plan) to the plan review agencies and other parties as required by MR 8410, and solicited each agency's priority issues, summaries of relevant water management goals, and water resource information. The CMSCWD engaged a variety of stakeholder groups to gather input on



watershed issues and reviewed existing plans and programs. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) kick-off meeting was held on July 29, 2020; a district-wide survey and a shoreland landowner survey were conducted; two public listening sessions were held, and the Citizen Advisory Committee provided their priority issues and recommendations (available in Appendix G). This stakeholder input was used to develop draft issue statements which were considered by the CMSCWD Board of Managers at an initial planning meeting (as required by MN 8410.0045) held on November 14, 2020.

Examples of high-priority program activities and outcomes for addressing issues and achieving goals include:

#### Administration

- Improved communications, streamlined and transparent budgeting, and strengthened partnerships throughout the watershed

#### Regulatory

- Consistent enforcement of CMSCWD Rules
- Enforcement of shoreline alteration rules and annual Shoreland Compliance and Enforcement Team meetings

#### Technical Assistance & Cost Share

- 30 rural/agricultural water quality BMPs reducing 300 pounds/year of phosphorus installed
- 27 urban water quality and rate control BMPs installed reducing phosphorus by 40 pounds/year
- 19 shorelines or streambanks (2,000 linear feet) restored; Increased parcels that have 50% or greater natural shoreline on 6 water resources

#### Inspections & Maintenance

- Annual inspections and maintenance on Carnelian Channel
- Inspection and maintenance recorded for all CMSCWD BMPs

#### Monitoring

- Evaluation of shoreline vegetative cover on 10 lakes in 2022, 2024, and 2030; measurement of progress toward the majority of lakeshores having 50% natural vegetative cover
- Water quality and water level monitoring in 30 lakes
- Water quality, quantity and macroinvertebrate monitoring in 22 streams

#### Analysis & Prioritization

- Subwatershed analysis completed for direct drainage to the St. Croix River (including spring streams)
- Floodplain Vulnerability Assessment
- Data collected on 14 degraded wetlands discharging focused waters

#### Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)

- Coordinated AIS prevention and management plan and rapid response plan
- 2,000 hours of watercraft inspections on public boat launches

#### Communications & Outreach

- Implementation of robust communications and outreach plan including continued partnership with East Metro Water Resources Education Program, Citizen Advisory Committee coordination, targeted engagement activities, events, meetings, and publications

#### Capital Improvement Program

- Design, construction, and maintenance of 18 Capital Improvement Projects

Jill Crafton stated that there were a lot of people brought together to develop this. Joe Collins agreed with Jill and stated the memo was well written and easy to read.

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22-14 Moved by Joe Collins, seconded by Kathryn Kelly, to approve the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed Management Plan. ***Motion passed on a roll call vote.***

**RIM Reserve Committee**

**Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Easement #08-09-93-02 Alteration for Public Road Project** – Karli Tyma presented Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Easement #08-09-93-02 Alteration for Public Road Project.

The Brown County Highway Department is seeking approval from BWSR to release 0.6 acres from Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Conservation Easement #08-09-93-03 in order to complete a bridge replacement and public road improvement project on CSAH 8. The project will involve replacement and relocation of Bridge 2110, a structurally deficient, one lane bridge crossing the Minnesota River. The project will require realignment of the roadway and expansion of the existing highway right-of-way. The bridge replacement, realignment of CSAH 8 and expanded road right-of-way will improve public safety by allowing better traffic flow and allowing trucks, equipment, and emergency vehicles to cross the river more safely. The overall impact to the RIM easement area will be minimal and immediately adjacent to the existing road right-of-ways.

Due to the shift in the roadway and right-of-way, 0.6 acres of RIM Easement #08-09-93-03 will be impacted by this project and are recommended for release from the RIM easement. In accordance with BWSR’s Easement Alteration Policy, both the Brown County Soil and Water Conservation District and the DNR Area Wildlife Manager have submitted letters in favor of the proposed release. Brown County Highway Department has submitted the required \$500 application fee for BWSR to consider the alteration request. The Highway Department has acquired the necessary highway easement from the current landowner to be able to move forward with the project. The Brown County Highway Department has agreed to pay BWSR the amount equal to two times the current RIM payment rate for the acres released, as well as pay back any state funds spent on conservation practices on the impacted areas, in accordance with the Easement Alteration Policy for public benefitted projects.

The total amount to be paid to BWSR and agreed upon by Brown County for release of the 0.6 acres has been calculated as follows:

Current RIM payment rate for Eden Township: \$7183.80 /acre

2 x current RIM rate = 2 x \$7183.80/acre = \$14, 367.60/acre

0.6 acres x \$14, 367.60/acre = \$8620.56

State funds previously spent on conservation practices: \$100/acre x 0.6 acres = \$60.00

\$8620.56 + \$60.00 = \$8680.56

The Brown County Highway Department has met all requirements of BWSR’s Easement Alteration Policy for public benefitted projects and all supporting documents are attached.

*Recommendation*

The RIM Reserve Committee voted to approve the easement alteration request and to formally amend RIM Easement #08-09-93-02 to release 0.6 acres for the public benefit of the Brown County Highway Department Bridge 2110 replacement project.

Kathryn Kelly stated their local SWCD took a look at this plan since it's in Area 6 and are supportive.

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22-15 Moved by Kathryn Kelly, seconded by Jill Crafton, to approve the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Easement #08-09-93-02 Alteration for Public Road Project. ***Motion passed on a roll call vote.***

**Resolution Authorizing the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve – Working Lands Conservation Code and Cost Share Rates** – Bill Penning presented Resolution Authorizing the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve – Working Lands Conservation Code and Cost Share Rates.

The Laws of Minnesota 2019, Chapter 2, Article 1, Section 4(a) allows BWSR to spend up to \$1,000,000 create a working lands easement program. The Working Lands RIM Easement Pilot Program was authorized by Board Resolution 21-04. This program is designed to work with cattle producers to keep cattle on the landscape and protect and improve water quality and wildlife habitat. To do so requires certain infrastructure such as fencing and alternate water sources to allow for rotational grazing and keeping cattle from vulnerable water sources. These activities must be done in accordance with a grazing plan that meets USDA or other widely accepted grazing standards.

The RIM program has not had a program like this in the past. Although NRCS may be able to write grazing plans and provide cost share for implementation, in the long run there is no certainty of this, and a new Practice Code for grazing infrastructure and authorization to pay for grazing plans is needed.

Jill Crafton asked if we are giving some deference to those that are doing good rotational grazing in their normal operation and does it figure into the selection of those participating. Bill stated they developed a scoring and ranking sheet that they take into account.

Kathryn Kelly stated she would have liked to see those who are already enrolled in RIM to have the opportunity to use the grazing practice. Stated she appreciates having the grazing practice for future RIM projects.

Todd Holman thanked Bill Penning and John Voz for their work.

Kelly Kirkpatrick stated this is an excellent program.

Mark Zabel stated he is not familiar with the program and asked for a brief overview of what these RIM agreements might be. Also asked if this resolution is just for codes and practices. Bill gave an overview and stated code and practices are limited to working lands easements that they take on under RIM.

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22-16 Moved by Ted Winter, seconded by Jill Crafton, to approve the Resolution Authorizing the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve – Working Lands Conservation Code and Cost Share Rates. ***Motion passed on a roll call vote.***

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Value of BWSR Storytelling presentation** – Mary Juhl and Ann Wessel presented Value of BWSR Storytelling presentation.

BWSR Communications staff gave a presentation at the Feb. 10 regional operations BWSR staff meeting and again at the March 8 Senior Management Team meeting about the value of BWSR storytelling. The purpose of this presentation is to share results and successes related to BWSR Snapshots and Conservation Stories, and to highlight the key role our staff play in communicating conservation outcomes. The presentation also outlines the ways agency communications staff use social media and work with news outlets to spread the word about BWSR grants, programs and initiatives. At the request of SMT, we'd like to share this presentation with the full BWSR board to make them aware of the positive trends we've seen in recent years related to BWSR's storytelling efforts.

Kathryn Kelly thanked them for their work.

John Jaschke stated this month's Snapshots are in the Day of Packet.

#### **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

- Grants Program and Policy Committee is scheduled for Monday, March 28, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. in the Lower Level Conference Rooms at 520 Lafayette Road North, St. Paul and by WebEx.
- Southern Regional Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, March 30, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. at Murray Soil and Water Conservation District, 2740 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, Slayton, and by Microsoft Teams.
- Grants Program and Policy Committee is scheduled for Monday, April 11, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. in the Lower Level Conference Rooms at 520 Lafayette Road North, St. Paul and by WebEx.
- Southern Region Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, April 19, 2022, at 9:30 a.m. in person, location TBD.
- Wetland Conservation Committee is scheduled for Thursday, April 21, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. location TBD and by Microsoft Teams.
- BWSR Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 27, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. in the Lower Level Conference Rooms at 520 Lafayette Road North, St. Paul and by WebEx.

Chair VanAmburg adjourned the meeting at 1:09 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Gerald Van Amburg  
Chair