

# Snake River Watershed – Steering Committee

## Meeting **Outcomes Summary**

Dec. 18, 2023, 9-11 am

Present: local SWCD & county staff, BWSR staff

Deanna Pomije, Emily Larsen, KSWCD; Susan Shaw, ML SWCD; Barb Peichel, Zach Guttormson, BWSR; Mara Jade, PSWCD; Erin Hoxsie, Pine Co.

Location: Remote Google Meeting – login details (at the bottom of this agenda)

Purpose: Discuss project vetting process for protection practices and review technical questions for consideration, page 3 below. Preparation for 1/22/24 Partnership Board Meeting. Prep. work for implementation

**Please see page 3 below...**

Remote Google Meet login details at the bottom of the agenda.

### Regular scheduled meetings:

Steering – 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, 9-11 am

TAC, as needed 1-2 x/yr. (2<sup>nd</sup> Thurs. 1:30-4:30 pm)

Partnership Board – 4 Monday, morning, 10:30 am after SRWMB if held or at 9 am if no SRWMB meeting

### **Agenda Topics:**

1. Approve Agenda, Other Items...
2. Update on contracts for services & budget / fiscal meeting from  
**Our WBIF Grant was fully executed 12/12/23!!!**

#### Updates:

- Deanna & Emily watched a recording of Stearn's Ben Ruley's spacial Arc-GIS on-line tracking system. They were just starting to use it the spring of 2023. It looks like a great system to share spacially landowner contacts and project details, grant reporting details, can upload photos and other planning/design data. Someone mentioned a \$6,000 / year server cost. Need to find out more specific details, if we want to look into something like this. Barb suggested just doing spreadsheet tracking for now, for this 1<sup>st</sup> biennium. Someone mentioned a web-based app may be good with potential staff turn-over.
- Deanna also suggested the need for an Arc-GIS layer of our priority areas for easier use for all watershed staff in developing projects with landowners. She plans to seek out a bid from Mitch Brinks from Area 8 TSA, who has provided mapping services previously for K-SWCD. It was recommended to ask Aitkin SWCD (not present today) their capabilities on this subject. Would this be cost effective for our Forest Stewardship Planning priority areas?

3. Project Vetting, addition of protection piece
4. Discuss the agenda for the next Partnership Meetings – 1/22/24 ~10:30 am, after the SRWMB meeting starting at 9 am

#### Agenda items:

- a. Approve Meeting Outcomes
- b. Contract for Services, attorney vetted contracts, final draft seeking approval

#### **For the meeting:**

**Explain the board's role in setting policy, etc. (ask the board if they see anything missing in the recommended ranking criteria)**

**Seek if there are any board volunteers to be a liaison between steering and board.**

Present a summarize of the contracts and a summary sheet the ranking developed by the Steering Cmte. – explain the time invested and the process the Steering Cmte. went through in coming up with this recommendation - include the full recommended ranking sheet in the meeting materials for them to look at.

- Master Contract
  - Statements of Work: Project Dev. – Pine SWCD
  - Statements of Work: Outreach, Projects, general <\$20,000 – Kanabec SWCD

Here is was suggested for our next Steering meeting on 1/8/24 to discuss what amount each SWCD wishes to contract with the P'ship for projects <\$20,000, based on our grant budget.

- Statements of Work: Reporting – Aitkin SWCD
  - Statements of Work: Outreach, Project Dev. – Mille Lacs SWCD
  - Others
- c. Present recommendations for project implementation guidance, seeking input and/or approval
- d. Set new date / time for partnership meetings
- e. Others...
5. Technical questions for discussion, see page 3 below (**see below**)
6. Next proposed Steering Meeting 1/8/24 as needed, 9:00 am-11:00 pm – agenda ideas

Access to our new Google Drive for sharing Snake Plan data:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-FIfKVjFepIWngxNln5gPtg7L1UFv3g?usp=sharing>

#### Details provided in the 12/18 meeting's chat:

Barb Peichel

9:22 AM

Here's the Lower St. Croix "virtual" project tour

<https://www.lsc1w1p.org/virtual-project-tour>

Barb Peichel

9:26 AM

Here's the interactive map that Lower St. Croix had developed for them by a consultant - <https://maps.barr.com/LSCWD/1W1P/index.html>

Running List of Technical Policy Questions for Consideration:

**Recommendation on projects <\$20,000: Have the Steering Cmte. review the ranking of each project and vote on funding.**

Question	Options / Comments
<p>1. What cost-share rates do we want to offer for any of the following? (Still need to be cognizant of meeting our 10% match, through landowner’s project portion and NRCS.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most BMPs – 75%</li> <li>• Forestry practices -</li> <li>• Those certified thru MAWQCP –</li> </ul> <p>A conclusion was discussed to have each LGU decide or follow their own cost-share policy for each practice category. To offer 75% and provide up to 90% for unique circumstances as warranted. Some mentioned what their LGU’s policies were, for example offering more funding for Ag. projects where the landowners do some of the work themselves. Labor can be used as match if documented.</p> <p>We discussed low-income landowners and how to ensure they are a part of our project work. It was suggested that US Rural Development (adjusted gross income requirement) may have guidance on what is considered low-income individuals.</p> <p>May plan to just write up some guidance to follow on this for example to be cognoscente of us meeting the 10% match as a whole on the grant.</p>
<p>2. Non-Structural Practices (cover crops, reduced tillage, perennial plantings)</p> <p><b>*Follow-up Question</b> – 1x upfront payment on a 3 yr. mgmt. practice (LSC – leaves this at the discretion of ea. LGU)</p>	<p>Recommendation: LSC &amp; Rum watershed has set rates they offer to offer more consistency between watersheds.</p> <p><b>We started here for the 12/18 Meeting:</b></p> <p>During the discussion it was suggested to leave this question of paying the 3 years of payments upfront to the discretion of each LGU, who would have the risk in any non-compliance contract holders.</p>
<p>3. Funding on Forest Stewardship Plans (many SWCD charging \$9/acre and \$300/plan)</p>	<p>Rates set based on DNR rates</p> <p><b>To follow suite with what other watersheds are doing here would be to offer this \$9/acre and \$300/plan for Forest Stewardship Plans cost share rates. These rates would be offered whether or not a SWCD or private sector did the planning work.</b></p>
<p>4. Prescribed Grazing</p> <p>a) Shown reduction #s – conversion from row crop to pasture</p> <p>b) No reduction #s, soil health benefits? – improved pasture only</p>	<p>a-c)</p> <p><b>Suggested to let the ranking do its job. &amp; each LGUs to make these individual calls.</b></p> <p><b>Yes, to offer cost-share funding for all component practices associated with prescribed grazing.</b></p>

c) Wells (cost ~\$10,000), expensive practice with little environmental gain	
5. Nutrient Management Do we also want to fund Comprehensive Nutrient Mgmt. Plans, includes a farmstead assessment pre-planning for feedlot work?	<b>Ok, to offer this cost-share funding</b>
6. If a practice falls on a priority area line or watershed line, do we fund it?	<b>Yes, to offer funding for projects that benefit the watershed even if only part is in the watershed or priority area – may discuss this with neighboring watershed (who is best to take this on given the capacity and funds available)</b>
7. <b>Buckthorn control</b> (popular) – do we want to require/encourage follow-up planting or another practice (not eligible as stand alone practice)	<b>12/18 Meeting Discussion stopped here.</b>
8. Discussion around streamlining ‘Shoreland Restoration Projects’ <u>Initial Priority Lakes:</u> Teir 1: Ann, Fish, Cross, Pokegama Teir 2: Quamba, Knife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use demonstration sites and/or public workshops (or specific to each lake assn.)</li> <li>• Do It Yourself Materials</li> <li>• Others...</li> </ul>
9. Deed Recording requirement? (maybe projects over \$20,000)	•
10. Request bid to hire consultant to develop a ArcGIS layer of our Snake priority areas	•
11.	•

**Next Steering Meetings**, proposed agenda items, list to tackle:

- 1) Discuss what \$ amount each SWCD LGU wishes to start off with in a P’ship contract for projects <\$20,000.
- 2) Come up with a ranking number to start with – over what \_\_\_\_ # will we recommend funding?
  - i. Start off with a low ranking # policy with a plan to set a ranking number to fund at the end of our 1<sup>st</sup> biennium.
- 3) Presentation from BWSR grant compliance specialist on fiscal management of WBIF funds from 9-10 am on 1/8/24
- 4) Reporting collaboration – spreadsheet or spatial option

- 5) Shoreline Restoration – How to stream line work (include TSA in this discussion)
  - i. Outreach Workshops, Do-It-Yourself Materials, Demonstration Projects
- 6) Sub-watershed assessment learning from others (Chisago)
- 7) Project Tracking / Reporting (ideas from BWSR Academy, Stearns SWCD)
- 8) Others...

Partnership Board Discussion List for review over time:

- ✓ Contract for Services – Statements of Work for party implementation roles
- ✓ Project Vetting Process – **develop flow chart for the P'ship Board**
- ✓ Cost-share rates, other technical / project steering recommendations
- ✓ Etc.