

# Snake River Watershed – Steering Committee

Meeting Minutes

December 9 2024, 3:00pm-4:30 pm



Invitees:

Local SWCD & county staff, BWSR staff

Attendance: Janet Smude, David Banta, Jaren Peplinski, Emily Larsen, Nick Foss, Zach Guttormson, Barb Peichel, Paul A. Swanson Pine SWCD, Erin C. Hoxsie, Siena Strom,

Location:

In-person meeting at Kanabec SWCD office: 2008 Mahogany St Ste 3 Mora MN 55051

**Video call link:** <http://meet.google.com/bam-qgik-hjw>

**Or dial:** (US) +1 502-667-4238 PIN: 479 537 515#

**More phone numbers:** <https://meet.google.com/tel/bam-qgik-hjw?pin=2761399208395&hs=1>

Purpose:

Project Proposal/Recommendation, Policy Updates, Outreach Plan Updates

	Topics	Assigned	Time
A	Approve Agenda/ Minutes	Mary KSWCD	5 min
1	Budget Review- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly Invoicing (final numbers for Q3)</li> </ul>	Erin PCo	5 min
2	Proposed Projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forestry Project: Buckthorn Removal</li> </ul>	Nick KSWCD	20 min
3	Current Projects Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared Services Forester Funding (Budgeting WBIF funds)</li> </ul>	Jaren KSWCD	10 min
4	Policy Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ranking Sheet Changes</li> <li>Federal Partner Match</li> <li>Cost Share Prescribed Grazing</li> </ul>	Mary KSWCD	30 min
5	Partner Updates/ Feedback: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey Experience</li> <li>Member Checkin</li> </ul>	Mary KSWCD	5 min
6	Meeting Updates:		tbd
7	Outreach Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Priority Activities for Partners</li> <li>JAA</li> </ul>	Mary KSWCD	10
8	Future Meeting Times	Mary KSWCD	5 min

**AGENDA TOPICS:**

**a. Prior Meeting Minutes Approval**

- i. Minutes 11.04.2024

No comments on Minutes from previous meeting

**b. Approve Agenda**

Packet Location:

[12.09.24 Steering Committee Packet](#)

**1. Budget Review**

1	Budget Review- <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quarterly Invoicing (final numbers for Q3)</li></ul>	Erin FA	5 min
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[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fnOpuJTc2wN1F6r13ZXrwNdClnP0h8KuCvEfeHDpEDU/edit?usp=drive\\_link](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fnOpuJTc2wN1F6r13ZXrwNdClnP0h8KuCvEfeHDpEDU/edit?usp=drive_link)

- i. Q3 2024 (June 1-Sept 30 2024) invoices and payment reimbursement requests are due by 10/15/24
  - Submit to [erin.hoxsie@co.pine.mn.us](mailto:erin.hoxsie@co.pine.mn.us)

Erin C. Hoxsie explained budget final numbers for Q3. Indicated that anyone who is interested in seeing these numbers or needs more detail/ information is always welcome to reach out

**2. Project Review**

2	Proposed Projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Forestry Project: Buckthorn Removal</li></ul>	Nick KSWCD	20 min
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- 1. SOW, Ranking Sheet, Summary, Cost Estimates, Map

Mary Poelman indicated that while this project was placed on the agenda for review. A review was not going to take place at this time due to the fact that SOW paperwork was not prepared in time for Steering Committee to review. Noted that future direction of approvals will be adjusted to ensure that projects are considered in a timely manner with appropriate time allotted for review and inclusion into packets that must go out 1 week prior to any meetings. This will probably be a continuing evolution to find the appropriate level of lead time for approvals.

Nick Foss presented on the buckthorn Removal and Planting plan. Presented PPT. Demonstrated water quality benefit through use of NRCS network diagrams. In review of the SOW it was noted that this is a 5 year project and that funding of this project would be split over two different grant years. Recommended by Barb Peichel to consider only funding the portion within the current grant years (possibly splitting the project into two different projects).

Discussion was had on the payment process for projects such as brush management and policy of individual counties to pay ahead on practices due to the high cost in first years of non-structural management practices.

Zach Guttormson reminded everyone that GAM BWSR policy is to not pay on a project until it is completed or certified. (note) this would mean that the swcd's/county would not be able to be reimbursed through WBIF funds until the project was completed.

For this project in particular it was noted that for approval we need to very carefully document water quality benefit, priority areas, and if ultimate goals are forestry, water quality, or habitat.

It was discussed that this topic of payments and splitting funding over multiple grant projects would be a good topic to discuss with JPE board members on policy

It was noted that a possible practice for buckthorn would be to immediately plant with an annual (such as cereal rye) to stabilize soils until a perennial planting could be completed during the removal phase of the buckthorn mgmt.

Please Submit with Projects:

1. SOW/ funding request  
Template SOW  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1S2bv1Ba4Z1doP2\\_RM2pJchjxGEgcghws/edit?usp=drive\\_link&ouid=115886762896760527439&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1S2bv1Ba4Z1doP2_RM2pJchjxGEgcghws/edit?usp=drive_link&ouid=115886762896760527439&rtpof=true&sd=true)  
Template SOW (ReadMe)  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/101w\\_5q-6i8HMQqMkSuwMK91cEh882Jg/edit?usp=drive\\_link&ouid=115886762896760527439&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/document/d/101w_5q-6i8HMQqMkSuwMK91cEh882Jg/edit?usp=drive_link&ouid=115886762896760527439&rtpof=true&sd=true)
2. Priority Area Map ( within SOW)
3. Project Description/Timeline ( within SOW)
4. Ranking Sheet  
Template Ranking Sheet  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sR6nwZQ9PZg2iDjLlgmd2dBavi0leaK1/edit?usp=drive\\_link&ouid=115886762896760527439&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sR6nwZQ9PZg2iDjLlgmd2dBavi0leaK1/edit?usp=drive_link&ouid=115886762896760527439&rtpof=true&sd=true)

### 3. Current Project Updates

3	Current Projects Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Shared Services Forester Funding (Budgeting WBIF funds)</li></ul>	Jaren KSWCD	10 min
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Noted that Mary Poelman was going to follow up on allocation of funds for Admin/Education/Project Dev to assess YTD budgeted amounts and forecasts moving forward into 2025. Suggested this might be a good practice with all SOW to have a yearly check in on funding especially projects that are conglomerated within one SOW.

### 4. Proposed Policy Updates

4	Policy Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ranking Sheet Changes</li> <li>● Federal Partner Match</li> <li>● Cost Share Prescribed Grazing</li> </ul>	Mary KSWCD	30 min
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Superficially reviewed Ranking sheet changes using the Bukthorn project as an example. Note the scale bar for average values of the rankings picture and what it was representing. BWSR continues to suggest a simplification of the Ranking sheet.

Feedback from members included - that this ranking sheet was the first one they could see themselves being able to use. Feedback on low ranking scores vs high ranking scores and how ranking sheets can be used to improve projects in the planning process. Mary Poelman will follow up with suggestions for changes to ranking sheet questions/ updates to be through email.

**Federal Partner Match**

Mary Poelman reviewed cost share rates and noted the ability for federal funds to be used for cost share. Encourage partners to work with NRCS offices in their area to discuss potential projects that we can collaborate on. Paul noted that also options for partnering with wetlands projects with federal funds (had contacts to share)

**Cost Share Prescribed Grazing**

Mary Poelman went through the cost share rates for NRCS EQIP 2025 on non-structural ag practices and recommended a follow up by email to assess if rates need to be adjusted for the 2025 year.

**5. Review of Projects for Submission to K.Co Board of Commissioners – Partner Updates/Feedback**

5	Partner Updates/ Feedback: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Survey Experience</li> <li>● Member Check In</li> </ul>	Mary KSWCD	5 min
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Feedback on the survey: Easy to click a few buttons on the survey and send in rather than having to email/ set up an email. Not a lot of responses so may not be able to get sufficient participation of a survey

**6. TAC Meeting Update**

6	Meeting Updates:		tbd
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N/A- Placeholder

## 7. Outreach Plan

7	Outreach Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Priority Activities for Partners</li><li>● JAA</li></ul>	Mary KSWCD	10
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Mary gave a quick review of what had been completed with outreach and working with partners to develop tools that will help them individually in executing the plan in their areas. BWSR indicated the encouragement of breaking out into an actual outreach plan of the priority areas and Do 5 things or do these 10 things. Make it simple and easy. BWSR encouraged partners to reach out to know what it is you need help with and expressed that the money is just sitting there to be used.

## 8. Upcoming Meeting Times

8	Future Meeting Times	Mary KSWCD	5 min
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Recommended that we add in a section placeholder for submissions to the JPE meeting for the month.

Regular scheduled meetings Upcoming :

Steering – 1st Monday, 2:00-4:00 pm

Jan 6, 2025 2:00 PM- next meeting is scheduled for this time

Feb 3, 2025 2:00 PM

TAC, as needed 1-2 times/yr. (2nd Thurs. 1:30-4:30 pm)

Nov 18, 2024 10:00 AM (date/time moved)

May 8 2025 1:30 PM

Partnership Board, 4th Monday, 9:30 am

Nov 25, 2024- 9:30am (cancelled)

December 30, 2024- 9:30am (date moved)- upcoming JPE meeting.

Jan 27, 2025- 9:30 am