

**BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES  
520 LAFAYETTE ROAD NORTH  
LOWER LEVEL BOARD ROOM  
ST. PAUL, MN 55155  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2020**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Jill Crafton, Kathryn Kelly, Rich Sve, Andrea Date, Todd Holman, Jayne Hager Dee, Ted Winter, Tom Loveall, Nathan Redalen, Tom Schulz, Gerald Van Amburg, Joe Collins, Harvey Kruger, Paige Winebarger, Neil Peterson, Sarah Strommen, DNR; Whitney Place, MDA; Joel Larson, University of Minnesota Extension; Steve Robertson, MDH; Glenn Skuta, MPCA

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**STAFF PRESENT:**

John Jaschke, Angie Becker Kudelka, Rachel Mueller, Travis Germundson, Kevin Bigalke, Tom Gile, Julie Westerlund, Marcey Westrick, Pete Waller, Annie Felix-Gerth, Dave Weirens, Dave Copeland, Shaina Keseley, Ryan Hughes, Chris Pence, Megan Lennon,

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Jeff Berg, MDA; Brian Martinson, AMC; Chessa Frahm, MACDE; LeAnn Buck, MASWCD; Emily Javens, MAWD; Troy Daniell, NRCS; Robert Sip, RRWMB; Mimi Daniel, May Yang, Jesse Bode, Haley Byron, Camilla Correll, Morgan Torkelson, Alex Trunnell, Jared House, Tanya Waldo, Nicole Bernd, Ben Underhill, Aaron Habermehl, Jamie Beyer, Jamie Osowski, Daniel Mahoney, Jean Christoffels, Michele Stindtman, Anne Oldakowski

Chair Gerald VanAmburg called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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20-34 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA** - Moved by Nathan Redalen, seconded by Joe Collins, to adopt the agenda as presented. *Motion passed on a voice vote.*

**Roll Call Vote: Adoption of the agenda**

Name of Board member	Affirmative	Opposed	Abstained	Absent
Joe Collins	X			
Jill Crafton	X			
Andrea Date	X			
Jayne Hager Dee	X			
Steven Robertson (MDH)	X			
Todd Holman	X			
Glenn Skuta (MPCA)	X			
Kathryn Kelly	X			
Harvey Kruger	X			
Sarah Strommen (DNR)	X			
Joel Larson	X			
Tom Loveall	X			
Neil Peterson				X
Nathan Redalen	X			
Tom Schulz	X			
Whitney Peterson (MDA)	X			
Rich Sve	X			
Paige Winebarger	X			
Ted Winter	X			
Gerald Van Amburg, Chair	X			
<b>TOTALS</b>	19			1

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20-35 **MINUTES OF JUNE 24, 2020 BOARD MEETING** – Moved by Kathryn Kelly, seconded by Jill Crafton, to approve the minutes of June 24, 2020, as amended. *Motion passed on a voice vote.*

**Roll Call Vote: Approval of the Minutes of June 24, 2020 Board Meeting**

Name of Board member	Affirmative	Opposed	Abstained	Absent
Joe Collins	X			
Jill Crafton	X			
Andrea Date	X			
Jayne Hager Dee	X			
Steven Robertson (MDH)	X			
Todd Holman	X			
Glenn Skuta (MPCA)	X			

<b>Name of Board member</b>	<b>Affirmative</b>	<b>Opposed</b>	<b>Abstained</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Kathryn Kelly	X			
Harvey Kruger	X			
Sarah Strommen (DNR)	X			
Joel Larson	X			
Tom Loveall	X			
Neil Peterson				X
Nathan Redalen	X			
Tom Schulz	X			
Whitney Place (MDA)	X			
Rich Sve	X			
Paige Winebarger	X			
Ted Winter	X			
Gerald Van Amburg, Chair	X			
<b>TOTALS</b>	19			1

#### **PUBLIC ACCESS FORUM**

No members of the public provided comments to the board.

#### **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 he attended the July 15 EQB meeting of the Environmental Review Implementation Subcommittee that is chaired by Commissioner Strommen. The subcommittee discussed the Environmental Review program data and Performance Report. EQB is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the Environmental Review Program and to modify and improve its effectiveness.

EQB met August 12 where they examined goals, strategies and the actions of 2020 Water Plan. The Water Plan considers the relations of water and climate and how climate change must be factored in when considering water policy. The Plan is composed of five goals and under each goal there are strategies and action as developed by EQB staff and interagency collaborators. Chair Van Amburg thanked the BWSR staff for their work and being involved in putting the 2020 Water Plan together. The plan will be up for approval and publication at the September EQB meeting. The board also heard an update on the 404 Assumption study from BWSR staff.

Attended Soil Health Field Day on July 23<sup>rd</sup> in Wilkin County. Good presentation and hands on learning.

Staffing adjustments made because of COVID 19, Chair Van Amburg thanked staff for shifting and doing other things.

Dale Krystosek, BWSR PRAP Coordinator retired in early July and thanked Dale for all his years of outstanding work.

**Audit and Oversight Committee** – Paige Winebarger stated committee has not met.

**Executive Director's Report** - John Jaschke reported that we normally would have been on our board tour and is hoping to pick that up again next year.

Reviewed the day of packet materials. Slight adjustment to the agenda and will try to line up the IDEC presentation to be presented around 10:30 a.m. Conflict of interest will be done through roll call, state yes or no and if you have a conflict at that time.

Jaschke stated we had to make some staffing adjustments since we are still in a hiring freeze, hiring exceptions can be sought through MMB. Along with Dale Krystosek retirement, Mary Peterson also retired and will possibly come back part time but has to go through hiring exception process.

Staff are still teleworking and those with field responsibilities have to log in every day to report if they are doing field work. The directive shared with staff is that they are expected to work from home through the calendar year.

There is a new MMB Commissioner Jim Schowalter who previously held this position under the Dayton administration.

Clean Water Funding there is an expected reduction in what was available compared to the prior biennium for Legacy Funds that affect both Outdoor Heritage Fund and Clean Water Fund.

Legislative sessions have occurred over the summer as needed and called by the Governor to ratify emergency orders. Bonding bill did not get passed.

Governor's Executive Order 19-37 work via the Climate Subcabinet took a pause due to COVID but is now working again. Mostly outreach and input stage at this time.

**Dispute Resolution and Compliance Report** – Travis Germundson reported there are presently nine appeals pending. All the appeals include the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA). There have been four new appeals filed since the last Board Meeting.

File 20-08 This is an appeal of a WCA restoration order in St. Louis County. The appeal regards the alleged placement of 8,000 sq. ft. of fill in a wetland. Petitioner intends to submit an after the fact application for exemption of no loss to the LGU. No decision has been made on the appeal.

File 20-07 This is an appeal of a WCA restoration order in St. Louis County. The appeal regards the alleged impact of 17,000 sq. ft. of fill in a wetland for the construction of a private driveway. Appeal has been withdrawn and the case has been dismissed.

File 20-06 (8-4-2020) This is an appeal of a WCA exemption decision in Benton County. The appeal regards the denial of an exemption request for installation of agricultural drain tile within a 3.5-acre wetland. At issue is the wetland size. No decision has been made on the appeal.

File 20-05 (6-23-2020) This is an appeal of a WCA exemption decision in Otter Tail County. The appeal regards the denial of an exemption request for the installation of new drainage tile in multiple locations. At issue is the cropping history and wetland type associated with two of the eleven sites. The appeal was denied and the local government unit's decision affirmed.

Buffer Compliance Status: BWSR has received Notifications of Noncompliance (NONs) on 99 parcels from the 12 counties BWSR is responsible for enforcement. Staff continue to actively reach out to landowners to resolve any noncompliance on a voluntary basis prior initiating enforcement action through the issuance of Correction Action Notices (CANs). So far 61 CANs have been issued by BWSR and five Administrative Penalty Orders (APO). Of the actions being tracked over 31 of those have been resolved.

Statewide 24 counties are fully compliant, and 43 counties have enforcement cases in progress. Those counties have issued a total of 1,143 CANs and 15 Administrative Penalty Orders. Of the actions being tracked over 866 of those have been resolved.

Notification letters have been sent out to the remaining SWCDs that have yet to complete compliance determinations issue notifications of compliance for parcels that are currently not in compliant. Of those SWCDs all but two have specific plans and timelines for compliance.

Harvey Kruger asked if they could see more information about what specific counties are in compliance and which ones have enforcement cases in progress. Travis stated there is a map that can be emailed to the board.

**Grants Program & Policy Committee** – Tom Schulz reported committee met August 13. Recommended four grant related items that are on the agenda today. Will have a meeting in future; no date set.

**RIM Reserve Committee** – Tom Loveall reported committee met July 31 one item of business was an easement alteration that is a work in progress and will meet again on it before it comes to the board.

Tom provided an update on CREP; as of third batching total of approx. 30K acres. Progress is being made.

**Water Management & Strategic Planning Committee** – Todd Holman reported committee has not met.

**Wetland Conservation Committee** – Jill Crafton reported committee has not met. WCA rulemaking notice hope to send out by the end of the month.

**Buffers, Soils & Drainage Committee** - Kathryn Kelly reported committee has not met.

**Drainage Work Group (DWG)** Tom Loveall and Tom Gile reported the Drainage Work Group met July 9 and August 13.

At the July 9 meeting an overview of the BWSR Clean Water Fund Multipurpose Drainage Management grant program was given. The group is generally supportive of this program and several members are interested in finding ways to increase available funds.

A Presentation was provided by Shannon Sweeny, David Drown Associates Inc. related to public drainage project bonding and financing. This topic has been part of several discussions in the past year and is an area of continued interest to the DWG membership. Of particular interest are the considerations a County would look at when considering their bonding rating and interest rates for drainage projects when considering other potential county projects that may incur debt.

BWSR staff drafted a revision to 103E to uniformly include Watershed Districts in a number of procedures that currently only reference Counties or Joint County boards. While this hasn't led to issues over time there was interest at the end of the 2019 DWG session to look into options going forward to "clean this up" in 103E. While this may help clarify the discussion included whether it is "needed" at this time and the risk of opening all of 103E if not necessary. Some future discussion is expected.

Final versions of the Understanding Minnesota Public Drainage Law Documents were shared with the DWG. Draft versions were shared with DWG membership last year and comments provided were considered in crafting the final versions. These documents are now available on the BWSR website for public use.

At the August 13 meeting presentations by BWSR (Tom Wenzel) and Rinke Noonan (Representing drainage authorities) specific to current discussions around the need for a right of way granted to the Drainage Authority when a drainage system is moved as a result of a conservation easement. While this hasn't been the case historically there is growing sentiment that it is appropriate to ensure that the drainage authority has clear right of way for inspection and maintenance purposes in the location of the drainage infrastructure in the event it is moved due to easement acquisition or restoration activities associated with the easement. BWSR staff will continue working with drainage authorities and their legal counsel to pursue options that satisfy the needs of the drainage authorities while attempting to prevent unnecessary additional steps.

#### BWSR Draft Drainage System Maintenance on Conservation Easements Policy

BWSR is developing a guidance document intended to clarify Agency roles and responsibilities related to existing drainage infrastructure when a conservation easement is acquired by the agency. An overview of the document will be provided for discussion. BWSR will also solicit feedback and input from DWG membership on the current version of the document to consider as we refine and finalize it.

- Overview and Discussion.
- Discussion on timeline for feedback from DWG membership.
- Timeline for DWG comment is September 11, 2020.

DWG membership discussed the bonding presentation from the previous meeting. The DWG group is interested in continuing this discussion and staying on top of the financing side as folks seem to agree that this could be an up and coming area of concern for members.

Next in-person DWG meeting tentatively planned for September 10, 2020.

Harvey Kruger stated he would like to see the process expediated a little faster for the bonding alternative for ditch improvements.

#### **AGENCY REPORTS**

**Minnesota Department of Agriculture** – Whitney Place reported that on September 1<sup>st</sup> the first portion of their Groundwater Protection Rule will be going into effect. Fall fertilizer application in sensitive areas will not be allowed. If growers or people need to know if they are included in that restriction there is a map on the MDA website.

Working hard on MN Ag water certification program trying to implement as many acres as possible; the Governor has set a goal of one million acres by end of 2022. Have been meeting with different stakeholders to promote this program and increase implementation of conservation out on the landscape.

**Minnesota Department of Health** – Steve Robertson reported COVID19 activities still continue with many of their staff still being reassigned. Stated they have a new pilot grant program for assisting private well users. They have awarded two grants in two different parts of the state.

The Association of State Drinking Water Administrators recently released a comprehensive analysis of the workload of all the state's drinking water programs nationwide. Many states will use this to help address emerging drinking water issues.

Steve stated the Health based guidance work that the department does has released work plans for 2021 on their website.

In the Drinking Water Program, the Source Water Program made a goal in 2010 to Clean Water Council to achieve drinking water supply management for all the vulnerable community systems in the state and to have completed by end of 2020. At the end of June this was completed.

**Minnesota Department of Natural Resources** – Sarah Strommen followed up on a question Jill Crafton had at the last meeting regarding invasive carp plan. She reported staff are still putting together the timeline for the updated plan. That timeline will include a public engagement opportunity to work with others and can follow-up offline if Jill would like more information.

Commissioner Strommen stated the Great American Outdoors Act was passed and signed. Will help fund national parks, state parks, local parks and trails, and recreational spaces across the state.

Chronic wasting disease is in our deer population and we're getting closer to archery and firearm deer season. This year will be a little different because of pandemic. DNR will not be doing mandatory staff stations for submitting samples but are asking hunters to voluntary give samples.

Shoreline restoration project in Lake Itasca State Park to address erosion that has been occurring at the headwaters. The project will repair and restore the original channel.

Missing the opportunity at the State Fair this year to engage with people. DNR is joining the State Fair and others in providing some virtual and online opportunities. Tomorrow they will be launching the Minnesota Great Outdoor Adventure that consists of a number of online virtual opportunities to interact with experts on various topics.

Jill Crafton stated she would like Commissioner Strommen to follow-up with her offline.

Neil Peterson would also like a follow-up call about some of their drainage issues.

**Minnesota Extension** – Joel Larson reported the U of M moved most of their classes to online or a hybrid option. Decided to delay undergraduate move in and in person classes by at least two weeks.

Soil Health field day in September with social distancing outside. Gather information to use for online training for online field days.

The climate adaptation webinars occur from 12:00 -1:00 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month. the MN Climate Adaptation Partnership (MCAP) is a multi-sector collaboration working to increase climate resilience in Minnesota.

The Water Resources Conference will be held online on October 20 and 21.

Hired new Extension Climate Specialist Heidi Roop who started last month. Also hired a new Extension Educator Anne Sawyer focusing on watershed education issues and will be hiring an Extension Educator to focus on urban stormwater management

Chair VanAmburg asked if Rachel would be sending out information to register for the Water Resources Conference in October. Rachel stated that she would be gathering the annual conference information and send to board members if they would like to attend.

**Minnesota Pollution Control Agency** – Glenn Skuta reported the status of the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS). For the 80 watersheds of the state 55 have been completed and are on track for the statutory deadline for having them all completed by mid-2023.

#### **ADVISORY COMMENTS**

**Association of Minnesota Counties** – Brian Martinson reported the spring district visits were held online this year and the fall policy conference was cancelled. The Policy Committee will be meeting via Zoom in mid-September to continue policy work. Not much accomplished by Legislature this year in terms of environment, finance, or policy work. AMC signed a letter, along with 50 other organizations from around the state, directed towards legislative leaders and the Governor's office to encourage them to get a bill done when they potentially reconvene in September. COVID has had significant economic impacts. Some of the work done in terms of state revenue reductions has been focused on the Clean Water Fund (CWF). Reductions are currently being made to CWF spending in the current year. Local Government Water Roundtable staff have been in regular contact and have been coordinating with BWSR staff to see that their voices are included. The Clean Water Council are currently in discussion about the FY22-23 budget year and are facing difficult decisions regarding reductions to the budget in the upcoming biennium. Part of what they need to consider is whether to include the SWCD funding within that budget. The Council has not included it in the past but legislature has adjusted it for them and added it in. Ability for the state to use general fund money to address issue has evaporated and encourage Council and others to take a look at this issue. Drainage Working Group has met and has had good informative meetings, discussed the issue of financing or bonding for projects.

Harvey Kruger stated he would like to see the drainage projects expedited.

**Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees** – Chessa Frahm reported they are revising plans for the year with COVID 19. Looking at different plans for the annual conference. Hosting SWCD budgeting workshop in partnership with BWSR. Partnering with U of M for HR training for employee onboarding. The National Conservation Planning Partnership website is now active at [www.ncpp.info](http://www.ncpp.info) with information and updates on what they've been up to.



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

**Minnesota Association of Townships** – Nathan Redalen reported monthly meetings are being held via Zoom.

**Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts** –Emily Javens reported Heron Lake Watershed District had a petition to improve their system and received a 3-year short term loan to build project. Need to figure out how they are going to finance it long term.

**Natural Resources Conservation Service** – Troy Daniell reported that most of the federal programs were held in late spring. Gave an update of their three-year strategy that is set up for management of their easements. Stated they won't be able to get a huge additionality of funding for next year. Hiring has improved since a year ago. Staff have been working on coming up with a game plan to keep training going during the COVID challenge. Still going out in the field and doing the work the best they can.

### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Grants Program and Policy Committee

**One Watershed, One Plan Planning Grants Authorization** – Julie Westerlund presented One Watershed, One Plan Planning Grants Authorization

The calendar year 2020 (FY21 grants) One Watershed, One Plan Planning Grants request for proposal (RFP) period opened on March 27, 2020 and closed on June 12, 2020. BWSR received nine proposals. Staff reviewed the nine proposals against the RFP selection criteria and received feedback from the Interagency WRAPS and Implementation Team. BWSR's Senior Management Team reviewed staff recommendations on July 14, 2020 and recommended funding eight of nine of the proposals. Grants Program and Policy Committee reviewed this recommendation on August 13, 2020. A draft board order is attached.

Funds are from the 2020-2021 biennium, Laws of Minnesota 2019, 1st Special Session, Chapter 2, Article 2, Section 7(i) for assistance, oversight, and grants to local governments to transition local water management plans to a watershed approach. A small portion of funds will come from unspent dollars from the 2018-2019 biennium, Laws of Minnesota 2017, Chapter 91, Article 2, Section 7(i).

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20-36 Moved by Harvey Kruger, seconded by Jill Crafton, to approve the One Watershed, One Plan Planning Grants Authorization. ***Motion passed on a voice vote.***

#### ***Roll Call Vote: Approval of the One Watershed, One Plan Planning Grants Authorization***

Name of Board member	Perceived conflict of interest	Affirmative	Opposed	Abstained	Absent
Joe Collins		X			
Jill Crafton		X			
Andrea Date		X			
Jayne Hager Dee		X			
Steven Robertson (MDH)		X			
Todd Holman		X			
Glenn Skuta (MPCA)		X			

Kathryn Kelly		X			
Harvey Kruger		X			
Sarah Strommen (DNR)		X			
Joel Larson		X			
Tom Loveall	X			X	
Neil Peterson					X
Nathan Redalen		X			
Tom Schulz		X			
Whitney Place (MDA)		X			
Rich Sve					X
Paige Winebarger		X			
Ted Winter		X			
Gerald Van Amburg, Chair		X			
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

**FY 2021 SWCD Local Capacity Grant Authorization** – Marcey Westrick presented FY 2021 SWCD Local Capacity Grant Authorization

On August 23, 2020, the Grants Program and Policy Committee reviewed two options for calculating the allocation formula for the FY21 SWCD Local Capacity grants. The committee recommends that the SWCD Local Capacity grants be calculated using the same formula that was used for FY20 and the attached order to the board.

Jill Crafton stated the committee supported this but she is concerned with the money coming out of the Clean Water Fund . With budget cuts it penalizes getting other projects on the ground. Harvey Kruger stated he agrees with Jill’s comment.

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20-37 Moved by Kathryn Kelly, seconded by Jayne Hager Dee, to approve the FY 2021 SWCD Local Capacity Grant Authorization. ***Motion passed on a voice vote.***

***Roll Call Vote: Approval of the FY 2021 SWCD Local Capacity Grant Authorization***

<b>Name of Board member</b>	<b>Perceived conflict of interest</b>	<b>Affirmative</b>	<b>Opposed</b>	<b>Abstained</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Joe Collins		X			
Jill Crafton		X			
Andrea Date		X			
Jayne Hager Dee		X			
Steven Robertson (MDH)		X			
Todd Holman		X			
Glenn Skuta (MPCA)		X			
Kathryn Kelly		X			
Harvey Kruger		X			
Sarah Strommen (DNR)		X			
Joel Larson		X			

Tom Loveall		X			
Neil Peterson					X
Nathan Redalen		X			
Tom Schulz		X			
Whitney Place (MDA)		X			
Rich Sve					X
Paige Winebarger		X			
Ted Winter		X			
Gerald Van Amburg, Chair		X			
<b>TOTALS</b>		18			2

**Fiscal Year 2021 Buffer Implementation Grants Authorization** – Tom Gile and Kevin Bigalke presented Fiscal Year 2021 Buffer Implementation Grants Authorization

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, budget reductions to the Clean Water Fund occurred. The governor and Minnesota Management and Budget instructed BWSR to reduce the Buffer Law Implementation Grants by 7% for FY20-21. Buffer Law Implementation Grants are paid to soil and water conservation districts as an upfront 100% payment and FY20 Buffer Law Implementation Grants have already been sent out. Therefore, budget reductions of 14% need to be applied to FY21 Buffer Law Implementation Grants in order to meet the necessary 7% reduction.

The Grants Program and Policy Committee met on August 13, 2020 and recommends the attached order to the board.

Jill Crafton asked if they could get feedback on how healthy these buffers are and how well they're working so they can see how that money is being invested. Tom will explore it and get back to Jill.

Harvey Kruger asked how the Governor decides which programs to cut and not cut? John Jaschke stated it was based on MMB's May budget forecast.

Joe Collins stated he would like to have BWSR consider setting up a committee or another way to prioritize programs in the future for potential budget reductions. Jill Crafton agreed. Kathryn Kelly suggested to include the Executive Director or leadership from local government associations, BWSR, and NRCS. Paige Winebarger supports this. Jaschke stated this is an unusual case and might not happen again. In consultation with the Chair could use the Administrative Advisory Committee if something comes along like this again. Commissioner Strommen stated all the agencies are in the same situation and would be helpful to include other agency leaders in discussions. Jill Crafton agreed. Harvey asked to keep all entities involved.

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20-38 Moved by Tom Schulz, seconded by Joe Collins, to approve the Fiscal Year 2021 Buffer Implementation Grants Authorization. ***Motion passed on a voice vote.***

***Roll Call Vote: Approval of the Fiscal Year 2021 Buffer Implementation Grants Authorization***

Name of Board member	Perceived conflict of interest	Affirmative	Opposed	Abstained	Absent
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Joe Collins		X			
Jill Crafton		X			
Andrea Date		X			
Jayne Hager Dee		X			
Steven Robertson (MDH)		X			
Todd Holman		X			
Glenn Skuta (MPCA)		X			
Kathryn Kelly		X			
Harvey Kruger		X			
Sarah Strommen (DNR)		X			
Joel Larson					X
Tom Loveall		X			
Neil Peterson					X
Nathan Redalen		X			
Tom Schulz		X			
Whitney Place (MDA)		X			
Rich Sve					X
Paige Winebarger		X			
Ted Winter		X			
Gerald Van Amburg, Chair		X			
<b>TOTALS</b>		17			3

**FY 20-21 Watershed-based Implementation Funding Program Amendment – Marcey Westrick presented FY 20-21 Watershed-based Implementation Funding Program Amendment**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, budget reductions to the Clean Water Fund occurred. The governor and Minnesota Management and Budget instructed BWSR to reduce the Watershed-based Implementation Funding by 10.5% for the FY20-21 biennium. Watershed-based Implementation Funding is distributed through a 50:40:10 payment schedule.

Staff developed two scenarios for how to apply the needed budget reduction.

- a. Distribute the reduction equally amongst all watershed areas. This would directly impact those grant agreements that have already been executed and would result in grant amendments to reduce the dollar amount awarded and grantees not receiving their final 10% payment.
- b. Take the reduction out of the ready reserve allocation for 2018 planning starts. This would not impact allocations established for any watershed area, but it would likely limit the number of planning areas that would be able to receive funding in this biennium.

The Grants Program and Policy Committee reviewed these options on August 13, 2020 and recommends option b and the attached order to the board.

Harvey Kruger asked if this a 10.5% reduction for just one year or if it's going into two years with a 21% reduction? Kevin Bigalke explained that its 10.5% across the biennium.

Jill’s concern is for those that are doing the projects, that the contracts for people would not be penalized since they have already made those commitments to get implementation. Kevin Bigalke stated it is a reduction only to the later plans that started in 2018.

Tom Loveall asked about option b where it states it would likely limit the number of planning areas that would be able to receive funding in this biennium, is that out of the 2018 plans that some of those won’t get funded and how is that determination made? Marcey and Kevin Bigalke stated that is correct. The board order was with funding from FY20-21 and we were never able to fund all those 2018 planning starts so it was on a first come first serve basis.

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20-39

Moved by Joe Collins, seconded by Jill Crafton, to approve the FY 20-21 Watershed-based Implementation Funding Program Amendment. **Motion passed on a voice vote.**

***Roll Call Vote: Approval of the FY 20-21 Watershed-based Implementation Funding Program Amendment***

<b>Name of Board member</b>	<b>Perceived conflict of interest</b>	<b>Affirmative</b>	<b>Opposed</b>	<b>Abstained</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Joe Collins		X			
Jill Crafton		X			
Andrea Date		X			
Jayne Hager Dee		X			
Steven Robertson (MDH)		X			
Todd Holman		X			
Glenn Skuta (MPCA)		X			
Kathryn Kelly		X			
Harvey Kruger		X			
Sarah Strommen (DNR)		X			
Joel Larson					X
Tom Loveall		X			
Neil Peterson					X
Nathan Redalen		X			
Tom Schulz		X			
Whitney Place (MDA)		X			
Rich Sve					X
Paige Winebarger		X			
Ted Winter		X			
Gerald Van Amburg, Chair		X			
<b>TOTALS</b>		17			3

***Northern Region Committee***

**Pomme de Terre River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan** – Pete Waller and Todd Holman presented Pomme de Terre River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan

The Pomme de Terre River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (Plan) planning area is in west central Minnesota encompassing portions of Big Stone, Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail, Stevens and Swift counties and the Pomme de Terre River Association Joint Powers Board. The Plan was developed as part of the One Watershed, One Plan program.

On June 18, 2020, BWSR received the Plan, a recording of the public hearings, and copies of all written comments pertaining to the Plan for final State review. The planning partnership has responded to all comments received during the 60-day review period and incorporated appropriate revisions to the final Plan.

BWSR staff completed its review and subsequently found the Plan meets the requirements of Minnesota Statutes and BWSR Policy.

On August 5, 2020, the Northern Regional Committee met to review and discuss the Plan. The Committee’s decision was to recommend approval of the Pomme de Terre River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan as submitted to the full Board per the attached draft Order.

Joe Collins asked for clarification on where it talks about a sediment reduction of 2,500 tons in direct runoff into the Pomme de Terre River. Joe stated it sounds like a large amount, how do you stop that sediment going into the river? Pete Waller stated it’s just the nature of that watershed and so much of it is agriculture, it’s also what the WRAPS found.

Jill Crafton would like to see the 11 priority issues added to the Findings of Fact. John Jaschke stated we will add in those priority issues under item 6 of the Findings of Fact.

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20-40 Moved by Todd Holman, seconded by Joe Collins, to approve the Pomme de Terre River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. **Motion passed on a voice vote.**

**Roll Call Vote: Approval of the Pomme de Terre River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan**

Name of Board member	Affirmative	Opposed	Abstained	Absent
Joe Collins	X			
Jill Crafton	X			
Andrea Date	X			
Jayne Hager Dee	X			
Steven Robertson (MDH)	X			
Todd Holman	X			
Glenn Skuta (MPCA)	X			
Kathryn Kelly	X			
Harvey Kruger	X			
Sarah Strommen (DNR)	X			
Joel Larson				X
Tom Loveall	X			
Neil Peterson				X
Nathan Redalen	X			
Tom Schulz	X			
Whitney Place (MDA)	X			

Rich Sve				X
Paige Winebarger	X			
Ted Winter	X			
Gerald Van Amburg, Chair	X			
<b>TOTALS</b>	17			3

**Redeye River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan** – Tom Schulz presented Redeye River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan

The Redeye River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (Plan) planning area is in central Minnesota encompassing portions of Becker, Otter Tail, Todd, and Wadena counties. The Plan was developed as part of the One Watershed, One Plan program.

On July 14, 2020, BWSR received the Plan, a recording of the public hearing, and copies of all written comments pertaining to the Plan for final State review. The planning partnership has responded to all comments received during the 60-day review period and incorporated appropriate revisions to the final Plan.

BWSR staff completed its review and subsequently found the Plan meets the requirements of Minnesota Statutes and BWSR Policy.

On August 5, 2020, the Northern Regional Committee met to review and discuss the Plan. The Committee’s decision was to recommend approval of the Redeye River Watershed Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan as submitted to the full Board per the attached draft Order.

Jill Crafton stated this is one of the best plans she has seen. Tom Schulz said the plan is a result of hard work by staff and the Policy Committee. Having partnerships around the table made it go much easier and quicker and thanked Jill for her comments.

Glenn Skuta received positive feedback on the plan and the planning process from PCA staff. Planning group was great and process went smoothly. Great communication across the partners.

\*\*  
20-41 Moved by Tom Schulz, seconded by Harvey Kruger, to approve the Redeye River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. ***Motion passed on a voice vote.***

***Roll Call Vote: Approval of the Redeye River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan***

Name of Board member	Affirmative	Opposed	Abstained	Absent
Joe Collins	X			
Jill Crafton	X			
Andrea Date	X			
Jayne Hager Dee	X			
Steven Robertson (MDH)	X			
Todd Holman	X			
Glenn Skuta (MPCA)	X			
Kathryn Kelly				X
Harvey Kruger	X			

Sarah Strommen (DNR)	X			
Joel Larson				X
Tom Loveall	X			
Neil Peterson				X
Nathan Redalen	X			
Tom Schulz	X			
Whitney Place (MDA)	X			
Rich Sve				X
Paige Winebarger	X			
Ted Winter	X			
Gerald Van Amburg, Chair	X			
<b>TOTALS</b>	16			4

***Southern Region Committee***

**Buffalo Creek Watershed District Boundary Change** – Annie Felix-Gerth presented Buffalo Creek Watershed District Boundary Change

The purpose of the boundary change between the Buffalo Creek Watershed District and the High Island Watershed District is to achieve more accurate alignment between the hydrologic and legal boundaries of the two districts.

\*\*  
20-42 Moved by Joe Collins, seconded by Harvey Kruger, to approve the Buffalo Creek Watershed District Boundary Change. ***Motion passed on a voice vote.***

***Roll Call Vote: Approval of the Buffalo Creek Watershed District Boundary Change***

<b>Name of Board member</b>	<b>Affirmative</b>	<b>Opposed</b>	<b>Abstained</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Joe Collins	X			
Jill Crafton	X			
Andrea Date				X
Jayne Hager Dee	X			
Steven Robertson (MDH)	X			
Todd Holman	X			
Glenn Skuta (MPCA)	X			
Kathryn Kelly	X			
Harvey Kruger	X			
Sarah Strommen (DNR)	X			
Joel Larson				X
Tom Loveall	X			
Neil Peterson				X
Nathan Redalen	X			
Tom Schulz	X			
Whitney Place (MDA)	X			
Rich Sve				X
Paige Winebarger				X
Ted Winter	X			



Gerald Van Amburg, Chair	X			
<b>TOTALS</b>	15			5

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Red River Watershed Management Board Strategic Plan** – Rob Sip presented Red River Watershed Management Board Strategic Plan

Update on Red River Watershed Management Board’s strategic plan, progress indicators, WQ funding, budget, etc.

Jill Crafton thanked Rob and stated it was great to learn about their efforts and support to further our state water quality goals.

Chair Van Amburg also thanked Rob and his team for their efforts.

Kathryn Kelly thanked Rob for the presentation.

Ted Winter would like to receive more information on the Red River Watershed Management Board and would like to be included on their emailing list.

John Jaschke stated a copy of the presentation was emailed in the day of board packet.

**Increasing Diversity in Environmental Careers (IDEC) Program** – Angie Becker Kudelka, Mimi Daniel and May Yang presented Increasing Diversity in Environmental Careers (IDEC) Program.

The Increasing Diversity in Environmental Careers (IDEC) program provides a unique college-to-careers pathway for underrepresented STEM college students, specifically, women, racial and ethnic minorities, or individuals with disabilities, who want to pursue a career in environmental and natural resources fields. BWSR is partnering with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to implement the program, which has just completed its first year of operations.

The IDEC program consists of three components:

1. Fellowship: The fellowship provides students with a supportive community, yearly academic fiscal scholarship, and professional development. Fellows attend in-person cohort sessions every other month during the academic school year to stay connected to their peers and participate in professional development opportunities.
2. Mentorship: Fellows are connected with professionals in the field who can share their experiences and support them. The mentorship aims to enhance college success, encourage personal and professional development, and promote career advancement by pairing fellows with employees at one of the participating state agencies.
3. Internship: The paid internship, which runs from May to August, allows fellows to learn more about environmental and natural resources career paths through paid, on-the-job experience. The internship includes first-year summer rotations and second and third-year summer agency internships.

With direction from an interagency team, the program is managed by the MNDNR and led by the Conservation Corps of MN and IA.

Jill Crafton is active in an Izaak Walton League chapter and they offer environmental scholarships. Jill inquired as to the age group for this program. Stated that the program is open for Freshmen, Sophomore, and Juniors can participate in this program. Jill asked for contact information, Angie stated they would get that for Jill.

Sarah Strommen thanked BWSR and MPCA and stated that this program is stronger because of the partnerships between the three agencies and is a good example of the work we can do together. Stated she enjoyed the conversations she had with this group and gives her hope for the future.

John Jaschke stated careers in this field can occur in lots of places that offer the use of the same skill sets in nonprofits and environmental natural resources fields. Thanked them for pulling this together and making this program possible.

#### **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

- Next BWSR Meeting is scheduled for 9:00 AM, September 23, 2020 in St. Paul and by WebEx.

Chair VanAmburg adjourned the meeting at 1:12 PM

Respectfully submitted,

  
Gerald Van Amburg  
Chair