COTTONWOOD SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING
March 21, 2025
Cottonwood SWCD Office – 210 10th Street, Windom, MN

CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL
AGENDA – Approval
MINUTES of February 27, 2025 Board Meeting
1. FINANCIAL – Annitra Moody •Financial Report •Accounts Payable •First Quarter Compensation and Expenses
2. COMMITTEE REPORTS and ACTION ITEMS
RCRCA – **Clark Lingbeek**
GBERBA – Clark Lingbeek
1W1P DES MOINES – Kay Gross
1W1P COTTONWOOD/LITTLE COTTONWOOD – Kay Gross
1W1P BLUE EARTH – Kay Gross
SOUTHWEST PRAIRIE JPO – Tom Muller
- Southwest Prairie TSA Vouchers, Financial and Administrative Report
- TSA Soil Health Quarterly Reporting

AREA V – Clark Lingbeek – Next Mtg – Thursday, June 26 (Cottonwood Co)
MASWCD – Clark Lingbeek
NRCS – NON-SUPERVISORY DC – Kiara Tomassini
COMMISSIONER REPORT – Tom Appel
- County Update

3. ADMINISTRATIVE – Kay Gross

- **GBERBA Cost-Share Contract Approval - FY2024 (2.0) BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C24-0092)**

Jeremiah Franz	17-16(WBIF-WW-24)	Carson 15	WASCOBS (3)	Cost $30,497.10	C-S $25,922.54
City of Mountain Lake	17-17(WBIF-WW-24)	Midway 33	Tree/Shrub Establishment	Cost $3,000.00	C-S $2,550.00
Michael Mueller	17-18(WBIF-WW-24)	Midway 29	Septic Incentive		Incentive $5,000.00

- **BWSR Cost-Share Contract Approval - WBIF FY25-27 - Des Moines River Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C25-0177)**

Landon Johnson	25-DMRW-COT-005	Great Bend 4	Septic Incentive	Incentive $5,000.00
Bruce Axford	25-DMRW-COT-006	Lakeside 18	Septic Incentive	Incentive $5,000.00

- **Cottonwood SWCD 2025-2026 Guidelines on Use of SWCD Aid Payments**
- **Soil Health Mentor Contract and Potential Third Contract**– Ramont Harder-Schrock
- **Threatened and Endangered Species Limited License Agreement** – Authorize Becky Buchholz to Sign
- **Talcot Lake Project**
- **Soil Health Practices Grant Policy** – Discussion
- **Request to Exceed Vacation Hours** – Move to Sick Leave
- **Meetings**

March	24	Cottonwood Co. Board of Adjustment – Office	Staff, Commissioner
March	25-27	MCFO Annual Feedlot Conference – Detroit Lakes (Registration, Lodging and Meals)	Alex, Nathan
March	26	GBERBA Technical Committee – Virtual/Windom	Staff
March	27	Second Grade Presentations – Windom School	Breanna
March	27-28	State Managers Meeting – St. Cloud (Registration $20, Lodging and Meals)	Kay
March	31	Southwest Prairie TSA Meeting – Marshall	Tom, Kay
April	2	Ninth Grade Presentations – Windom School	Breanna
April	3	Area II/RCRCA – Redwood Falls	Clark
April	7	Soil Health Mentor Meeting – Office/Virtual	Staff, Tom, Daryl
April	7	Seventh Grade Presentations – Windom School	Breanna
April	8	Sixth Grade Presentations – Windom School	Breanna
April	8-10	HR Training – St. Cloud (Registration, Lodging & Meals	Kay, Becky, Annitra
April	10	First Grade Presentations – Mountain Lake School	Breanna
April	11	GBERBA Executive Board Meeting – Windom/Virtual	Clark, Staff
April	14-18	Tree Deliveries – Schumacher's and Bailey's	Staff
April	17	Des Moines Policy Committee Meeting – Windom	Tom/Daryl, Staff
April	17	WCA TEP Training – St. Cloud	Dylan
April	23	GBERBA Technical Committee Meeting – Virtual/Office	Staff
April	24	Cottonwood SWCD Board Meeting – Virtual/Office	Supervisors, Staff, Tom A
April	24-25	Tree Pick-up – Office/DNR Site	Staff

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4. **SENIOR TECHNICIAN – Dave Bucklin** – Written Report
5. **SENIOR TECHNICIAN – Becky Buchholz** – Written Report
6. **PROGRAM TECHNICIAN – Breanna Wagner –** Written Report
7. **PROGRAM TECHNICIAN – Nathan Harder –** Written Report
8. **AREA 6 CERTIFICATION SPECIALIST – Herman Bartsch** – Written Report
9. **AREA 5 CERTIFICATION SPECIALIST – Danielle Evers** – Written Report
10. **MN CONSERVATION CORP – MAWQCP INTERN – Adriene Matthews** – Written Report
11. **PLANNING and ZONING TECHNICIAN – Alex Schultz** – Written Report
12. **COTTONWOOD COUNTY DRAINAGE INSPECTOR – Dylan Oeltjenbruns** – Written Report

Next Regular Meeting – Thursday, April 24 at 8:30 a.m. – Cottonwood SWCD Office

MARCH TRANSACTIONS

District Checking Account Balances 2-28-2025 (Bank Midwest)		**$725,094.05**
RECEIPTS: (since last board meeting)		
Interest February - 2025 Bank Midwest (Checking Account $81.51 and Sweep Account $834.86)		$916.37
Tree and Tube Sales/Pruning/Deposits		$1,554.49
Des Moines River Watershed - January Admin		$2,792.55
BWSR - Reimbursement Easement Work 17-01-23-09, 17-01-24-03, 17-02-24-03, 17-02-23-09		$24,765.25
MN Valley Action Council - Reimbursement Workforce Training		$3,715.00
Cottonwood County Auditor-1st Qtr Allocation $13,000, County $5047.73, P & Z $1405.64		$19,453.37
GBERBA - Coordinators - February		$8,753.83
GBERBA - MAWQCP Area 6 - February		$5,403.70
	TOTAL RECEIPTS	**$67,354.56**
DISBURSEMENTS: (since last board meeting)		
Direct Deposit	Payroll 02-16-25 to 02-28-25 Plus Pera, MN Dept of Rev, Bank Midwest	$21,683.13
1737	Cottonwood County-Insurance March 2025	$3,117.36
1738	Cottonwood County - Health Sipend	$6,000.00
26672	Des Moines River DU Chapter- Registration	$50.00
26673	NCPERS - Group Life Insurance - March 2025	$112.00
26674	Staples Enterprises -March 2025	$164.54
26675	Cigna Health - Accident Ins - March 2025	$9.70
26676	Sun Life Financial - STD March 2025	$7.40
26677	The Hartford - LTD March 2025	$167.68
26678	Met Life - Dental Ins March 2025	$96.12
26679	Fifelity Security - Vision Ins March 2025	$13.22
Direct Deposit	Payroll 03-02-25 to 03-14-25 Plus Pera, MN Dept of Rev, Bank Midwest	$18,829.53
	TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	**$50,250.68**
	BALANCE BEFORE BOARD MEETING	**$742,197.93**

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ACCOUNTS PAYABLE
3/21/2025
(to be approved at this board meeting)

Payable		**Amount**
26680	Bauer Management	$337.50
26681	Cardmember Services - Training, Office Supplies & Postage	$998.71
26682	Central Landscape Supply - Tree Tubes	$1,590.00
26683	Citizen Publishing Co. - Site Hosts (3), Ad Mania	$1,446.30
26684	Cottonwood County Auditor - County Rent ($2106.30) - April 2025 / Postage (February $74.52)	$2,180.82
26685	Gordon Flesch-Copier	$256.89
26686	MACDE- Managers Mtg Registration	$20.00
26687	Murray SWCD - SWPTSA Admin Assistance	$2,272.32
26688	ODP Business Solutions-Office Supplies	$34.87
26689	Regents of the University of MN-Rental Agreement Hwy 14 Tour	$100.00
26690	Windom Area Chamber of Commerce - Riverfest Parade Registration	$25.00
26691	Rebecca Buchholz - Cell Phone & Mileage	$251.40
26692	Kay Gross - Cell Phone & Mileage	$367.80
26693	Herman Bartsch - Mileage & Cell	$132.60
26694	VOID	$0.00
26695	Cottonwood County Auditor - Ins - April 2025	$3,117.36
	TOTAL ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	**$13,131.57**
	District Checking Account Balance	**$729,066.36**
Balances as of 3-21-2025		
PETTY CASH (Included in District Fund Balance)		**$50.00**
9 Month CD - Bank Midwest - Interest - 2024 ($1,287.44 - Included in Total)		**$54,523.77**
Savings Account - Bank Midwest - Interest - 4th Quarter ($567.90 - Included in Total)		**$55,953.76**
	Account Balances: Checking (2)/Savings/Petty Cash/CD:	**$839,593.89**

FIRST QUARTER MEETINGS
2025

JANUARY

January	2	RCRCA/Area II Meeting – Marshall	- $125.00
January	6	Southwest Prairie TSA Personnel Reviews – Windom	- $125.00
January	13	Southwest Prairie TSA Board Meeting – Windom/Virtual	- $125.00
January	15	Cottonwood 1W1P Policy Meeting (??) – Springfield	- $125.00
January	16	Des Moines Policy Board Meeting – Windom	- $125.00
January	16	GBERBA Soil Health Landowner Meeting – St. James	- $125.00
January	17	Private Lands Meeting – Willmar	- $125.00
January	21	Personnel Reviews – Office	- $125.00
January	23	SWCD Board Meeting – Office/Virtual	- $125.00
January	24	GBERBA Policy Meeting – Mankato	- $125.00

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FEBRUARY

February	4	MASWCD Legislative Priorities Meeting- Virtual	- $125.00
February	7	Area II/RCRCA Meeting – Redwood Falls	- $125.00
February	14	GBERBA Executive Meeting – Windom/Virtual	- $125.00
February	19	Hwy 14 Soil Health Event – Lamberton	- $125.00
February	19	Cottonwood 1W1P – Springfield	- $125.00
February	20	Des Moines Executive Committee Meeting – Office/Virtual	- $125.00
February	20	Area 5 Meeting – Windom/Virtual	- $125.00
February	27	SWCD Board Meeting – Office/Virtual	- $125.00

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MARCH

March	4-5	MASWCD Legislative Briefing – St. Paul	- $125.00/day
March	6	Area II/RCRCA Meeting – Marshall	- $125.00
March	14	GBERBA Policy Meeting – Windom/Virtual	- $125.00
March	20	Des Moines Executive Committee Meeting – Office/Virtual	- $125.00
March	21	SWCD Board Meeting – Office/Virtual	- $125.00
March	31	Southwest Prairie TSA Meeting – Marshall	- $125.00

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Monthly Treasurer's Report
Southwest Prairie Technical Service Area
February 2025

Use of Cash	Beginning Balance 2/1/2025	Receipts	Disbursements	Ending Balance 2/28/2025	EXPIRES
Checking Account	$ 578,439.85	7,877.92	$ 45,537.01	540,780.76	
Select Business Svg	$ -			-	
Interest Money	$ -			-	
Compensated Absences	$ -			-	
Sweep Account	$ 815,992.93	1,158.80		817,151.73	
CD	$ -			-	
Total	**$ 1,394,432.78**	**9,036.72**	**$ 45,537.01**	**1,357,932.49**	
Program Summary					
JPO Fund Balance	$ 97,741.61	2,317.60		100,059.21	
Technical Services	$ 376,881.83			376,881.83	
GRANTS	$ 833,277.78	6,719.12	$ 45,537.01	794,459.89	
Training	$ 12,531.56			12,531.56	
Education/Outreach	$ 20,000.00			20,000.00	
Compensated Absences	$ 54,000.00			54,000.00	
NACD Grant	$ -			-	
	$ 1,394,432.78	**9,036.72**	**$ 45,537.01**	**1,357,932.49**	
eLINK Grants					
FY21 ESTS Grant	$ -	-		-	12/31/2023
FY21 Local Match	$ -			-	
FY21 Administration	$ -			-	
FY22 ESTS Grant				-	12/31/2024
FY22 Local Match	$ -			-	
FY22 ESTS Administration				-	
FY22 NPEA Grant	$ -			-	12/31/2024
FY22 NPEA Local Match	$ -			-	
FY22 NPEA Administration	$ -			-	
FY23 ESTS Grant	$ 156,634.26		$ 80,958.29	75,675.97	12/31/2025
FY23 Local Match				-	
FY23 ESTS Administration	$ 30,065.00		$ 3,523.59	26,541.41	
FY23 NPEA Grant	$ 10,627.04		$ 10,627.04	-	12/31/2025
FY23 NPEA Local Fund	$ -			-	
FY23 Administration	$ 5,080.97		$ 5,080.97	-	
FY24 ESTS	$ 205,987.89			205,987.89	12/31/2025
FY24 Local Match	$ 24,250.00			24,250.00	
FY24 Administration	$ 36,512.11			36,512.11	
FY24 NPEA	$ 240,000.00			240,000.00	12/31/2025
FY24 Local Match	$ 27,500.00		26877.45	622.55	
FY24 Administration	$ 15,000.00			15,000.00	
FY24 NPEA Supplies/Equip	$ 10,582.80			10,582.80	
FY24 Soil Health Staffing Grant	$ 272,153.77	275,125.00	$31,111.14	516,167.63	12/31/2027
FY25 ESTS Grant	$ 204,400.00			204,400.00	12/31/2026
FY25 ESTS Administration	$ 38,100.00			38,100.00	
FY25 ESTS Local Match	$ 24,250.00			24,250.00	
	$ 1,301,143.84		**Total**	**1,418,090.36**	

Southwest Prairie Technical Service
Balance Sheet Detail
As of February 28, 2025

Type	Date	Num	Name	Memo	Class	Clr	Split	Amount	Balance
									1,649,623.64
ASSETS									1,417,991.41
Current Assets									1,394,432.78
Checking/Savings									578,439.85
Checking Account									578,034.56
Bill Pmt -Check	02/05/2025	4219	Elan Finanical Servi...			X	Accounts Paya...	-405.29	572,588.66
Bill Pmt -Check	02/06/2025	4220	Cottonwood SWCD	Admin Januar...		X	Accounts Paya...	-5,445.90	569,669.38
Liability Check	02/07/2025	4221	MN PEIP			X	Health Insuran...	-2,919.28	569,551.03
Bill Pmt -Check	02/11/2025	4222	Chandler Co-op			X	Accounts Paya...	-118.35	569,411.25
Bill Pmt -Check	02/11/2025	4223	Gary's Service	Oil change/co...		X	Accounts Paya...	-139.78	561,498.57
Liability Check	02/12/2025		QuickBooks Payroll ...	Created by P...		X	Direct Deposit ...	-7,912.68	561,498.57
Paycheck	02/13/2025	DD1654	Harrison, Jacob L	Direct Deposit	FY20 ESTS	X	-SPLIT-	0.00	561,498.57
Paycheck	02/13/2025	DD1655	Hoogendoorn, Russell	Direct Deposit	FY23 NP...	X	-SPLIT-	0.00	561,498.57
Paycheck	02/13/2025	DD1656	Skoglund, Michael	Direct Deposit	FY23 NP...	X	-SPLIT-	-3,026.14	558,472.43
Liability Check	02/13/2025	auto	EFTPS	41-1811267		X	State Withholdi...	-557.00	557,915.43
Liability Check	02/13/2025	auto	MN Revenue	1947844		X	Federal Withho...	-100.00	557,815.43
Liability Check	02/13/2025	auto	MSRS			X	-SPLIT-	-1,631.51	556,183.92
Liability Check	02/13/2025	auto	PERA			X	HCSP-Def C	-475.00	555,708.92
Liability Check	02/13/2025	auto	MSRS				Life Insurance ...	-19.54	555,689.38
Liability Check	02/13/2025	4221	Sun Life Insurance			X	HCSP-Def C	-30.00	555,659.38
Liability Check	02/13/2025	auto	MSRS			X	-SPLIT-	7,090.90	562,750.28
Deposit	02/13/2025			Deposit			Accounts Paya...	-188.76	562,561.52
Bill Pmt -Check	02/25/2025	4224	Verizon			X	Direct Deposit ...	-7,912.67	554,648.85
Liability Check	02/26/2025		QuickBooks Payroll ...	Created by P...		X	-SPLIT-	0.00	554,648.85
Paycheck	02/27/2025	DD1657	Harrison, Jacob L	Direct Deposit	FY20 ESTS	X	-SPLIT-	0.00	554,648.85
Paycheck	02/27/2025	DD1658	Hoogendoorn, Russell	Direct Deposit	FY23 NP...	X	-SPLIT-	0.00	554,648.85
Paycheck	02/27/2025	DD1659	Skoglund, Michael	Direct Deposit	FY23 NP...	X	-SPLIT-	-3,026.14	551,622.71
Liability Check	02/27/2025	auto	EFTPS	41-1811267		X	State Withholdi...	-557.00	551,065.71
Liability Check	02/27/2025	auto	MN Revenue	1947844		X	Federal Withho...	-100.00	550,965.71
Liability Check	02/27/2025	auto	MSRS			X	-SPLIT-	-1,631.51	549,334.20
Liability Check	02/27/2025	auto	PERA			X	HCSP-Def C	-475.00	548,859.20
Liability Check	02/27/2025	auto	MSRS			X	HCSP-Def C	-30.00	548,829.20
Liability Check	02/27/2025	auto	MSRS				Accounts Paya...	-8,835.46	539,993.74
Bill Pmt -Check	02/28/2025	4225	Green Garden Place...	Contract Posit...		X	Interest on Che...	787.02	540,780.76
Deposit	02/28/2025			Deposit					
Total Checking Account								-37,659.09	540,780.76
Savings Interest Account									0.00
Total Savings Interest Account									0.00
Select Business Savings									0.00
Total Select Business Savings									0.00
Sweep Account									815,992.93
Deposit	02/28/2025			Deposit			Interest on Che...	1,158.80	817,151.73
Total Sweep Account								1,158.80	817,151.73
Total Checking/Savings								-36,500.29	1,357,932.49

Cottonwood SWCD - RCPP Soil Health Grant Policy

This policy applies only to the RCPP Soil Health Grant funds.

Grant numbering system: RCPP – COTT – (project number beginning with 01)

1. **Eligible Practices**
    a. Conservation Cover (327), Cover Crops (340), Critical Area Planting (342), Filter Strip (393), Residue and Tillage Management (No-Till) (329), Riparian Forest Buffer (391), Tree and Shrub Establishment (612), Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380).
2. **Landowner/Occupier & Land Eligibility**
    a. Landowner/occupier & land eligibility must be determined as eligible to receive Farm Bill program payments during two phases:
        i. At time of contract before implementing practices
        ii. At time of certification before any payment(s) is made to the contract holder
    b. Failure for the landowner/occupier to maintain eligibility can result in an ineligible contract and/or ineligible for a cost-share payment(s).
3. **Priority**
        i. A ranking sheet has been developed and will be used to score all applications for funding.
        ii. Minimum score = 35 points to be funded.
4. **Cost-Share**
    a. Flat rate contracts will be used for implementation of Cover Crops (340) and Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till (329).
    b. Percentage based contracts will be used for Conservation Cover (327), Critical Area Planting (342), Filter Strip (393), Riparian Forest Buffer (391), Tree & Shrub Establishment (612), Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380).
    c. Flat rate contracts will be 1, 2, or 3 year contracts dependent upon grant agreement expiration date.
    d. Percentage based contracts must be installed and paid prior to end of the grant agreement expiration date.
    e. The contract holder will be paid after each annual certification on multiyear flat rate contracts.
5. **Payment rates**
    a. Payment rates for flat rate contracts are as follows (not to exceed the RCPP program maximums):
        i. Single Species cover crops = $45/ac/yr
        ii. Multispecies cover crops = $60/ac/yr
        iii. Residue and Tillage Management, no-till = $35/ac/yr
    b. Percentage rate contracts will be 85% not to exceed set program maximum payment rates as determined by the RCPP program.
6. **Practice Standards**
    a. All practices must be consistent with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG) practice standards. Design standards for all practices must include specifications for operation and maintenance for the effective life of the given practice, including an inspection schedule and procedure.
7. **Technical Approval Authority**

a. Technical services will be provided by SWCD staff with appropriate technical approval authority; conservation partners with appropriate technical approval authority (e.g. Natural Resources Conservation Service, Southwest Prairie Technical Service Area); a professional licensed engineer, and/or reputable vendor with applicable expertise and liability coverage.

8. Non-Compliance

a. The SWCD, after learning of potential non-compliance, will:
    i. Review applicable law and rule.
    ii. Review project file contents, contract and operation/maintenance plan.
    iii. Conduct an on-site visit and complete a site inspection form and any other relevant information
        1. Relevant information includes, but is not limited to: pictures, aerial imagery review, elevation points, etc.
    iv. Interview the land occupier for information
    v. If determined that the land occupier is in compliance, the SWCD staff will document this decision and no corrective action is needed.
    vi. If determined that the land occupier is not in compliance, the SWCD staff will present to the SWCD Board their findings and a preliminary corrective action plan.
    vii. If the SWCD Board agrees that a non-compliance condition exists, a corrective action plan will be completed and sent via certified mail to the land occupier. The corrective action plan will make reference as to why the practice is not in compliance; specify what the land occupier must do to correct the situation; and give deadlines for the corrective action to be completed.
    viii. If the SWCD Board does not agree that a non-compliance condition exists, then it will be documented and no corrective action plan is needed.
    ix. The SWCD staff will follow-up to ensure the land occupier completes the corrective action plan in the time allotted
        1. SWCD staff can make the appropriate modifications to the corrective action plan if the land occupier cannot complete the corrective actions in the allotted time due to conditions out of their control, such as weather, site conditions, etc.
    x. Should the land occupier fail to maintain the practice(s) during their effective life according to the operation and maintenance plan, the land occupier is liable to the district for up to 150% of the financial assistance received to install and establish the practice as per MN Rule, part 8400.1700 as determined by the District Board.

Soil Health Practices Grant

Maximum Payment Rates

January 29th, 2025

Practice	Code		Rate	Unit
Alley Cropping	311	$	700.00	Acre
Conservation Cover	327	$	1,000.00	Acre
Contour Buffer Strips	332	$	610.00	Acre
Cover Crops	340	$	60.00	Acre
Critical Area Planting	342	$	700.00	Acre
Field Border	386	$	600.00	Acre
Filter Strip	393	$	700.00	Acre
Pasture and Hay Planting	512	$	800.00	Acre
Forest Stand Improvement	666	$	700.00	Acre
Forest Farming	379	$	2,000.00	Acre
Prescribed Grazing	528	$	80.00	Acre
Residue and Tillage Management (No-Till)	329	$	35.00	Acre
Riparian Forest Buffer	391	$	3,800.00	Acre
Silvopasture	381	$	50.00	Each
Tree and Shrub Establishment	612	$	12.00	Each
Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment	380	$	1.85	Foot
Nutrient Management	590	$	75.00	Acre

BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

COTTONWOOD SWCD
Ranking Form

Batching Frequency: Monthly.

Ranking Criteria	Answer	Points
Does this project address at least one required resource concern? (No = ineligible)	Yes / No	**N/A**
1. Does the applicant identify as a Historically Underserved Farmer/Rancher? (Yes = 1 pts)	1/0	
2. **Is this the first time the applicant has utilized the proposed practice?** (Yes = 10 pts)	10/0	
3. Has the proposed practice been installed/utilized on the proposed CLU field? (No = 10 pts)	10/0	
4. If the landowner has been implementing the proposed practice for more than 2 years, have they received any other local cost-share funds previously? (No = 5 pts)	5/0	
5. **Does the proposed project fall within a Drinking Water Supply Management Area?** (Yes = 10 pts)	10/0	
6. **Does the proposed project fall within a sensitive groundwater area?** (Yes = 5 pt) Example: MDA Fall Nitrate application areas, a calcareous fen on the same field?	5/0	
7. **Is the proposed project located in a high, medium, low priority area within a CWMP?** (High = 20 pts, Medium = 10, Low = 5) High priority subsheds = South Fork Watonwan River, Des Moines Headwaters (see PDF page 57), Cottonwood - Western Uplands & Cottonwood - Central (see PDF page 66); Medium Priority = Upper Watonwan, Des Moines Headwaters (see PDF page 57), Cottonwood - Western Uplands & Cottonwood - Central & Little Cottonwood (see PDF page 66); Low Priority = North Fork Watonwan River, Lime Creek, Des Moines Headwaters (see PDF page 57), Cottonwood – Central (see PDF page 66)	20/10/5	
7. How far away is the proposed practice from surface waters? a) Within 500’ (10 pts) b) 501’ – 1000’ (5 pts) c) 1001’ + (0 pts)	10/5/0	
Total Available Points =	**Total Points**	

Minimum funding score = 35 points

Bolded Items above are required Soil Health Practices Grant criteria.

The weight (Pts) each question has on the ranking process is up to each individual SWCD office.

Upload into eLINK for work plan development.

DRAFT

SOUTHWEST PRAIRIE TECHNICAL SERVICE AREA

210 10th Street, Windom, MN 56101 Phone: 507-832-8287

DATE: **MARCH 21, 2025**

TO: **SOUTHWEST PRAIRIE TECHNICAL SERVICE AREA MEMBERS**

FROM: **KAY GROSS, ADMINSTRATIVE COORDINATOR**

SUBJECT: **COORDINATOR REPORT**

TSA Manager's Meeting
Discussion on RCPP policies throughout the area for different Districts and Watersheds. Also, looking towards hiring a third Engineering Technician, this will be discussed more this summer when workloads can be assessed after the addition of the Cottonwood/Little Cottonwood WBIF.
Discussed the start of charging for engineering services throughout the area and WBIF funded projects, the TSA budget forecast will determine the start date. Districts and Watersheds will be made aware – when specific date is set.

Soil Health/Training Contract Position
Dawn Madison is continuing to work with District staff in gaining Job Approval Authority and also working with the Administration to help report and assist with our quarterly meetings for the Soil Health Staffing Grant.
Dawn is assisting with area trainings, soil health events, and working with the Soil Health Staffing quarterly meetings and reporting.

MAWQCP Technical Assistance
Continued work with local landowners to receive worksheet and ulimately certification through MAWQCP.
Danielle also has JAA for Ecological Services and Non-Structural practices if that service is needed by your office.
Danielle is working with SWCD staff to understand and help local landowners with the MAWQCP additional cost-share available for practices ($5,000 per project).
Grow More Training offered by National Wildlife Federation was held on February 25-26.

State TSA Managers Meeting
Next meeting is set for September 4.

BWSR Soil Health Staffing Grant
The first round reporting has been completed for 2024. With the start of the grant in April 2024 here are our 2024 numbers.

April – September 2024			**October – December 2024**		
Administration	68 hrs - $4,602.53		Administration	32.25 hrs - $2,414.84	
Mentors	12	Participating	Mentors	11	Participating
	115	Landowner Contacts		86	Landowner Contact
	19	Meeting Attended		25	Meetings Attended
	334.75	Hours		222.25	Hours
	$27,121.25			$17,898.75	
	18,582 acres			23,406 acres	

Dawn, Danielle and area staff are working towards holding three Soil Health Sessions featuring Russell Hedrick with stops in Lac Qui Parle, Pipestone and Cottonwood Counties July 15-17, 2025

TSA Manager Meeting
Will work towards having a TSA Manager's meeting in May-June.
Eduction/Outreach Committee Members: Doug Bos, Anita Borg and Shannon Bootsma.

TSA Board Meeting
The next schedule TSA Board meeting will be held in during the month of Monday, March 31, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. Lyon County Government Center, Marshall, MN.

210 10th Street
Windom, MN 56101

Phone: 507-832-8287

COTTONWOOD
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Cottonwood SWCD Technician Report for March 21, 2025.

1) Minnesota Wetlands Conservation Act update.
I have stopped being the WCA LGU for Watonwan County as of January 1, 2025. I am working closely with Becky on WCA concerns in Cottonwood County until my final day on June 30, 2025.

2) GBERBA.
The CRP incentives program has really taken off. Right now, we are waiting to see if funds will be available from the federal government for conservation. Soil health and cover crops continue to be a very important push in conservation. We have submitted an urban tree planting request to the Watonwan Watershed Grant for the city of Mountain Lake.
SWCD staff met with the city engineer for Mountain Lake to discuss a storm water erosion issue. A survey has been scheduled to determine the design estimate for this stormwater project.

3) Tree Program
The Emerald Ash Borer is continuing to be the most impactful issue for trees. In Mountain Lake hundreds of Ashes will be leafless this spring. Windom is next.
Training landowners to use proper pruning methods is a big push to promote healthy trees.
It will be a very busy tree season this spring.

4) DNR ReLeaf grants for Mountain Lake and Windom.
Staff submitted 2024 financial reports to the MN DNR and substantial grant cost share paid out for the 2024 tree removal/ plantings. Urban trees planted in Mountain Lake (90) and Windom (40). In Mountain Lake and Windom, we used a majority of the ReLeaf Grant funding in the first year! We plan to complete the Mountain Lake grant two years early and have been told we can apply again immediately.

David Bucklin, Cottonwood SWCD

210 10th St
Windom, MN 56101

Phone: 507-832-8287

COTTONWOOD
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Date: March 18, 2025

Name: Becky Buchholz (Senior Technician)

Topics: Past Events, Upcoming Events, Farm Bill Assistance, SSTS, AgBMP Loans, WCA

Past Events:

- February 20, 2025 – Area V meeting, virtual
- March 3, 2025 – Area V MACDE Meeting, Slayton
- March 4-5, 2025 – Legislative Days, St. Paul
- March 10, 2025 – Brome Conversion Training, Marshall
- March 20, 2025 – SSTS Talking Tour - Marshall

Upcoming Events:

- March 25, 2025 – Red Rock LTT, virutal
- March 26, 2025 – GBERBA Tech, virtual
- March 31, 2025 – BWSR Spring Training Academy, virtual
- April 7, 2025 – Blue Earth Watershed Meeting, Blue Earth
- April 9-10, 2025 – HR Training, St. Cloud
- April 11, 2025 – GBERBA Exec, virtual
- April 16, 2025 – Red Rock LTT, Windom DNR
- April 17, 2025 – Des Moines Policy, LEC
- April 23, 2025 – GBERBA Tech, virtual
- April 24, 2025 – Basic Cover Crops, Marshall

Farm Bill Assistance:

- Current RIM programs available: RIM Wellhead, RIM Wetland, RIM Grasslands, RIM 1W1P (only for finished 1W1P areas), RIM Riparian & Floodplain
- Submitted documentation to receive Level 3 Conservation Planner to ARC, Dave Voigt and I had a meeting, a few more AgLearn courses to do because requirements changed from when I submitted my request until now. Then we will reevaluate.
- CREP is currently closed until a new CRP sign up is announced. All CRP (Continuous, General, and Grasslands) are also closed.
    - BWSR did finalize an amendment to the current CREP agreement:
        - Deadline extended from 9/30/2026 to 9/30/2029
        - Acreage cap from 60,000 to 75,000
        - Expanded eligible counties (54 to 66)
        - Expanded CP2 practice outside of Wellhead Protection Areas (details coming)
- Assisting landowners with RIM and other programs on their lands.

SSTS:

- Continuing to send out letters as septic disclosure forms come in and as property transfers occur. I have been working with the county attorney to send out follow up letters.

- The Watonwan Watershed has a $5,000 incentive for IPHT and FTPGW (in DWSMA and shoreland only) for SSTS replacements that use other financial assistance (low interest loans, grants, etc). There are a few incentives left.
- The Des Moines Watershed has a $5,000 incentive for IPHT, FTPGW (in DWSMA and shoreland only), and low-income for SSTS replacements that use other financial assistance (low interest loans, grants, etc).
- The county received a $750,000 loan for SSTS loans and is ready for disbursement now. We used up approximately half of the funds in 2024.

AgBMP Loan Program

- Interest in the loan program has increased this year, due to the low interest rate in comparison to traditional lenders.
- As of today, we have limited funds that were added to our loan funds and I will be continuing a waitlist.
- Main uses: septic system replacement, ag waste, conservation tillage, replacement wells

WCA

- I will be working closely with Dave to learn more about administering the WCA program for the County.

COTTONWOOD
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Program Technician Report for March 19, 2025

Past Priorities:

- Environmental Fair Initial Meeting: Marshall, MN – March 11th

Current Priorities:

- **Projects:**
  - Send in cost share folders/projects towards obtaining Cover Crop/Strip-Till&No-Till JAA Certification.
  - Potential cost-share project site visits for landowners in the Des Moines & Cottonwood River Watersheds
  - Cost-share projects for Windbreak/Shelterbelts throughout Cottonwood County.
  - Keep up with Social Media accounts for Cottonwood SWCD (Facebook & Instagram)
- **Trainings:**
  - Grow More Training: Marshall, MN February 25th and 26th
  - Brome Conversion Training: Marshall, MN – March 10th
  - Step 2 towards Pollinator Steward Certification: Complete Habitat and Outreach Events by Aug 2025.
  - Level 1 Conservation Planner: Webinars to complete this Spring.
  - Critical Area Planting JAA Cohorts (ongoing)
  - Continuing **JAA training** for vegetative practices (327, 645). Will work with Dawn and Becky.
  - Training with Dawn (Resource Specialist): training courses vary, including WASCOB and Waterways.
- **Meetings/Events:**
  - Presentations to Windom Schools: Pollinators and Water Quality!
  - Presentation to Mountain Lake School: Plants!
  - Attend Quarterly Tree Commission Meetings for Windom.
  - Environmental Fair monthly meetings.
  - Seeding Cohorts meetings for various vegetative JAA trainings with CPS (including 342 & 327/420/643)
  - Tree Site Visits with landowners throughout Cottonwood County.

Future Priorities:

- TREE SEASON IS SOON UPON US!!
- Stake priority RIM/CREP easement boundaries Spring 2025.
- Get certification for an outreach effort for my Pollinator Steward Certification.

- **Trainings:**
  - Urban Practices/Small Scale Ag Webinars and Trainings
  - Winter Tree ID
- **Meetings/Events:**
  - Russell Hedrick Day (currently planning): July 2025
  - Cover Crop Field School: August 2025
  - Tree Care Workshop: November 2025

Breanna Wagner
507-832-8287 ext. 8866
breanna.wagner@co.cottonwood.mn.us

COTTONWOOD
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Nathan Harder
507-832-8287 ext. 8867
nathan.harder@co.cottonwood.mn.us

Program Technician Report for March 21, 2025

Completed Activities from Previous Month:

- **Trainings/Meetings attended**
  - Area 5 Employee meeting in Slayton
  - Des Moines Tech meeting
  - GBERBA Policy meeting
- **Tree Program**
  - Tree Projects work – 3 site plans
- **Soil Health**
  - Finished all the AgLearn courses for NRCS Conservation Planner Level 1 and emailed Dave Voigt
  - Landowner interview with Kim and Herman for GBERBA Soil Health Grant 43
  - Started planning for Russell Hedrick field day with Dawn, Dale, and Caleb
  - We held the GBERBA SWCD staff meeting to talk about Soil Health grant details.
  - Worked with Ramont Harder Schrock to have him be another soil health mentor for Cottonwood SWCD
  - Worked on updating policy and ranking sheet for RCPP project
- **Other Activities**
  - Wyatt Bloch CC contract details work – field maps
  - Final contacts made for well location work
  - Started setting up MailChimp account for email contacts

Priorities for Month Ahead:

- **Trainings/Meetings planned**
  - BWSR Spring Training
  - MACFO conference
  - Soil health mentor check-in
- **Tree Program**
  - Make final adjustments to orders, get tree barn ready
  - Start getting trees delivered
- **Soil Health**
  - Get stickers for modifying field signs
- **Other Activities**
  - Send in the final well location files to U of M

Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program

South Central MAWQCP Certification Specialist

Serving the Counties of: Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, LeSueur, Martin, McLeod, Nicollet, Renville, Sibley, Waseca, Watonwan

GBERBA Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

CLEAN WATER LAND & LEGACY AMENDMENT

Herman Bartsch
AREA 6 MAWQCP CERTIFICATION SPECIALIST
March 11th, 2025

Workload:

- Working with producers and SWCDs to complete assessments and certifications
- GBERBA Soil Health Implementation Grant – Planning website and shooting videos
- RCPP Training – St. Peter 2/14
- Hwy 14 Soil Health Event – Owatonna 2/18

AREA 6	Applications	Assessments	Certifications
Blue Earth SWCD	**18**	**16**	**10**
Brown SWCD	**20**	**15**	**4**
Faribault SWCD	**44**	**34**	**28**
LeSueur SWCD	**23**	**16**	9
Martin SWCD	**36**	**26**	**19**
McLeod SWCD	**18**	**13**	**7**
Nicollet SWCD	**3**	2	1
Renville SWCD	**34**	**28**	**16**
Sibley SWCD	**5**	**5**	**3**
Waseca SWCD	**20**	**19**	11
Watonwan SWCD	**16**	**13**	**9**
Total	**237**	**188**	**117**

MAWQCP Numbers as of 3-3-25

- 1,590 producers certified
- 1,110,721 acres certified
- 7,689 new practices installed or planned to be installed
- Sediment delivery to surface waters reduced by 57,138tons per year
- Soil loss reduced by 169,860 tons per year
- Phosphorus loss reduced by 73,323 lbs. of P per year
- 144 Soil Health Endorsements
- 107 IPM Endorsements
- 89 Wildlife Endorsements
- 186 Climate Smart Endorsements
- 15 Irrigation Endorsements

Herman Bartsch:
Area 6 Certification Specialist
422 Belgrade Ave, Suite 104
North Mankato, MN 56003

Cell: (507) 380-9134

E-MAIL:
hermanbartsch@outlook.com

Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program

Agriculture and Water Outreach Corpsmember
Conservation Corps of MN and IA
Adriene Matthews

March 1st, 2025

Workload:

- Inputting landowner's data and mapping farms that have been assessed by Herman Bartsch and Danielle Evers into ArcGIS mapping tool.
- Attend farm verification site visits with Danielle and Herman.
- Speak with landowners regarding replacing their tree groves.
- Attend Soil health Meetings with the SWCD technicians.
- Attend cover crops trainings.
- Complete MAWQCP interviews by myself.

Projects:

- Assist Breanna Wagner and Nathan Hader with documenting well locations in ArcGIS Pro.
- Creating outreach opportunities for MAWQCP and landowners.

Upcoming Events:

- Brome Conversion training
- Tree Care Advisor workshop

Adriene Matthews
Agriculture and Water Outreach Corpsmember
210 10th St
Windom MN 56101
Cell:(507)-832-8237 Email: adriene.matthews@co.cottonwood.mn.us

Alex Schultz
Planning and Zoning Technician

210 10th Street
Windom, MN 56101

Phone: 507-832-8287

COTTONWOOD
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Date: March 27, 2025
Name: Alex Schultz

Topics: Past Events, Upcoming Events, Planning and Zoning, and Ag. Inspecting

Past Events:

- **March 13- Planning Commission meeting**
- **March 24- Board of Adjustment meeting**
- **March 25 – 27- MACFO Conference**

Upcoming Events:

- **April 2- Township Meeting/Weed Meeting**
- **April 3- Planning Commission meeting**

Planning and Zoning:

- **Planning Commission Meeting- EAW Review- MPM quarry expansion Decision**
- **Board of Adjustments-**
- **Permits**
  - Setback Permits, 0 Issued
  - CUP, 0 Issued
  - Variances, 0 Issued
  - 911 addresses, 0 Issued

Feedlots

Annual Conference was held in Detroit Lakes. Nathan and Alex were in attendance

Cottonwood County Drainage

Dylan Oeltjenbruns-Drainage Inspector

Date: March 21, 2025

Past Events

- March 18-JD24CB Meeting-Initiate Repair Proceedings

Upcoming Events

- JD18CM Landowner Meeting-Date TBD
- Second FEMA Appeal
- April 15th-Continuation Hearing for first Group of ROB's
- JD24CB Public Hearing-TBD

Summary Report

JD24CB proceedings moving forward. No tiling projects have started yet. Will be doing some televising of multiple systems on top of replacing and repairing this spring.