



To: Members of the Lower St. Croix Watershed Partnership

From: Lower St. Croix Policy Committee

RE: LSC FY23 WBIF Work Plan Revision and Budget Amendment for Agronomy Outreach Specialist

At the Monday, April 22, 2024 meeting of the Lower St. Croix Watershed Partnership, Policy Committee members unanimously approved a recommendation to revise the FY23 Watershed Based Implementation Funds (WBIF) Work Plan and adjust the budget as outlined in this memo. The goal of this revision is to host the Lower St. Croix Agronomy Outreach Specialist as a local staff position instead of as an embedded position with University of Minnesota Extension.

At this time, the LSC FY23 WBIF Work Plan Revision and Budget Amendment is being sent to local governing boards for review. The local governing boards must act on Policy Committee recommendations within 60 days after the day in which the Policy Committee formally adopted such recommendation. The decisions of the various governing boards of the Parties will be deemed approved for purposes of this Agreement when 2/3rds of the governing bodies have adopted formal action on the respective recommendation. The Chisago SWCD would then submit a work plan revision request to the Board of Water and Soil Resources for consideration and approval.

Requested Action: Review and approve the proposed LSC FY23 WBIF Work Plan Revision and Budget Amendment.

Background: LSC Agronomy Outreach Specialist position has been vacant since October 2023. Over the winter, LSC partners worked with University of Minnesota Extension to conduct two consecutive applicant searches to fill the vacant position. After reviewing applications received from University of Minnesota, the LSC WP A1 Subcommittee determined that none of the applicants met the minimum requirements of the job announcement. As such, the LSC WP A1 Subcommittee recommended changes outlined in the following pages.

Proposed LSC FY23 WBIF grant work plan revision.

Activity 5: Agronomy Outreach Specialist

eLINK Activity Category: Project Development

Grant: ~~\$225,000~~ \$125,000

Co-Lead Agency: Washington Conservation District, Jay Riggs (~~partnership with UMN Extension~~),
Chisago Soil and Water Conservation District, Craig Mell

~~**Co-lead Agency:** Chisago SWCD, Craig Mell~~

Priority areas: Agronomy outreach specialist will focus on priority areas described in Structural Ag BMP Implementation and Non-Structural Ag/Urban Implementation

CWMP Reference: Page 61

Activity Description: Agronomy outreach specialist. (A) Shared Services: Work with an agricultural conservationist (~~one individual~~) for basin wide assistance with agronomy, outreach, and technical assistance to agricultural producers including conservation planning and nutrient management plans. Approximately 80% of this position's time will be directly working with agricultural producers in the LSC Watershed to identify economical farming practices with water quality benefits to make them a routine part of farm operations. See Attachment A – Agronomy Outreach Specialist Details & Milestones for more information.

This would allow for ~~1 full time~~ **the** agronomy outreach specialist to work basin-wide. Staff will work basin-wide and may have more than one office space. LSC partners will ensure duties assigned to this staff member will be in alignment with WBIF funding intent and requirements.

Costs billed to this item ~~for the embedded Extension Agent~~ will include the following: Staff salary, supervisory time (~~by University of MN~~), benefits, travel expenses, training expenses, and office supplies. As with all grant activities, LSC partners will ensure program expenses are eligible before billing to the grant/match. All costs will primarily benefit water quality in a priority resource as identified in the LSC CWMP. In addition to direct landowner outreach and technical assistance, as described above, staff time will also include program and work plan coordination: annual partner coordination meetings, updates to partners, interfacing with the shared services educator, coordinated planning efforts, regular basin-scale coordination meetings with LSC partners and other agencies as appropriate.

Subcommittee: A subcommittee composed of LSC partners will meet on an as-needed basis in order to review projects and assist with project planning. Subcommittees may be grouped by implementation category.

Proposed LSC FY23 WBIF grant work plan budget revision.

Adjust the FY23 budget, with the \$100,000 approved to move from the A5 category, shifting \$30,000 to the A2 category, \$35,000 to A4, \$25,000 to A7, and \$10,000 to the A10. (See attached spreadsheet, column F is the proposed grant work plan.

FY23 WBIF GRANT WORK PLAN BUDGET (04/15/2024)

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	WBIF BALANCE (01/01/2024)	WBIF SUPPLEMENTAL GRANT FUNDS (03/27/2024)	WBIF BALANCE WITH SUPPLEMENTAL GRANT FUNDS (04/04/2024)	WBIF GRANT WORK PLAN BUDGET REVISION SC RECOMMENDATION (03/27/2024)	PROPOSED WBIF BALANCE WITH WITH WORK PLAN BUDGET REVISION (04/22/2024)	AMOUNT WBIF's ENCUMBERED (Sub- Agreements)	CURRENT WBIF BALANCE REMAINING	PROPOSED WBIF BALANCE REMAINING
A1 Structural Ag BMP Implementation	\$ 140,000.00	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 260,000.00	\$ -	\$ 260,000.00	\$ 62,410.00	\$ 197,590.00	\$ 197,590.00
A2 Structural Urban BMP Implementation	\$ 118,054.00	\$ -	\$ 118,054.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 148,054.00	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 73,054.00	\$ 103,054.00
A3 Non-Structural Ag/Urban BMP Implementa	\$ 122,025.00	\$ -	\$ 122,025.00	\$ -	\$ 122,025.00	\$ 122,025.00	\$ -	\$ -
A4 Wetland Restoration Implementation	\$ 220,000.00	\$ -	\$ 220,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 255,000.00	\$ 220,000.00	\$ -	\$ 35,000.00
A5 Agronomy Outreach Specialist	\$ 225,000.00	\$ -	\$ 225,000.00	\$ (100,000.00)	\$ 125,000.00	\$ 225,000.00	\$ -	\$ (100,000.00)
A6 Shared Services Educator	\$ 270,500.00	\$ -	\$ 270,500.00	\$ -	\$ 270,500.00	\$ 227,840.00	\$ 42,660.00	\$ 42,660.00
A7 Technical/Engineering	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 47,615.00	\$ 87,615.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 112,615.00	\$ 62,000.00	\$ 25,615.00	\$ 50,615.00
A8 Internal Analyses	\$ 18,000.00	\$ -	\$ 18,000.00	\$ -	\$ 18,000.00	\$ -	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 18,000.00
A9 Targeting Analyses	\$ 45,000.00	\$ -	\$ 45,000.00	\$ -	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 33,000.00	\$ 33,000.00
A10 Administration/Coordination	\$ 80,000.00	\$ -	\$ 80,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 90,000.00	\$ 67,312.50	\$ 12,687.50	\$ 22,687.50
PROJECT BALANCE:	\$ 1,278,579.00	\$ 167,615.00	\$ 1,446,194.00	\$ -	\$ 1,446,194.00	\$ 1,043,587.50	\$ 402,606.50	\$ 1,043,587.50