

MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 33-24

NAME Local GROW Committee PAGE Page 1 of 5
 LOCATION WIWD Office DATE April 8, 2024

PRESENT: B. Fleury Member (Chairperson) Producer / WIWD
 H. Rosing Member (Vice- Chair) Producer
 T. Cook (zoom) Member Producer
 J. Cruise Member Producer / WIWD
 B. Sigfusson Member WIWD
 J. Olson Peonan Point Representative Producer
 I. Zotter Member (Manager /GROW Coordinator) WIWD
 K. Christensen Financial Administrator WIWD
 D. Kaartinen Resource Technician WIWD

REGRETS: G. Metner Member Producer / WIWD
 D. Timmerman Watershed Planner ARD

WRITTEN BY: K. Christensen

ITEM		ACTION BY
1.0	CALL TO ORDER B. Fleury called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.	
2.0	APPROVAL OF AGENDA <u>179-24 J. Cruise – B. Sigfusson</u> BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Local Grow Committee (LGC) approved the agenda as presented.	CARRIED
3.0	APPROVAL OF MINUTES <u>180-24: J. Cruise – H. Rosing</u> BE IT RESOLVED THAT the LGC approved the minutes of the LGC Meeting # 32-24 January 29 th , 2024 as presented.	CARRIED
	Old Business	
4.0	GROW and PWCP Funds and Programs terms Update The GROW Coordinator updated committee members on available funds on hands from GROW 2021–2023, 2022–2024, and 2023–2025. Projects from 2022 and 2023 have been merged. Awarded GROW Funds for Project Establishment over these three terms: \$1,146,762.00 Expended to date: \$705,431.39 Remaining available funds: \$441,330.61 Estimated projected funds for approved applications that were unable to be carried out in 2023-2024, will be being carried into the 2024-2025 fiscal year: \$181,181.00 Additional available funds for distribution for the 2024-25 fiscal year: approximately \$260,149.61 Technician updated committee members on the current PWCP budget. The projected costs of the projects on hand are as follows: Rotational Grazing: \$562,613.86 Cover Crops: \$138,666.97	

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	<p>Nitrogen Management: \$197,884.93 Total Projected cost: \$899,165.76 Funds are fully allocated. Documentation of current funds is on file at the WIWD office.</p>	
5.0	<p>GROW 2024-2026: Proposal</p> <p>Approval notification was received on March 15th, 2024 the 'Building Watershed Resiliency: A Sustainable path' GROW proposal. "... request has been approved to be partially funded for \$777,302.00. given the high overall funding request relative to available funds, it was necessary to focus on the highest priority activities that support watershed management objectives. As a result, the funding request for cover crops (\$445,641) and tame grassland restoration (\$479,423) have been denied. Additionally, the project has received a general reduction of \$178,388 for activities and outputs of your choosing. The funding for Temporary Wetland Incentive Payments (\$63,750) should be maintained in its entirety."</p> <p>All adjusted documents are to be completed and submitted to MHC by April 8th, to ensure the Contribution Agreement can be signed by April 10th, 2024. Due to time restraints, the GROW Coordinator did not have the adjusted documents ready for review by the LGC.</p> <p>There was discussion on the WIWD's current Soil Health program, as there was no funding received for the program for the 2024-25 fiscal year. The WIWD will have to decline all future applications for soil health projects until further notice.</p>	
6.0	<p>GROW, Upland Enhancement: Ineligible Expenses – common practices</p> <p>There was further discussion on the topic. Incentive payment guidelines were also discussed, as there was a consensus on the need to provide incentives to landowners for leaving the land in its natural state rather than converting to annual crop land. There is a large sum of marginal land acres being converted to annual crop land in the Interlake region. Currently, Manitoba Habitat Conservancy (MHC) has a focus on providing annual incentive payments on class I & II wetlands on the annual crop land, however the LGC believes there should be emphasis put on the need to protect and conserve natural areas from being converted.</p> <p>LGC Members were asked to provide the staff with their thoughts in writing, to allow staff to comprise a letter to MHC.</p>	
7.0	<p>Shelterbelt Establishment and Enhancement</p> <p>No update at this time.</p>	
8.0	<p>RALP Applications</p> <p>The following 3 proposals for the Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program were submitted on December 14th:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Agroforestry Establishment in the West Interlake Watershed District 2024</i> for the amount of \$20,000.00 • <i>Exclusion Fencing in the West Interlake Watershed District to Enhance and Restore Riparian Areas – 2024</i> in the amount of \$100,000.00 • <i>Cultivating Environmental Resilience through Perennial Forage Establishment.</i> In the amount of \$100,000.00 <p>Approvals will be received in April 2024.</p>	

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	<p>Staff submitted reports for RALP projects T00071 & T00072.</p> <p>Project T00072: Exclusion Fencing in the West Interlake Watershed District to Enhance and Restore Riparian Areas (\$100,000).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partially completed. Fencing in two of the three locations is complete, materials have been delivered for the third location. Due to time restrictions, work on the low-flow cattle crossings has been delayed until June 15th. <p>Project T00071: Creating Pollinator Habitat in the West Interlake Watershed District (\$2,500).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partially completed. There has been 16 of the 25 acres of pollinator strips established, the remaining 9 acres will be established in the spring of 2024. 	
9.0	<p>GROW Committee members</p> <p>Peonan Point has appointed J. Olson as their representative on the WIWD's LGC. The WIWD Executive board will be reviewing the appointment at their next monthly meeting.</p>	
10.0	<p>Aquanty / Strategic Systems Engineering</p> <p>Members were provided a copy of the Lake Winnipeg Basin Fund (LWBF) proposal submitted by Manitoba Association of Watersheds (MAW) on behalf of 5 watershed districts. The WIWD's project goal identified within the proposal is to <i>strengthen collaborative decision making, with a focus on environmental risk management, via the use of advanced technological tools. The product of this tool will be a baseline analysis to establish the scientific rationale for natural, sustainable practices such as retention storage, perennial & cover crops, ephemeral wetlands, etc for building resilience. In addition, this will allow for scenarios that show the analysis will reveal a trend toward longer drought episodes, which motivates retention storage investment.</i></p>	
11.0	<p>GROW and PWCP Limits and Caps</p> <p>During Executive meeting #52-24 on March 21st, 2024, the Executive board approved the following resolution</p> <p><u>"457-24: J. Cruise-S. Hofer</u> BE IT RESOLVED THAT the board approves establishing a limit of \$30,000.00 per producer per year under the Prairie Wetlands Conservation Program (PWCP)."</p> <p>Technician presented a document titled '(PWCP) Proposed Limitations for FY 2024' that compared the funding rates and limitations for PWCP BMP's from 2023 to the suggested 2024 rates based off of program utilization from previous years.</p> <p><u>181-24: H. Rosing – J. Cruise</u> BE IT RESOLVED THAT the LGC adopts the 2024 rates as presented at meeting #33-24, dated April 8, 2024, and be it further resolved that the LGC recommends to the Executive Board to amend resolution #457-24 accordingly.</p>	CARRIED
12.0	<p>Approval of GROW and PWCP Applications</p> <p>Technician gave an overview on PWCP projects.</p> <p><u>182-24: J. Cruise – B. Sigfusson</u> BE IT RESOLVED THAT the LGC approved the following projects, to be funded through the PWCP Program for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. The Project must adhere to all the PWCP guidelines established by the MAW, as well as the LGC WIWD guidelines. Funding is contingent on the completion of the Final Project Inspection and the availability of funds.</p>	CARRIED

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	<p>➤ BMP: PWCP Cover Crops Ben Kinhead Jamie Keen</p> <p>183-24: I. Zotter – B. Sigfusson BE IT RESOLVED THAT the LGC approved the following projects, to be funded through the GROW Program for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. The Project must adhere to all the GROW guidelines established by the MHC, as well as the LGC WIWD guidelines. Funding is contingent on the completion of the Final Project Inspection and the availability of funds.</p> <p>➤ BMP: Alternative Watering System Rick Miller Darren Cook</p>	CARRIED
	NEW BUSINESS	
13.0	<p>Flooded Landowners Association / Shoal Lake</p> <p>A. Bélanger, Manager of the East Interlake Watershed District (EIWD), reached out to the WIWD to arrange a meeting involving the EIWD, the WIWD, Strategic Systems Engineering, and the Shoal Lake Flooded Landowners Association. The discussion focused on identifying potential solutions for Shoal Lakes’ levels and drainage issues, with the consensus that a study will be necessary. Districts, in collaboration with municipalities, can potentially explore options for securing external funding to support a study.</p> <p>The LGC had a brief discussion on the topic.</p>	
14.0	<p>Crossings</p> <p>There was discussion at the Executive Board level on the importance of the WIWD funding crossings for Riparian projects.</p> <p>Under Riparian Area Management, page 19, in the GROW Guide 2024, eligible practices include: <i>Enhancement of existing riparian areas on working lands that result in measurable incremental benefits. For example, this may include fencing that optimizes grazing impacts, alternative watering systems, improved stream crossings, constructed works to stabilize banks and prevent erosion, and re-establishment of riparian vegetation.</i></p> <p>The LGC discussed the issues, stating that all applications would be reviewed on an individual basis to rate the benefits to the surrounding riparian area as a result of a crossing being established.</p> <p>184-24: J. Cruise – I. Zotter BE IT RESOLVED THAT the LGC approved crossings to remain an eligible practice provided the project meets the guidelines and requirements of the funder, while providing economic benefits to the surrounding riparian area.</p>	CARRIED
15.0	<p>Cover Crop Project: Jason Olafson</p> <p>The LGC discussed and decided that due to limitations of funds, the WIWD will offer an option for producers to terminate their contracts after one year for anyone who signed a new contract in 2023. The LGC discussed the 3-year contract held with J. Olafson, as his agreement was signed during the summer of 2023, J. Olafson was in agreement of terminating the contract.</p>	CARRIED

