

March 12, 2024

Katrina Kessler, Commissioner  
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
520 Lafayette Road  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

RE: Board of Water and Soil Resources Support of the State Minnesota's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Single Entity Proposal for Climate-Smart Food Systems (Award Number EPA-R-OAR-CPRGI-23-07)

Dear Commissioner Kessler,

I write to affirm that we, the Board of Water and Soil Resources, plan to partner with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and other state agencies involved in the proposal, to implement the suite of climate-smart food systems programs in your agency's CPRG single entity implementation grant proposal.

Our agencies have been actively collaborating in an all-of-government approach to climate action through the Climate Change Subcabinet, launched by Executive Order 19-37, and the development and implementation of Minnesota's Climate Action Framework, released in 2022. The Framework establishes a vision for climate action that will make Minnesota carbon-neutral, resilient, and equitable. These three co-equal pillars of Minnesota's Framework guide our collaborative climate work. We have built strong partnerships among our agencies and are well-positioned to support and collaborate with MPCA in the implementation of this CPRG grant proposal.

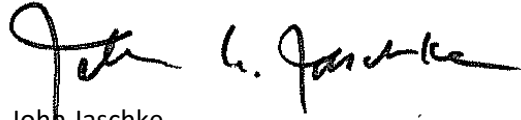
We are excited to have this proposal moving forward as a collaboration across state agencies because we all have a role to play in making Minnesota a national leader in climate-smart approaches to our food system. Our agencies coming together allows us to take a systems approach and capture multiple benefits while achieving significant greenhouse gas emissions reductions and carbon sequestration across all aspects of our food system. At BWSR, we are already working closely with the DNR, The Nature Conservancy, the U.S. Forest Service, local governments, and other partners to identify potentially restorable peatlands via an on-line mapping tool and to acquire conservation easements on peatlands, using funds appropriated by the Legislature in 2023.

BWSR is excited to partner in this climate-smart food systems work because it aligns with our mission to improve and protect Minnesota's water and soil resources. Restored peatlands not only sequester carbon but also reduce downstream flooding and improve water quality, protecting wild rice stands and other culturally important food sources. Our experience managing multiple easement programs and developing wetland mitigation banks, many of which center on peatlands, as well as our long-established working relationships with local governments, watershed districts, and Tribal nations will all help ensure the success of this ambitious restoration effort.

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We are enthusiastic about partnering with the MPCA to advance our shared climate goals and the goals of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's ambitious and vital CPRG program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John H. Jaschke". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being more prominent and the last name "Jaschke" following in a similar style.

John Jaschke  
Executive Director