

GRASSWORKS GRANT UPDATE

From: Jill Hapner, Emerit Executive Director, GrassWorks, Inc.

Dated: February 22, 2023

I am sending an update regarding our efforts to get this fantastic project rolling. The exhaustive paperwork has included requested amendments to our project budget by NFWF (National Fish & Wildlife Foundation) staff and exhaustive federal NEPA and ESA documentation. All required paperwork was quickly completed and submitted by GrassWorks but approval was back-logged by NFWF. We recently received our full-executed award agreement and now have fully-executed agreements with Golden Sands and Glacierland RC&Ds who are currently hiring our two Regenerative Agriculture Specialists.

We are very anxious to begin this fantastic project! As soon as both Regenerative Agriculture Specialists are on-board, I will send a kick-off meeting survey to all our partners.

From: Michele Sadauskas, County Conservationist

Date: February 22, 2023

Thank you Jill for the update.

My committee has asked for an update on this project, so I plan on relaying what was shared here today. I do have a few questions I hope someone could address, so that this too can be passed along to my Committee.

Answers from Jill are in blue

#1. What is Lumberjack RC&D's role in this project? My county is a member of Lumberjack. Are they my point of contact?

While composing the grant application, we discussed hiring 3 Regenerative Agriculture Specialists, but soon realized that two could cover the area if office space was donated. As stated in the Lumberjack letter of support (included in the attachment), they will provide office resources for our Specialists to use when working in their region. Both Specialists will coordinate to share the responsibility of covering the Lumberjack region. We envision the Specialists to first meet with Tracy and County Conservationists, then divide the region between the Specialists for full coverage. So, we expect that you will be contacted by Tracy and by the Specialist assigned to your County. You will likely work directly with the Specialist assigned to your County but of course you can reach out to Tracy, me, Patty and other partners at any time. You will have the opportunity to meet both Specialists during the kick-off meeting.

#2. I noticed that Golden Sands and Glacierland are hiring the Specialists. How then does Lumberjack's area of coverage, get covered? Is there mileage in the grant for the Specialists to work in Oneida, Forest, and Langlade counties? Not just mileage to host grazing events, but mileage for site visits to farms.

Yes, both Glacierland and Golden Sands RC&Ds have a travel budget that will reimburse Specialists for mileage throughout our 31-county project area for workshops, pastures walks and farm visits.

#3. I would like to assure my committee that Oneida County will benefit from this grant project. I realize there is much paperwork to handle with the start of a project, and a large project such as this takes time to hit the ground running. However, are there any words of confidence I can send to my Committee? Potential start dates for staff? Potential hours staff plan to spend in Lumberjack's area of coverage?

We have scheduled a minimum of 6 grazing plans that will be completed in the Lumberjack region during this project. Also, a minimum of 18 all-day workshops and 30 pasture walks will be held throughout the Lake Michigan basin of our 31 target counties (please see map included in the attached). Although there is no required number of workshops and pasture walks for the Lumberjack region, the Specialists will work with Tracy and County Conservationists within the Lumberjack region to determine the number of, and most convenient locations for, pasture walks and workshops based on interest and need voiced by the County Conservation Offices. Please begin making a list of producers in your county who are interested in learning more about regenerative agriculture practices, share that list with Tracy, and you will be a step ahead! The number of hours spent in the Lumberjack region will be determined by the interest and need of producers voiced by the County Conservation Offices. The staff time you pledged toward this project will be used to communicate the needs and interests of the producers and residents of your county, which is most likely a goal included in your Department's Land and Water Plan. Your Committee will certainly be happy to hear that.

The grant project has officially started and I am anxious to introduce our two Specialists to the County Conservationists and ultimately the producers throughout our project area. I am hoping we can schedule the kick off meeting soon! Please reach out to me with any other questions as we proceed.