



October 25, 2021

The Honorable Tim Walz
Governor, State of Minnesota
75 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd
Saint Paul, MN, 55155

via electronic delivery.

Dear Governor Walz,

As chairs of the Environment and Natural Resources Finance committees, we are requesting that your administration explore any possible avenues under the stimulus funding from the American Rescue Plan to reimburse the Board of Water and Soil Resources for their unreimbursed costs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As you know, the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) mission is “to improve and protect Minnesota’s water and soil resources by working in partnership with local organizations and private landowners.” The Board provides core functions such as implementing the state’s soil and water conservation policy, comprehensive local water management, and the Wetland Conservation Act.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the operations of state agencies such as the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources. It is our understanding that the Board of Water and Soil Resources have an estimated \$595,000 in one-time COVID-19 unreimbursed direct costs and delays. These include agency wide one-time operational costs to address COVID protocols such as sanitation, overtime, single person vehicle travel and delays in accomplishing field conservation practices such as construction oversight, surveying, and contracting.

Federal funding for these unreimbursed costs will help facilitate implementation of important Board of Water and Soil Resources programs such as the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Rick Hansen
State Representative

Bill Ingebrigtsen
State Senator