Agenda Item:
4. Approval of a 2017 agreement with Yahara Pride Farms

Background and Analysis:
Beginning in 2013, Yahara WINS had provided funding to the Yahara Pride Farm Group on an annual basis to support implementation of phosphorus reducing practices and related activities. The approved 2017 Yahara WINS budget includes $110,000 in funding for the Yahara Pride Farm Group for this purpose. In a letter dated April 28, 2017, Yahara WINS received a formal 2017 funding request from Yahara Pride Farms in the amount of $110,000. The request specified that a minimum of $90,000 would be used for phosphorus reduction practices, and a maximum of $20,000 would be used for the Resource Managers and the Yahara Pride Certification Program.

In a June 22nd email, Jeff Endres (Yahara Pride Farms Chairman) requested that a revised allocation be considered, allowing a maximum of $25,000 to be used for the Resource Managers, who are responsible for preparing the Phosphorus Report. This report has been a condition of all previous Yahara WINS/Yahara Pride contracts. Jeff’s request was made after reviewing the level of effort needed to prepare the 2016 Phosphorus Report, Pride included more detailed analysis than had been included in previous Phosphorus Reports.

A draft 2017 agreement had been prepared earlier this year and was reviewed by Yahara WINS Counsel. The 2017 agreement increases the number of acres in which phosphorus reduction practices are required to be placed, with the increase being proportional to the increased level of funding provided in 2017. The agreement also moves up the date by which the final Phosphorus Report is due (June 1st, vs. June 30th in previous agreements) and increases by $5,000 the amount of funds held by WINS until receipt of the final report from Pride. Per the email request from Jeff Endres noted above, the draft agreement has been revised to allow a maximum of $25,000 to be used for the Resource Managers. The amount for phosphorus reducing practices has been decreased to a minimum of $85,000 to keep the total contract amount consistent with the amount in the approved 2017 WINS budget.

Options:
1. Approve the 2017 draft agreement as written
2. Approve the 2017 draft agreement subject to modifications that are made by the Executive Committee
3. Delay approval and request that additional information be brought back to the Executive Committee at a future meeting

Recommendation:
Approve the 2017 agreement as written.
2017 Yahara WINS Grant Agreement With The Yahara Pride Farms

This Grant Agreement (the “Agreement”) is made and entered into this ___ day of __________ 2017, by and between the Yahara Watershed Improvement Network (the “Yahara WINS”) and Yahara Pride Farms (the “Yahara Pride”).

1. Recitals

a. Yahara WINS is pursuing an approach to address reductions of phosphorus in the Yahara Watershed through an Adaptive Management project.

b. Yahara Pride is a farmer-led, not-for-profit organization working to improve soil and water quality.

c. Yahara Pride is working with farmers in the Yahara Watershed to put phosphorus lowering practices on farms, is engaged in associated outreach/education efforts, is implementing a farmer certification program, and is advancing pilot projects aimed at practices that reduce nutrient losses from spreading of solid manure.

d. Yahara WINS desires to support these efforts with the ultimate goal of reducing phosphorus losses in the Yahara Watershed.

2. Scope of Work

a. Yahara Pride Farms shall perform the following services:

- Administer a Yahara Pride sponsored cost share assistance program to improve the adoption of cost effective conservation practices such as cover crops, low disturbance manure injection, and reduced tillage that have the potential for reducing phosphorus losses, with the goal of helping farmers adopt these practices into their farming system.

- Expand a windrow composting pilot project to showcase the economic opportunities of composting, selling and/or buying composted manure, to reduce nutrient losses from winter spreading of solid manure.

- Provide outreach to farm producers on the latest technologies and practices in conservation that could be used to reduce phosphorus loads. Outreach activities include field days, watershed conferences and newsletters.

3. Use of Funds

a. A minimum of $85,000 of the funds provided under this agreement will be used for implementing conservation practices such as cover crops, low disturbance manure injection, and reduced tillage that have the potential for reducing phosphorus losses, with the goal of helping farmers adopt these practices into their farming system.
injection, and reduced tillage that have the potential for reducing phosphorus losses, with the goal of helping farmers adopt these practices into their farming system. A minimum of 2,250 acres of farmland using these conservation practices will be funded by Yahara Pride. Yahara Pride agrees that payments to producers using funds from this grant will not be made until after Yahara Pride confirms that SNAP-Plus information used to calculate phosphorus reductions has been received from the producer. Yahara Pride also agrees that producers receiving funds under this agreement will not receive additional funds provided by Yahara WINS through any other agreement for the same practices on the same acres in 2017.

b. A maximum of $25,000 of the funds provided under this agreement will be used for supporting activities, including field data collection and analysis, SNAP-Plus modeling to determine phosphorus loss, report development, farm evaluations conducted by Yahara Pride Resource Managers as part of the Farm Certification Program, producer outreach, and related activities.

c. Yahara Pride agrees to return any unused funds to Yahara WINS at the end of the agreement period or in the event that the Yahara Pride Farms is dissolved or no longer has legal standing.

4. Deliverables
   a. Yahara Pride will provide Yahara WINS with a preliminary report on or before January 31, 2018 on summarizing practices and activities undertaken and funded under this agreement.

   b. Yahara Pride will provide Yahara WINS with a final report by June 1, 2018 that includes:
      - Acres covered.
      - The estimated change in the phosphorus index (PI) and changes in soil loss on a field by field basis using SNAP-Plus, organized by TMDL stream reach. Both annual and rotational changes in PI shall be reported.
      - Unit cost information for phosphorus reduction, expressed as $/pound of P reduction.
      - Information on the number of farms worked with under the certification program and other relevant summary information.
      - A detailed accounting of disbursements made under this agreement, including hours associated with supporting activities.

5. Payment
   a. Yahara WINS agrees to provide a total of $110,000 to the Yahara Pride Farm Conservation Board in consideration of and subject to the above. Payments will be made as follows:
      - $20,000 by July 31, 2017.
• $80,000 upon receipt of the preliminary report with confirmation that minimum acreage requirement has been met.
• $10,000 upon receipt of the final report

6. **Modification of the Agreement**
   a. The terms of this Agreement may be modified if agreed to in writing by Yahara WINS and Yahara Pride.

7. **Complete Agreement**
   a. This agreement constitutes the complete and entire agreement between the parties and supersedes any previous communications, representations, or agreement, whether oral or written, with respect to the subject matter hereof.

8. **Miscellaneous:**
   a. The terms of this Agreement may be modified if agreed to in writing by Yahara WINS and Yahara Pride.

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**For the Yahara Pride Farms:**

_________________________   ______________________
Jeffrey Endres               Date
Chair-Yahara Pride Farms

**For Yahara WINS:**

_________________________   ______________________
Kathleen Lake               Date
Yahara WINS Executive Committee President

_________________________   ______________________
Jeffrey S. Rau               Date
Yahara WINS Executive Committee Treasurer
April 28, 2017

Dave Taylor  
Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District  
Yahara WINs  
1610 Moorland Rd  
Madison, WI 53713

Dear Mr. Taylor:

Yahara Pride Farms (YPF) is a farmer-led, not-for-profit organization working to improve soil and water quality. We help advance new ideas and technology that balance water quality improvement with farm sustainability and profitability.

**YPF is requesting support in the amount of $110,000 to continue our cost share programs for 2017 in which a minimum of $90,000 will be used for P reduction practices and a maximum of $20,000 will be used for Resource Managers and Certification.** This request will allow us to continue to work with the farmers in the Yahara watershed to put phosphorus lowering practices on the land.

Objectives.

1. Provide outreach to our farmers with the latest technologies and practices in conservation through our field days, conferences and in our newsletter.
2. Provide cost-share assistance to improve the adoption of cost-effective conservation practices such as cover crops, low disturbance manure injection and reduced tillage with the goal of helping farmers adopt these practices into their farming system.
3. Expand the windrow composting pilot program to showcase the economic opportunities of composting, selling and/or buying composted manure, to reduce nutrient losses from winter spreading of solid manure while providing organic sources of nutrients.

**Cost-share program**

The use of practices such as cover cropping, low disturbance manure injection, strip tillage, and vertical tillage has additional benefits beyond their capacity for improving runoff control. For example, growing cover crops can increase soils’ nutrient retention capacity, reduce soil erosion, and improve soil structure. This program works with farmers by offering financial assistance to cost-share these effective practices. There has been a substantial increase in the use of these practices by farmers in the target watershed.

In 2015, farmers in the program reduced phosphorus delivery by 8,642 lbs. Since 2012, farmers have documented a total phosphorus delivery reduction of 15,872 lbs. The 2016 report is nearly finished and consistent results are expected.
Outreach Efforts

**Ag Innovation Days** – A multi-day event that provides education and hands-on demonstrations from farmers and field experts regarding innovative technologies and innovative manure management methods. Ag Innovation Days provide education on the environmental and economic benefits from utilizing the various practices and methods.

**Winter manure management workshop** - educational workshop and brainstorming session led by innovative farmers to discuss best manure management methods among the agricultural community.

**Watershed-wide Conservation conference** – provides new information about various conservation efforts being done by field experts throughout the state and region. The conferences bring in around 100 farmers, agribusiness employers, implement dealers and government officials.

**Farm Tours** – connects urban and non-farming rural community with the day-to-day farm operations and management practices.

**Forward Farmer** - newsletter that mails to 300+ farmers and other interested stakeholders - provides information regarding Yahara Pride Farms efforts, events and innovative technologies.

Thank you for your continued support,

Sincerely,

Jeff Endres
YPF Chairman