

Green Lands Blue Waters is still kickin'!

Despite any rumors you may have heard, Green Lands Blue Waters is still kickin'! In April, the week after our [GLBW 2025 CLC Conference](#), funding was terminated for our [Equipping Next Gen Ag Leaders mentorship program](#), just as we were launching the next cohort. We've had to cancel the cohort retreat, but have stayed committed to the vision of the program. Huge heartfelt thanks to lead trainer, [Dr. Akilah Martin](#), and all our mentors and trainers who have carried on serving mentees!

Like many institutions, there has also been shuffling going on at the University of Minnesota that has had an impact on GLBW. (For more, see this September 5 [Star Tribune guest commentary](#), *Funding cuts hit sustainable agriculture partnership with U of M.*)

GLBW pushed through, and we can now announce, with gratitude to these funders and partners, that we've secured two years of funding with a grant from [Builders Initiative](#) and a subaward increase through University of Wisconsin's NIFA-funded [Resilience CAP](#). Areas of work to encourage continuous living cover and diverse perennial ag landscapes include:

- developing early CLC crop outreach materials for technical assistance and commercialization audiences
- engaging local economic development partners around CLC value chains
- collaborating on policy platforms
- facilitating ongoing Risk Management Agency relationships and data collection for Kernza insurance product evaluation
- coordinating a special journal on CLC commercialization and adoption
- articulating the value of transdisciplinary research and advocating for and professionalizing the coordinator-manager role in TD research.

Additionally, GLBW is in Yr2 of a three-year, USDA/MN NRCS-funded project, *Gaining Ground for Temporary Grazing and Virtual Fence in Minnesota*. Led by GLBW's [Midwest Perennial Forage Working Group](#), members and partners are developing and delivering training materials for educators and technical assistance providers on a range of temporary grazing topics, including targeted and contract grazing, cover crop and solar grazing, invasive species control, forage availability, and virtual fencing.

As always, GLBW's work is done in collaboration. If you would like to engage with us on any of these topics or projects, please reach out. Many conversations with partners and allies over the past months have underscored the importance of our collective work, despite funding challenges and uncertainty. Thank you for what you do and the work we do together!

– Erin Meier & Aaron Reser

Green Lands Blue Waters highlights from the North American Agroforestry Conference

Green Lands Blue Waters was thrilled to join agroforestry advocates from across the continent as an active participant and sponsor at the [North American Agroforestry Conference](#), July 23-25 in Columbia, MO. Dr. Akilah Martin and GLBW's Aaron Reser co-hosted **ReRooting Kinship**, a multisensory participatory exhibition in re-rooting kinship, interconnectivity, and oneness experienced through the interdependence of trees, roots, humans and beyond; asking attendees to reflect on "What can we learn from the soil about our fundamental interconnectedness?"

GLBW also hosted two sessions: **Small Ruminants and Silvopasture** with GLBW's Jane Jewett and Margaret Chamas with Practical Farmers of Iowa and **Network Weaving as Resilience** with Kitt Healy from the [Agroforestry Coalition](#), the closing workshop.



GLBW's Equipping Next Gen Ag Leaders mentorship program mentee Juliana Noy, mentor Izula Maximillen and program lead Dr. Akilah Martin at the ReRooting Kinship exhibition.



Network Weaving as Resilience



ReRooting Kinship attendees engage with the Olfactory Agroforestry station led by the Columbia Center for Urban Ag.

Have you checked out the CLC Value Chain Case Studies?



New updates on the Midwest hazelnut industry and Developing Markets for CLC Crops program. Excellent information from so many partners working in supportive policy, market development, and financing CLC value chain development.

- [Financing the Midwest Hazelnut Value Chain](#) looks at how actors within the hybrid hazelnut industry have creatively accessed a variety of funding sources to build a processing line and establish the first hybrid hazelnut-focused consumer packaged goods company.
- [Minnesota Developing Markets for CLC Crops](#) describes the state grant program dedicated to advancing CLC value chains through small business grants, highlighting four examples of grant recipients working on a variety of CLC crops – winter camelina, hybrid hazelnuts, Kernza, and elderberries.

[Marketing Strategies for Perennial Crops](#) examines how two unique marketing programs – Perennial Percent and Audubon Conservation Ranching – communicate the benefits of perennial grains and grass-fed beef to consumers.

A farewell from Sarah Svoboda, GLBW Communications Specialist



After six incredible years as the Communications Specialist with Green Lands Blue Waters (and almost a decade at the U of M), the time has come for me to turn the page and begin a new chapter in my journey.

It's hard to put into words what this community has meant to me. GLBW is more than a network—it's a vision, a movement, and a deeply committed group of people working toward a better sustainable agricultural future.

It's been a privilege to support and share the work of this inspiring and dedicated team. I've learned so much from the passionate farmers, researchers, and partners who make GLBW what it is—and I'm grateful for every connection, friendship, conversation, and collaboration in ways I never could have imagined!

Thank you for the opportunity to be part of this important work. I'll be cheering you on from afar! Please don't hesitate to stay in touch!

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