

**WASHAKIE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT**  
**208 Shiloh Road**  
**WORLAND, WYOMING 82401**

**MINUTES OF MONTHLY BOARD MEETING**

The Washakie County Conservation District (WCCD) held their monthly board meeting on Monday, September 21, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in Ten Sleep at the Senior Citizens Center. Members in attendance were; Dan Rice, Vance Lungren, Charley Orchard, Dave Slover and Cal Jones. Also in attendance was upcoming board member Susan Pennington, and Victoria Dietz; WCCD Director.

Dan called the WCCD board meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

The WCCD board reviewed the August 17, 2015 board meeting minutes. Susan noted that the name "Batt Barovatz" under the attendees in the 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph of the minutes should be "Matt Barovatz". Charley noted that in the DC report, the word "ate" should be "area". Cal moved to accept the board meeting minutes as amended. Charley seconded the motion. Motion carried. Tori stated that she had not printed the minutes from the August 17<sup>th</sup> board meeting, so signatures could be obtained, but would print, and bring to the October WCCD board meeting.

The WCCD board reviewed the August 17, 2015 executive session minutes, which had been previously approved. The minutes were signed by Dan Rice and Dave Slover.

Tori reported the following financial account balances: WCCD main checking account; -\$1,442.34 and Money Market account; \$206,303.53. The CD balance is \$16,405.82. The August bank statements for the main checking and money market accounts were reconciled by Tori Dietz. Tori stated that she fixed the error of the \$14,000.00 deposit showing up from the previous bank reconciliation. Vance moved to accept the financial statement and the reconciliation reports for both accounts. Charley seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The following vouchers were reviewed and approved:

<b>VOUCHER</b>	<b>CK NUMBER</b>	<b>PAYABLE TO</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
7734	7356	Marquis Awards	45.60
7735	7357	Hot Springs CD	45.00
7736	7358	Karen Fenton	20.13
7737	Electronic	Janet Heron	258.12
7738	Electronic	Karen Fenton	1,423.31
7739	Electronic	Victoria Dietz	2,683.72
7740	Electronic	Security Bank	1,127.12

7741	7359	R.T. Communications	88.74
7742	7360	Verizon Wireless	10.08
7743	7361	WACD	74.50
7744	7362	BCBS	1,355.86
7745	7363	Wyo. Retirement	886.67
7746	Electronic	Susan Carrell	12.43
7747	7364	Town of Manderson	25.00
7748	7365	Daily News	315.00
7749	7366	Washakie Co. Clerk	475.00
7750	7367	Cardmember Service	4,781.38
7751	7368	Laird Sanitation	60.00

### **NRCS REPORT**

Laura was not in attendance, but provided the following DC Report via email prior to the meeting as follows:

- Help provided for WCCD
  - Looked at landowners who will be interested in projects for the new NWQI application and helped get signatures of those in support of the project.
  - Falxa –Spring development, tanks, pipelines designs
  - Sage Creek Pipeline – design
  - Sage Creek buried Drain on Hake place – Allen reviewed
  - Galloway Solar Pump System - design
  
- SOIL CONSERVATIONIST POSITION – Worland: applications closed August 18<sup>th</sup>. We conducted interviews on Thursday September 17<sup>th</sup> with 5 applicants. Rigo, Sydney and I chose Emma Green as the applicant most qualified to offer the position to. Someone from HR will offer her the job in the next couple of weeks. Emma is the current Ultima employee for Greybull, Thermopolis and Worland. She will be a great asset to the NRCS team.
  
- EQIP 2015
  - We are still waiting on the Cultural approval for some of the 2015 contracts.
  - Batching Date for the 1<sup>st</sup> round of applications for FY2016 was September 18<sup>th</sup>. We received around 40 applications.
  
- AMA 2015
  - All of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Round of applications for AMA have been approved and are being obligated.
  
- CSP
  - We have 3 renewal CSP's that are being reviewed for approval right now. These will be obligated after the current ones expire.
  
- NWQI

- We received an additional \$23,000 to fund 1 of our pending projects. It has been approved and is waiting on obligation. As soon as it is obligated, they have said they will give us the money to fund the second one.
- Mary Schrader sent out application information for the NWQI FY2016 on 9/11/2015. I forwarded it to Tori.

Dan asked about the additional \$23,000 to fund the pending project under NWQI. Tori stated that she thought it was for a pivot sprinkler.

### **EMPLOYEE REPORTS:**

Karen Fenton's report was previously provided via email. Tori reported that Karen had provided addition information after her report was submitted as follows: Karen stated that Jarrod Glanz would be spraying the test plots this week for the Gooseberry Revegetation project and plans were to seed the plots after October 15<sup>th</sup>. In addition, Karen had been in touch with Worland Recycles and said they would be working on getting a list of what is recycled in Worland to provide to the public, and would also help with the distribution of the WCCD office paper recycling bins. There was further discussion held regarding recycling efforts in Worland and WCCD's role in helping with possible equipment purchases if needed to help with the landfills composting efforts.

### **BOARD MEMBER REPORTS:**

Area III Meeting Report – Dan gave a summary report of the Area III meeting hosted by Hot Springs Conservation District which included the topics of Cottonwood Grass Creek Watershed Improvement District projects, Sage Grouse Predation project, which was voted on to continue support as a Basin-wide effort, Waters of the U.S., 2<sup>nd</sup> mill levy, which the WACD board had voted to not support, and Wyoming Water Development projects where 10 are being done in Area III, out of 29. Dan also reported that Russ Boardman was voted in as the Area III Director, and Keith Grant was voted in as an alternate Area III Director.

Local Government Cooperating Agency/BLM Meeting – Dan reported that he had attended a meeting in Cheyenne with some of the other local government officials, to meet with the Governor's Office and BLM Acting Director, Mary Jo Rugwell, to discuss future considerations of a revisit of the inventory of Lands Wilderness Characteristics' (LWC's), Master Leasing Plans (MLP's), Social-economics, and other concerns associated with the BLM RMP.

-Governor Mead Consistency Review Letter – Tori provided the WCCD board with Governor Mead's Consistency Review letter regarding the BLM's RMP Final EIS. Dan stated that the Governor was very supportive of the local government comments to the BLM and agreed with the need for a revisit of the LWC inventory.

Cheatgrass Conference Report – Charley reported that he attended the Cheatgrass conference on September 17<sup>th</sup>, which was hosted by Converse County Weed & Pest. Charley gave a summary report of the conference and reported there was a new biological soil amendment being used in conjunction with the chemical Plateau, which has been researched and been found to help attack the Cheatgrass seed and roots in the soil, which will last 2 to 5 years, then disappear. He stated that there have been great successes with controlling Cheatgrass, and the solution will become available to landowners in November.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Use Attainability Analysis (UAA) Hearing Report – Tori provided the WCCD board with a copy of the final version of the WCCD's comments to DEQ regarding the UAA model and also provided WACD's draft comments. Tori reported that she attended the DEQ hearing last week and testified in support of DEQ's model, also providing input on WCCD's groundtruth efforts for the model.

Water Quality Monitoring Update – Tori reported that she and Karen have completed the 2015 monitoring for Sage Creek and Slick Creek. Tori provided the WCCD board with charts that Karen had developed showing the *E.coli* geometric mean data in relation to discharge and temperature, and also a chart to compare historical data to the current data. Tori stated that the historical data had not been collected during every month of the recreation season, but instead, during at least one month during the season.

Tori reported that the Transducer that had been installed by Jared Dalebout, BLM Hydrologist, on Slick Creek, had been found to have failed at the end of May after she and Karen had downloaded the data in August and had found that it had not logged any data after the end of May. Tori stated that Jared was going to send the transducer in to the company to be fixed and thought it was still under warranty.

### Washakie Watersheds Steering Committee Report

-Discussions on Big Horn River Future Monitoring – Tori discussed the thoughts of the steering committee regarding the possibilities of future monitoring on the Big Horn River and also the thoughts of Jennifer Zygmunt, DEQ. Tori stated that she would try to see if either the State Engineer's Office, Bureau of Rec. or USGS may have funds to install a staff gauge before the Big Horn Canal inlet or at the Black Mountain Bridge. Tori stated that if WCCD is going to monitor for *E.coli* on the river, there needs to be discharge information to go along with it.

-319 Application Update – Tori reported that one of the applicants for a 319 grant Cropland project, to bury an open ditch, would be buried through multiple landowner's properties. Tori stated that the steering committee proposed some additional language for the 319 application to address a way for them to know if others were affected by an applicant's project. Tori stated that NRCS will no longer complete a design unless all landowners have signed an access acknowledgement sheet and a sheet that says the applicant has reviewed the preliminary design with them. Tori provided the WCCD Board with the sample language for the 319 applications and also the access permission and preliminary design review forms she had developed to help address this issue. The WCCD board suggested the following language to be used for #12 on the 319 application: "If the construction of this project crosses other landowner's properties, have you discussed your project with them and received preliminary access approval?" Dave made a motion to approve the suggested language. Vance seconded the motion. Motion carried. Tori suggested that the same language be utilized for the WCCD Rural cost share program, which is explained under NEW BUSINESS, Consideration and Review of Cost Share Application Update.

-Draft Big Horn River-Nowater Creek Watershed Plan Review – Tori provided the WCCD board with the draft Big Horn River-Nowater Creek Watershed Plan and asked that they review and provide input by October 7<sup>th</sup>. Tori stated that the steering committee is reviewing and providing input as well, and would finalize the draft during their October 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. Tori stated that she would like to have the watershed plan out for public comment by October 23<sup>rd</sup>.

WCCD Natural Resource Land Use Plan Draft – Tori provided the draft WCCD Natural Resource Land Use Plan to the WCCD board and explained that she had not yet updated the background information. Dan requested that the WCCD board consider moving forward with the policy updates in the plan so it might be ready to share during a session at WACD Convention. The WCCD board agreed to meet on October 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00, to begin review and updating the policies in the plan.

Nowood Watershed Improvement District (WID) Election Certification and Joint Board Meeting Report- Tori reported that the Nowood WID board was elected on September 15<sup>th</sup>, which included John Joyce, Terri O'Donnell, Martin Mercer, Casey Johnstone, and Michael Vigil. Tori added that the election was certified by the joint Nowood WID conservation district board members the same night. Tori reported that she had sent in a letter of request to Justin Caudill, Dept. of Agriculture, asking for a training to be developed for WID boards. Tori stated that Justin had replied and said he would develop a training.

-Discussion on Reimbursement Request – Tori reported that she had totaled the expenditures for the Nowood WID formation and board of director elections at \$1,644.56, which included legal ads, postage, hall rental, and filing fee. Tori asked the WCCD board if they wanted her to invoice the Nowood WID board of directors to ask for reimbursement. Charley made a motion to waive the election costs incurred by WCCD for the Nowood WID formation and board of director elections. Cal seconded the motion. Motion carried. Tori stated that she would develop a detailed cost sheet to send in along with a letter stating that WCCD would waive reimbursement costs.

Annual Plan Distribution – Tori distributed the final hard copies of the FY 2016 WCCD Annual Plan to the WCCD board.

Outdoor Classroom Update – Tori reported that Karen Fenton had seeded one of the grass plots again to see if anything would come up. Tori stated that the grass came up, and was regularly watered, but some of it died off again and they didn't know if that was typical or not, but Karen was checking with Joe Scianna, Bridger Plant Materials Center. In addition, Grace Godfrey's students spent time at the Outdoor Classroom weeding the xeric plots and the bigger weeds in the range grass plots. Tori reported that Karen wanted to wait until spring to reseed the range plots. Tori asked the WCCD board's consideration of supporting the FFA at their Slave Auction, by hiring students to help weed and seed the range plots on the spring. The WCCD board agreed to it.

Outdoor Education Specialist Hiring Update - Tori reported that Janet Heron had been hired for the Outdoor Education Specialist position, then had to resign due to her mother's health issues. Tori had received permission from the WCCD board members Dave Slover and Cal Jones who had helped interview the applicants, to select the next choice in line, Jenn Rasmussen, rather than advertising the position again. Tori reported that Jenn had accepted the job and started on September 8<sup>th</sup>. Tori stated that Susan Carrell has begun training Jenn and her first field trip is scheduled for September 23<sup>th</sup> for the sixth grade Day of Monitoring.

Susan Pennington Appointment Update – Tori reported that she has not yet heard when the Board of Ag will meet to appoint Susan Pennington as a new WCCD board member. Tori stated that she had visited

with Doug Miyamoto, Director of Wyoming Dept. of Ag, during the DEQ hearing, and he said he would try to get the meeting scheduled very soon.

Approved 319 Grant Agreements – Tori reported that she had received the signed 319 grant agreements for Sage Creek Land & Cattle and Fairview Farms and asked for Dan’s signature, which he signed.

Approved Rural Cost Share Agreements - Tori reported that she had received the signed Rural cost share project agreements for Sage Creek Land & Cattle, Galloway Ranch, Jesse Kysar, Split Rock Land & Cattle, and Falxa Land Company, and asked for Dan’s signature, which he signed.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Consideration and Review of Cost Share Application Update – The WCCD board reviewed Tori’s proposed changes to the Rural Cost Share application. After some discussion, Charley made a motion for the first paragraph under “Funding Overview” on the Rural Cost Share Program Overview page to read, “The amount of cost share available for each project is a maximum of 50% cost share and a maximum of \$10,000.00. The electrical portion of an irrigation project may be capped at \$5,000.00.” In addition, under “Selection Process and Timeline,” a third paragraph would be added to read, “If the construction of this project crosses other landowner’s properties, applicant will need to have discussed the proposed project and received preliminary access approval.” Vance seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### Consideration and Review of Sample Approval Letter, Access & Permission Forms for Rural Cost Share Program

-Access Form Proposed Language Review - As Tori reported in the OLD BUSINESS, Washakie Watersheds Steering Committee Report, 319 Application Update, current language in the application made it difficult to determine if the project involved multiple landowner’s properties. In addition, where there are multiple landowners, NRCS will no longer provide a final design unless they know that all landowners associated with a project have been made aware and have given preliminary approval for access. Consequently, Tori had developed several forms; one for access signatures and one stating that the applicant had reviewed the proposed project and preliminary NRCS design. Charley made a motion to approve the use of the access signature form as presented by Tori. Vance seconded the motion. Motion carried.

-Sample Approval Letter Language Review – The proposed language for the approval letters sent to applicants was presented to the WCCD board by Tori. Tori suggested that the same sample approval letter will be utilized for the 319 program as well. After some discussion, Charley made a motion to approve the proposed sample letter, with the understanding that not all language will be used for all applications and would be determined on a case by case basis. Vance seconded the motion. Motion carried.

-Proposed Language for Landowner Permission to Install Form Review - The WCCD board reviewed the proposed Landowner Permission to Install form. After some discussion, the WCCD board suggested that the first paragraph of the form should read as follows: “An applicant proposing to implement a structural or vegetative practice funded through a Washakie County Conservation District cost share program, on land they do not own, must obtain written authorization from the landowner(s) prior to

construction.” In addition, under the Project Description section of the form, the WCCD board suggested changes to the paragraph to read, “My signature below indicates the applicant has reviewed with me, the proposed project plan map/design and I understand and concur with the construction/installation.”

The WCCD board discussed what the requirements would be pertaining to water rights and it was suggested that water rights verification be done by a simple letter or statement from the landowners stating that they have direct water rights. A decision on the water rights requirement was not made and Tori was asked to update the Landowner Permission to Install form, then bring it back for discussion during the October WCCD board meeting.

-Consideration of Adoption of Use of NRCS form CPA-5 – The WCCD board tabled discussion of the use of the CPA-5 form and asked that it be brought back up for discussion during the October WCCD board meeting.

M & C Trust Special Discretionary Fund Application Withdrawn – Tori reported that M & C Trust had withdrawn their Special Discretionary Fund application since they had been approved for EQIP funding by NRCS. Tori stated that it was for the amount of \$1582.07 and said it had been put in reserve from last fiscal year. Tori asked the WCCD board if they wanted it put back into the Special Discretionary funds or Rural Cost share funds. The WCCD board agreed to put it back in the Special Discretionary funds budget.

Bark Beetle/Thinning Project Application and Funding Guidelines – Tori provided a copy of the Bark Beetle/Thinning grant to the WCCD board and reported that she had contacted the State Forester in Riverton for assistance in identifying some of the interested landowners who owned private forested lands in Washakie County. She stated that the forester had a few suggested landowners and had explained the Bark Beetle/Thinning project application to her. Tori reported that Karen had developed a post card using some of the application guidelines and had mailed it to Washakie County landowners who had forested lands, to see if there was any interest in the grant program.

#### WACD Convention

-WACD Convention Auction Items – Tori provided a photo of the WACD Live auction item she had purchased for \$345.00, which was an end table with Wyoming Bucking Horse on it, made locally by Dan Cook. Tori stated that she would like to also purchase some artwork from her mother, Victoria Bales, to use for the Wyoming Conservation District Employees Association silent auction table, which would cost less than the remaining budget limit of \$150.00. The WCCD board agreed to have Tori purchase her mom’s artwork for the silent auction.

-WACD Convention Agenda/Registration – Tori provided the WCCD board with the WACD Convention agenda and registration. Tori stated that the early registration deadline is October 28 and she would be sending in registrations for herself, Karen Fenton, Dan Rice, and Vance Lungren. Tori stated that the WACD Convention will be held from November 2nd through November 5<sup>th</sup>.

National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) Application Discussion – Tori reported that she had received the application for the upcoming NWQI, which is due October 23<sup>rd</sup>, and was working on that and the watershed plan at the same time as the same language could be used in both. Tori stated that the new

NWQI stated that separate applications needed to be for each 12 digit HUC, but she had been working with the steering committee on both the Bighorn River –Horse Gulch and the Nowater Creek – Wildcat Gulch as a combined application. Tori reported that she had visited with several of the steering committee members as well as Jennifer Zygmunt, and had decided to go ahead with separating the two applications, but explain the importance of combining the two in the cover letter, which included size, need, desire of steering committee, etc. Tori stated that there is an option for Edge of Field Monitoring and she has contacted an NRCS employee in Oregon, who Jennifer recommended, that is very knowledgeable about that part of the grant, but has not yet heard back. Tori stated that she would like a presentation to be made to producers so they understand what is involved in the Edge of Field Monitoring, but will need to try to facilitate that before October 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Wyoming Sugar Weather Station URL Issue – Tori reported that she is still trying to coordinate with the University of Wyoming on the weather station’s expired internet URL issue and has had Caitlyn Youngquist contact the University from her end to see if the problem can be resolved. Tori provided the WCCD board with an email message Caitlyn had received which indicated that the University is still receiving the data and have suggested two individuals that may help get things moving.

Governor’s Task Force on Forests – Tori reported that she had participated in a teleconference with Bernie Bornong; Bighorn Forest, and Keith Grant; Shoshone Conservation District board member, regarding a “Collaborative Assistance Grant for Engaging Stakeholders to Improve Implementation of Projects”. Bernie had explained that the Governor’s Task Force on Forests had come up with 12 recommendations focused on three major themes of fire and other disturbance, forest management, and economic opportunities and innovation. Bernie stated that the recommendation #8, to review and assess Roadless area and recommend management actions, and to consider specific designations and/or releases where appropriate, was quite pertinent to the Bighorn Forest. Tori reported that the grant was due 5 days after the teleconference was held, and she had told Bernie and Keith that she would not be able to meet the deadline. Tori stated that Keith was going to move forward as Shoshone Conservation District to apply for the grant, to help form a committee to tackle #8.

-Letter of Support for Big Horn Country Coalition – Tori reported that, in regards to the above “Collaborative Assistance Grant” , WCCD had been asked by Terry Wolf, Washakie County Commissioner, to write a letter in support of the Big Horn Mountain Coalition’s grant submittal for recommendations #2 forest management issues, and #6 importance of grazing. Tori presented the WCCD board with a letter of support she had developed and asked for their review and approval. Charley made a motion to approve the support letter for the Big Horn Mountain Coalition’s grant for the Forests Collaborative Assistance Program. Cal seconded the motion. Motion carried.

WACD Upcoming All District Teleconferences- Tori reported that there will be two different all-district teleconferences. On September 28<sup>th</sup>, NRCS will discuss office space lease options with conservation districts who pay for office space. Tori asked the WCCD board for their thoughts on whether or not they would agree to trading administrative work for office rent. The WCCD board agreed that they would not be in favor of a trade of administrative work for paying rent and stated that the WCCD employees are only to be fully employed with the WCCD and would opt to pay rent. Tori stated that she would relay the message when participating in the teleconference. The second teleconference will be held on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, where NRCS leadership will discuss the following topics: Arch Review Status, Migratory Bird Stipulations, and Practice 528 Requirements. Tori reported she would participate in the teleconference.



