

**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, March 21, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in Ten Sleep at the Ten Sleep Senior Citizens Center. WCCD Board members in attendance included; Charley Orchard, Vance Lungren, Susan Pennington, Dan Rice, and Dave Slover. WCCD employees in attendance included; Victoria Dietz, Karen Fenton, and the newly hired Education Specialist, Mandi Magerus. The NRCS District Conservationist Laura Galloway was also in attendance.

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

The WCCD board reviewed the February 15, 2016 board meeting minutes. Dave moved to approve the February 15, 2016 WCCD board meeting minutes. Charley seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Tori reported the following financial account balances: WCCD main checking account; -\$4,872.53 and Money Market account; \$241,155.51. The CD balance is \$16,405.82. The February bank statements for the main checking and money market accounts were reconciled by Tori. Charley moved to accept the financial statement and the reconciliation reports for both accounts. Dave 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>
7875	Electronic	Karen Fenton	1544.72
7876	Electronic	Victoria Dietz	2683.70
7877	Electronic	Security State Bank	1123.02
7878	7468	University of Wyo.	40.00
7879	7469	Verizon Wireless	10.08
7880	7470	RT Communications	88.91
7881	7471	WACD	74.50
7882	7472	BlueCross BlueShield	1355.86
7883	7473	Wyo. Retirement	913.42
7884	7474	Washakie Co. Clerk	100.00
7885	7475	Daily News	377.64
7886	7476	Kennedy Ace	29.99
7887	7477	Voided	0

7888	7478	Voided	0
7889	7479	WC School Dist. #1	200.00
7890	7480	Wyo. Water Assoc.	100.00
7891	7481	Karen Fenton	108.00
7892	7482	Cardmember Service	3009.15
7893	7483	Signs of Sutherland	496.00
7894	7484	Energy Lab	600.00
7895	7485	Split Rock Land/Cattl	10,000.00
7896	7486	Meeteetse CD	2000.00

## NRCS REPORT

Laura Galloway presented the following written DC Report as follows:

NRCS help provided for WCCD: Rome Hill Ranch – Flow Meter Measurements for Well, Westi Ag days, Sage Creek / South Flat – pipeline system, Urban storm water drain project, and Airport Road Irrigation Wastewater Pipeline.

## EQIP 2016

- Our 5 contracts have been written, peer reviewed, and sent to the Area Office and State office for review. One has passed reviews and has been signed by the producer waiting on obligation.
- We still have \$ 44,162 in the Division as Big Horn County had one applicant end up not having water rights. We are ranking the second round of applications and will decide which contract to fund when those are done.

## NWQI

- We received \$334,094 for the lower Nowater HUC under NWQI.
- A batching date of April 15<sup>th</sup> has been chosen for the first round of applications. We have gotten quite a few applications already.
- Tori has done a great job of advertising, notice in the paper and postcards.
- We had a NWQI teleconference on March 11<sup>th</sup>.
- National questions have been set and we need look at our local questions to see if they need updated.
- RSET – Resource Inventory Tool – pilot use with the NWQI contracts. This is a new Tool that everyone was just made aware of. It is a resource inventory tool that NRCS planners will use to evaluate the resource concerns on the client's property and provide them with a document that is easier to understand than the current tools we use.
- We had a webinar on what the tool is on March 17<sup>th</sup>. The tool will not be available to use until March 31<sup>st</sup>. (See the PowerPoint presentation , on a pdf, for more information)
- The RSET tool uses all the information that we already ask and evaluate in our current planning process. There will be nothing new. It is designed to improve communication

and understanding between NRCS and the clients. I am including example of our current evaluation sheets so you can compare. These are the main 2 forms that are used in every contract. In addition to these there are at least 10 more spreadsheets that we fill out to get these answers depending on which resource concern there is. We will discuss this more at the meeting.

#### Local Work Group Meeting

- We held our Division I, LWG meeting on March 16<sup>th</sup> in Greybull.
- There were 21 people present, 3 NRCS state and Area office personnel, 3 NRCS employees from Washakie County, 2 NRCS employees and 2 district representative from Greybull, 2 district representatives from Lovell, 3 NRCS employees from Park County-1 FSA employee, and 5 District representatives from Park County.
- We went over the 2016 subaccount dollars. See attached 2016 Funds
- We discussed and decided on the Division I Resource Concerns. They are:
  - 1: Water Quality
  - 2: Soil Quality
  - 3: Grazing Lands Management
  - 4: Irrigation Water Management
  - 5: Wetlands
  - 6: Excessive Erosion
  - 7: Streambank/Riparian Area Protection
  - 8: Invasive Species
  - 9: Fish and Wildlife Habitat
  - 10: Energy
  - 11: Forest Health
  - 12: Prevention of the Conversion of Ag Lands to non-Ag use
- Several recommendations were made to the State Technical Committee. I did not write them down word for word but will get you the meeting minutes when I receive them.
- We reviewed the payment percentage rate to use in 2017 and decided to leave them the same as 2016.
- We reviewed the Additional Local (Division) questions that we use on our screening tool to screen applications as low priority. It was decided they were good questions and to leave them the same. They are:
  - 1: The project is a pivot sprinkler and planned coverage is less than 90 degrees.
  - 2: On the Water Rights Verification Form, a box other than "The applicant's water rights are adequate for all acres in the proposed project." Is checked and signed by the State Engineers Office representative.

Snow Report – Laura provided the snow report, which is not included in these minutes.

Laura also reported that she has received 24 applications for Lower Nowater National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) projects which include pivot, gated pipe, and drain projects.

NWQI Local Ranking Question Input – Tori provided the WCCD Board with documents Laura had shared, which included the 2015 Ranking Questions and the 2016 National Required Questions. Tori reported that she had also sent the information and request for input to the Washakie Watersheds Steering Committee. Laura asked the WCCD Board for their input on any local questions they would like to have considered or eliminated. After some discussion, the WCCD Board agreed that since the Washakie Watersheds Steering Committee had provided input on the ranking questions for the previous NWQI watershed, their input would be respectfully considered. Tori stated that she would follow up with the steering committee to urge them to provide input.

#### **EMPLOYEE REPORTS:**

Tori provided the WCCD Board with Karen Fenton's monthly report and notes from the Washakie County Burning Regulations Public Meeting and Burning Committee Meeting she had attended, prior to the WCCD Board meeting.

Airport Road Project Update – Tori gave the WCCD Board an update on the wastewater pipeline portion of the Airport Road project and stated that the construction should begin this week. In response to Dan's question regarding her extension request for the Wyoming Department of Ag (WDA) grant, Tori explained that the grant expires on June 30<sup>th</sup> of this year and the irrigation water pipeline portion has the potential to be completed this fall and she needed more time on the grant.

Big Horn Mtn. Country Coalition Public Meeting - Tori reported that she had attended the public meeting and gave a brief summary and stated that the results of the four-county public meetings will be compiled and reported on at the upcoming Bighorn Forest Steering Committee meeting in April.

Annie's Project Scholarship - Tori reported that Tracy Neidig had received a scholarship from WCCD to attend the Annie's Project sessions, and would be attending the May WCCD Board meeting to report on what she had learned.

Winter Training Education Tools Session – Tori reported that she would be sending Mandi Magerus, the new Outdoor Education Specialist, to the Education Tools session being held during the Wyoming Conservation District Employees Association WCDEA Winter Training meeting in Casper on March 31<sup>st</sup>.

#### **BOARD MEMBER REPORTS:**

NRCS March 7 Teleconference Report - Dan reported that he had participated in the March 7<sup>th</sup> NRCS teleconference and gave a brief summary of that teleconference.

Washakie County Crop Burning Regulations Comments – Dan thanked Karen for her involvement with

the Washakie County Crop Burning Regulation input and participation. Dan reported that he read that the regulations had been adopted by the Washakie County Commissioners.

Cottonwood Grass Creek Watershed Improvement District (WID) Quarterly Meeting Report-Vance gave a summary report of the Cottonwood Grass Creek WID quarterly meeting, which had included a financial report, then a presentation by Jason Mead, Wyoming Water Development Commission on the progress of the Whales Reservoir. Dan had attended the meeting via teleconference and had nothing to add.

National Water Quality Initiative March 11 Teleconference Report- Dan gave a summary report of discussions held during the teleconference which included new NRCS Resource Stewardship Evaluation Tool (RSET) and stated that he was not in favor of piloting the RSET in the recently approved Lower Nowater NWQI grant.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

WACD Legislative Updates – Tori provided the WCCD Board with WACD's Legislative Updates #3, #4, & #5. Dan provided the WCCD Board with a brief summary of a few of the bills that had successfully passed during the legislative session. Dan stated that Representative Greear had been a great help in getting the Trespass bill passed through the House and sated that it would be good to thank him for his efforts.

Natural Resource Land Use Plan Policy Updates: Waste Management & Internal District Operations - The WCCD Board agreed to table this agenda item until the April WCCD Board meeting.

Big Horn Forest Service Steering Committee Agenda – Tori provided the WCCD Board with the Big Horn Forest Service Steering Committee meeting agenda, scheduled for April 28<sup>th</sup> in Sheridan. Dan stated that he would plan to attend.

### **NRCS - WCCD Signed Cooperative Agreement**

- Attachment A Review & Consideration – Tori reported that Laura had been told by Grant Stumbough, NRCS, that Attachment A of the NRCS/WCCD Cooperative Agreement would need to list agreed to items outside of the agreement, to justify rent trade for the second WCCD person space. Tori provided the WCCD Board with an updated Attachment A for their review and consideration. After some discussion, Charley made a motion to approve Attachment A of the WCCD/NRCS Cooperative Agreement as presented. Dave seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

New Outdoor Education Specialist - Tori introduced the new Outdoor Education Specialist, Mandi Magerus, to the WCCD Board. She stated that Mandi has already begun working on the poster contest and scheduling with teachers. Dan suggested that there may be an opportunity for Mandi to accompany Nikki Erickson's classes to Teton Science School. Tori stated that she would check into that possibility. The WCCD Board welcomed Mandi.

New Outdoor Maintenance Person - Dusty Vale – Tori reported that she has hired a new Outdoor Maintenance person, Dusty Vale, who will be maintaining the WCCD's Outdoor Classroom and the

Fairgrounds windbreak. Tori stated that Dusty has a full time job and will be working on an as needed schedule for WCCD. Tori reported that the fairgrounds windbreak has deteriorated over the past several years as it is not being maintained very well by the county. Tori stated that since the WCCD's name is associated with the windbreak, she intends on making the area look good again with consistent watering, pruning, and will need to re-establish some of the failed tree plantings. Tori added that she will have Dusty, once he has cleaned the fairgrounds area up, apply weed barrier and gravel between the tree rows to eliminate the need for mowing.

Consideration of Sage Grouse Predator Project Assistance – Tori reported that Steffen Cornell, Meeteetse Conservation District, has asked for Karen Fenton's assistance for the Sage Grouse Predator project in the Bud Kimball area. Tori provided the WCCD Board with an outline of duties associated with project assistance, which were provided to her by Steffen. and Karen gave the WCCD Board an overview of the duties and her understanding of her time commitments for the project. The WCCD Board agreed to support the project and recommended that Meeteetse Conservation District work with Karen regarding part-time employment. Karen stated that she agreed that employment with both conservation districts made sense and understood that WCCD's priorities took president when it comes to water quality monitoring and other projects she is involved with. Tori stated that she would let Steffen know of the WCCD Boards thoughts and support.

Ranch Sustainability Conference/Ideas for Future Range Monitoring Workshop – Karen reported that she had attended the Ranch Sustainability Conference in Sheridan and gave the WCCD board an overview of what she had learned at the conference. Some of the topics included Soil Health, Carbon Sequestration, and Remote Sensing. Karen asked the WCCD Board of their thoughts for topics for a future range workshop, based upon some of the topics she had summarized, and also based upon what they see as needed by local ranchers. Charley stated that he knew of a gal from New Zealand who would be in the area in May or June, who was a great speaker and expert on soil health. Other topics the WCCD Board suggested were; streamlining the permitting process, overall productivity, and profitability. Karen also discussed some her other thoughts that may be of interest, which included the Haney Soil Test and Nutrient Fecal Analysis which could show quality of forage tied to livestock productivity.

Forage Day in Sheridan June 14-FYI – Tori reminded that WCCD Board of the Forage Day to be held in Sheridan on June 14<sup>th</sup>.

Cost Share Program - Public Benefit Documentation Importance-Special District Task Force – Tori reported that the legislature recently passed a bill that would form a task force to look into Special Districts operations and WACD wants to ensure that conservation districts are conducting business properly. Tori shared information from Bobbie Frank, that conservation districts with cost share programs should be documenting that public benefit is being considered when approving cost share on projects. Tori stated that she will be giving a presentation during the upcoming WCDEA Winter Training on WCCD's cost share programs and process, and has provided information to the other districts who will be presenting their cost share programs to be sure to include public benefit questions and documentation. Tori stated that Bobbie felt that WCCD's application and ranking sheet questions were sufficient in asking the applicant about public benefit, but would suggest that funding decisions be documented in the minutes as well.

Tori reported that Bobbie also discussed the conservation district budgeting of reserve funds and the need for a reserve fund policy. Tori stated that she would find out what a policy of that nature would look like and what language would be necessary.

Budget Updates/Transfer Approval – Tori provided the WCCD Board with an amended budget which zeroed out the \$2700.00 previously budgeted for Office Rent, and distributed the \$2700.00 amongst several other budget accounts; expenditures that had been approved during the February 15, 2016 WCCD Board meeting. Budget balance changes were as follows:

- Added a new budget line item called Inland Marine at \$278.00
- Increased Content Insurance to \$334.00
- Increased Bonds to \$1433.00
- Increased On-the-Ground Special Projects to \$6455.00.

Tori stated that a budget hearing was not required since there was no increase or decrease in the overall budget. After review by the WCCD Board, Vance made a motion to approve the amended budget, which was an internal transfer of funds. Dave seconded the motion. Motion carried.

-Budget for Science Fair – Tori reported that there were no students enrolled in the Science Fair in Basin this year, so no contributed was made.

-Anticipated 25% mill levy reduction for FY 2017 – Tori reported that Mary Grace Strauch, Washakie County Clerk, has recommended that an anticipated mill levy reduction of 25% be considered when working on the WCCD's FY 2017 budget.

Wyoming Forestry BMP Workshop - Tori reminded the WCCD Board of the upcoming Wyoming Forestry BMP Workshop on April 22<sup>nd</sup> in Worland.

BLM Meeting - Tori reminded the WCCD Board of the upcoming BLM meeting on March 23<sup>rd</sup> and provided the them with the documents needed for the meeting. Dan stated that he planned on attending the meeting.

Sage Grouse Webinar - Tori reminded the WCCD Board of the upcoming Sage Grouse webinar to be held at the WCCD office at 10:00 a.m. on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. Dave stated that he would plan to attend.

Sage Creek Land & Cattle -

- Hake Pivot Supply Line 319 Project - Revised Agreement & Application Approval-Signatures – Tori presented the updated agreement and application for the Hake Pivot Supply Line and explained that the project had been approved previously, but the cost estimate had been updated and a new application received to update the project changes. Dan signed the agreement and the WCCD Board signed the application.

-Connie Clark Pivot Pipeline - Consideration to Extend to October 1, 2016 – Tori reported that Steve Snyder has asked for an extension of time for the Connie Clark Pivot Pipeline project due to the extra time it had taken to start construction on the Hake Pivot Supply Line project. Dave made a motion to extend the Connie Clark Pivot Pipeline, as a one-time extension, to October 1, 2016. Charley seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Larry Warner/Damon Weber Rural Cost Share Project Extension Consideration - Tori reported that Damon Weber, lessee for Larry Warner, was just about completed with this project, but needed another month to ensure his agreement didn't expire before he was completed. Vance made a motion to approve Larry Warner's project extension to April 28, 2016. Charley seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Gene Schreibeis-Extension Consideration - Tori reported that Gene Schreibeis is waiting on his neighbor to complete an irrigation line, of which he will be hooking on to for his project. Tori stated that she talked to Gene's neighbor and was assured that the pipeline would be completed in time for Gene to irrigate, but Tori suggested that Gene be given until June 30<sup>th</sup> to complete his project. Charley made a motion to approve an extension for Gene Schreibeis to June 30, 2016. Vance seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Split Rock Land & Cattle- NRCS Certification Report – Tori provide the WCCD Board with the NRCS Trip Report for Split Rock Land & Cattle's project, which has been completed.

Mike Gerber Septic System Project Update – Tori reported that Mike Gerber's septic project had been previously approved for funding by the WCCD Board. Tori stated that Mike had submitted a receipt, which was for the replacement of the pipe that ran between his house and his leachfield, which had been found to be plugged and corroded. Tori asked the WCCD Board if they would still approve cost share funding if only a portion of the system had been replaced. After some discussion, it was determined by the WCCD Board that the project still qualified for cost share funds as it met a water quality public benefit.

#### National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)

-NRCS Resource Stewardship Evaluation Tool (RSET) – Laura provided the WCCD Board with information on the NRCS RSET and explained how the NRCS uses the current software tools previous to when contracts are awarded to applicants. Laura explained that currently there are several Tools utilized and her understanding is that the RSET will allow for the compilation and analysis of the information gathered and help the applicant better understand the condition of their property, any resource concerns there may be, and improvements that can be made. Laura said that her understanding was that the RSET will also produce a document that producers can understand.

-Decision to Pilot NRCS Resource Stewardship Evaluation Tool - The WCCD Board discussed at length, the NWQI regarding the piloting of the NRCS RSET for the Lower Nowater Watershed. Dan stated that WCCD was not aware of the use of the RSET at the time application was made and should not have been brought in after the fact. In addition, Dan stated that the WCCD Board, Washakie Watersheds Steering Committee, and producers had not been given time to consider or understand the use of the RSET, and had concerns that the Tool could be used to set national funding thresholds. Dave was concerned that if they did use RSET to set funding thresholds, would those who didn't meet the thresholds not be funded and have a higher need for projects than those who met the thresholds. Tori stated after viewing the power point presentation about RSET, she was concerned that a threshold standard for sustainability of Ag operations would be set where corporations like Campbell Soup Company would only buy products from Ag producers who met those standards. The WCCD Board asked Laura if the decision to pilot RSET was tied to the funding for NWQI and by not participating in the Pilot use, would it jeopardize the NWQI funds. Laura stated that Mary Sessions told her that if no



one piloted the Tool, she would have to talk to the NRCS National office to see if funding was in jeopardy, but she would follow up with Mary in that event. As a result of WCCD Board discussions, Charley made a motion to do what we said we would do in the NWQI application and to opt out of the pilot project at this time. Susan seconded the motion. Motion carried. It was noted that WCCD Board members; Charley, Susan, Vance Lungren, and Dave Slover voted for the motion. Dan Rice voted against the motion.

Tori stated that she would send the WCCD Board's motion language to Laura in an email. Dan asked Tori to copy the email to Bobbie Frank and Cathy Rosenthal, WACD Watershed Coordinator.

-Decision to Monitor Nowater Creek – Dan reported that he had learned during the NWQI teleconference that districts were no longer required to conduct water quality monitoring. Dan made a recommendation to the WCCD Board that water quality monitoring be done on Nowater Creek, as the monitoring requirement had been understood and included in the Lower Nowater NWQI application. The rest of the WCCD Board agreed to move forward with water quality monitoring of Nowater Creek as had been previously approved.

Wyoming Ag in the Classroom Stewardship Project -FYI – This item was not discussed.

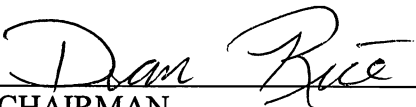
#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

NRCS Newsletter 02152016; Federal Register-Endangered Species; Excess Horse Campaign Video; NACD Letter to Ag Committee; Federal Register-Resource Management Planning; BHMCC Dispersed Camping Public Meeting; Cottonwood Grass Creek Storage Level II, Phase II Study; Washakie County Draft Burn Regulations; March 2 BHB Dispatch; Sage Grouse Implementation Meeting March 10; Governors Letter Regarding Budget; Governor News Release on Delisting Grizzly; Sage Grouse Lawsuit News Release; BLM Webinar & Meeting Notice; Corner Post Newsletter; Wyoming SG Lawsuit; Federal Register-Grizzly Bear; Barrasso Welcomes Sims to Testify; WDA Comment on Forest Thinning.

Susan moved to adjourn. Dave seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Date: March 28, 2016

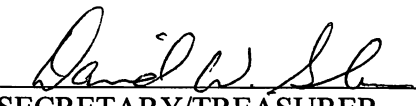
Respectfully submitted by: Victoria Dietz, District Director



CHAIRMAN

DATE

4-18-16



SECRETARY/TREASURER

DATE

4/18/16