

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Public Meeting Minutes
April 13, 2010**

I. Time and Place of Meeting.

A regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the Whatcom Conservation District (WCD) was held at the Ag Service Center, 6975 Hannegan Rd, Lynden, Washington on April 13, 2010, at 7:00 p.m.

II. Attendance and Quorum.

The following Supervisors, being a quorum of the Board, were present:

Dick Yoder	Ed Stone
Larry Davis	Terry Lenssen

Also in attendance were:

George Boggs, District Manager	Alex Hall, NRCS staff
Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant	

III. Meeting Called to Order.

Dick Yoder, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

IV. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting.

Ed Stone moved that the minutes of the March 10, 2010 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

V. Financial Report.

The financial report was mailed to the Board with their draft minutes from the March meeting.

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant, asked if there were any questions regarding the Financial Report. There were no questions.

Larry Davis moved to approve the Financial Report. Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed. Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Treasurer's Report was approved.

Accounts Payable –

A copy of District invoices and incurred expenses, as listed in the Accounts Payable Report, were reviewed and approved. The Board further authorizes the payment of District expenses incurred subject to their review and approval at the next Board meeting.

The following voucher/warrants are approved for payment:

March 2010 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>17596</u>	through	<u>17617</u>	and totaling	<u>32,253.14</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>17618</u>	through	<u>17632</u>	and totaling	<u>29,558.25</u>
April 2010					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>17633</u>	through	<u>17650</u>	and totaling	<u>9,740.24</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>17651</u>	through	<u>17664</u>	and totaling	<u>28,062.46</u>

Moved by Larry Davis. Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Petty Cash Policy –

Dawn reviewed that the Board had historically established a petty cash system and Board adopted a policy for incidental expenditures in 2008, which referenced petty cash. During the recent Internal Audit a specific petty cash policy was requested as per the recommendation of the WA Conservation Commission internal audit paperwork. A draft Petty Cash policy was reviewed and approved.

Larry Davis moved to approve and adopt Resolution 10-2 Petty Cash Policy. Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VI. Action Items.

A. Approval of Contracts.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Cooperative Agreements –

George explained that under this project there are two proposed sub-awardees, Whatcom County and the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA). To facilitate getting all of the contracts in place for a July 1, 2010 start date, George requested authorization to develop an Inter-local Agreement with Whatcom County and development of Cooperative Agreements with EPA to implement the Application Risk Management and Birch Bay Pilot Projects. There was discussion about firming up the match provided through the Inter-local Agreement with Whatcom County prior to entering into the Cooperative Agreement with EPA for the Birch Bay project.

Terry Lenssen moved to authorize George and the District to negotiate an Inter-local Agreement with Whatcom County and Cooperative Agreements with EPA for the Birch Bay and Application Risk Management (ARM) projects. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Terry Lenssen moved to authorize Dick Yoder, Chair, to sign the Inter-local Agreement with Whatcom County and Cooperative Agreements with EPA for the Birch Bay and Application Risk Management projects on behalf of the Whatcom Conservation District. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Puget Sound Partnership Block Grant –

The District was awarded a \$5,000 block grant from the Puget Sound Partnership for small farm management magazine articles and Best Management Practices (BMP) workshop activities. A copy of the basic outline was distributed to the Board. The grant deadline to complete this project is June 30, 2010. Therefore, we are requesting authorization for the Chair to sign the contract when completed to begin work on the project.

Larry Davis moved to authorize Dick Yoder, Chair, to sign the Puget Sound Partnership block grant contract for \$5,000. Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) Crop Mapping Project –

WSDA has requested assistance from the WA Conservation Commission to update the Department of Agriculture's Crop Location Map (Agricultural Land Use Map). The WA Conservation Commission is granting \$1,500 to the District to provide this mapping assistance to WSDA. Agricultural land use mapping provides geospatial crop system information. It is intended to be used by WSDA to provide data on crop locations for risk analysis.

Larry Davis moved to approve the Crop Location Map contract for \$1,500 with the WA Conservation Commission. Ed Stone seconded the motion. The motion passed.

B. Approval of Conservation Plans.

Livestock Nutrient Management Plan (LNMP) Approval –

There was one Livestock Nutrient Management Plan submitted for Board approval.

Larry Davis moved to approve the Livestock Nutrient Management Plan for Western Waves LLC (Hilda Mitchell, Kevin Dougherty and William Wavrin). Ed Stone seconded the motion. The motion passed.

There was one Livestock Nutrient Management Plan written and submitted that staff could not answer yes to all questions under the checklist for Board approval. WS Department of Ag inspected the farm and referred them to the Conservation District for a plan update. There is some question regarding the farm's manure lagoon. The Board could not approve the plan at this time. Staff desires the producer to get a copy of his plan and be advised on the fixes that he needs to make to have his plan approved and certified.

Ed Stone moved to decline approval of the Livestock Nutrient Management Plan for Feddema and Sons Dairy (Arnold & Ted). Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Moderate Impact Farm Plan Approval –

There was one small farm plan submitted for Board approval. Chuck Timblin wrote a moderate impact farm plan for a small fruit grower on Bertrand Creek under the County's Critical Areas Ordinance.

Ed Stone moved to approve the Moderate Impact Farm Plan for Ron Nymeyer. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

C. Medical Insurance.

Employee Health Insurance –

The current medical plan expires April 30, 2010. Staff had a meeting to review our options for medical and dental coverage. Staff agreed to go with the Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) and enroll in Group Health Classic. This will save approximately \$5,000 on medical premiums for the year. At their March 10, 2010 meeting the Board authorized the District to join the Public Employees Benefits Board through the Washington Health Care Authority.

The enrollment papers to join the PEBB require an Inter-local Agreement with Washington Health Care Authority (HCA), the administrator for the Public Employees Benefits Board, a Memorandum of Understanding with HCA and a Government Entity Attestation along with a start up fee of \$110.

Larry Davis moved to authorize Dick Yoder to sign an Inter-local Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding with Washington Health Care Authority, sign the Government Attestation and pay the \$110 start-up administration fee. Terry Lensen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

D. Annual Plan of Work.

The draft Annual Plan of Work for July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011 was reviewed by the Board. There was some discussion of the plan.

Terry Lensen moved to approve and adopt the FY 2011 Annual Plan of Work. Ed Stone seconded the motion. The motion passed.

E. Long Range Plan of Work.

The draft Long Range Plan of Work for 2010-2015 has been review modified and vetted with various groups and agencies. There was some discussion of the plan.

Ed Stone moved to approve and adopt the 2010-2015 Long Range Plan of Work. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VII. Other Business.

A. Alex Hall, Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS).

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) –

Joy Hawley, NRCS Soil Conservationist, and Alex have completed contracting with 8 producers for EQIP. He gave a breakdown of the different types of producers to receive contracts this year. There are more applications than funds received. If more funds become available, there may be more contracts in Whatcom County. The contracting went smoothly.

EQIP Organic –

There are one dozen applications for the organic EQIP that they are working on now. The threshold for EQIP is \$1,000 per year in farm income to qualify for the program. Most producers that have applied are growing fresh farm-to-market products. Alex anticipates quite a bit of time to get the contracts done.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) –

NRCS is getting calls on the CSP again. Alex is not sure when the next sign-up for this program will be. He anticipates that there will be a few producers interested.

Senate Aide Tour –

NRCS hosted a congressional tour of Senate Aides that work on the federal Farm Bill. Alex arranged the Whatcom County stops. The Whatcom County tour included two large commercial farms and one organic dairy. The farms showed practices that were installed and the long-term relationships between Whatcom County dairies and NRCS. Alex showed the congressional aides a bedding recovery system. The organic producer was working with NRCS from the beginning of his going organic. There was not much feedback from the aides. The tour did reflect well on the NRCS and Conservation District partnership in Whatcom County.

B. Supervisors Report.

Terry Lenssen –

Terry and Larry did the internal audit. All went smoothly, i.e. meeting audit guidelines/tests.

Larry Davis –

Larry reminded the Board that the Local Work Group meeting was scheduled for Monday, April 19 in Coupeville.

C. George Boggs, Executive Director.

Local Work Group –

George is working on draft ranking information for the Local Work Group.

EPA Birch Bay Project –

There was not much to fix on the EPA grant. Dawn worked on the edits and it was sent off last week.

Congressional Tour –

George attended both days of the Congressional tour hosted by NRCS. He discussed the river corridor management issues with them. The only federal program that applies to this type of activities is Public Law 566 (PL566). The County would need help from the Washington congressional delegation to initiate that program. There is also a 250,000 acre limit to PL566 projects. This would mean that the Nooksack River would have to be broken into sections for any potential projects.

The group went to a berry farm in Skagit County. They met with the Lummi Nation and discussed the large, woody debris build-up in the mouth of the Nooksack River. They visited a forest site in Clallam County.

Nooksack River Corridor Group –

George is helping to coordinate a tour of the Nooksack River Corridor for Whatcom County Council members, Flood Control Zone District and staff. It is scheduled for April 21, 2010. George gave a run down of the sites that the tour will visit, including the Marietta log jam.

George shared a flow projection chart for the Elwa River due to climate change impacts. He stated that the Elwa is similar to the Nooksack River in morphology and flow. Increased flows as projected due to climate change would be a problem in the Nooksack River. He gave the Board anecdotal accounts showing that dairy farmers must delay planting their fields due to wetness. Each year the planting date is getting later.

Conservation Program on Agricultural Lands (CPAL) –

The Whatcom County Ag Advisory Committee has a sub-committee that is looking at the CPAL and small farms. It has been determined that due to current laws the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) and CPAL can not be changed. However a volunteer program can be developed to address water quality issues on a watershed basis. The group agrees that everyone wants clean water, but they don't want anonymous complaints filed and they don't like Whatcom County coming onto their property unannounced.

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) –

George attended a web meeting regarding the Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of Ecology, WA Conservation Commission and Conservation Districts. The objective is to have an MOA with clearly defined roles for the agencies with regard to water quality issues.

Swift Creek –

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sent a letter to NRCS asking for help with surface water withdrawals on Swift Creek. The creek tests at ten times the national standard asbestos levels. EPA is concerned about surface withdrawals spreading the asbestos around.

Application Risk Management (ARM) System Presentation –

Nichole Embertson, WCD staff, will be making a presentation on the Application Risk Management system on April 30, 2010 at the Department of Ecology (WDOE) office in Bellingham. The presentation will explain the EPA grant proposal. The presentation will be broadcast to WDOE offices in Lacey and Bellevue.

Society of Wetland Scientists Conference –

George will be participating in a panel presentation at the Society of Wetland Scientists conference on April 28. The title of the session is "Feeding Mother Nature a New Role for American Agriculture." He will be on a panel with Henry Bierlink, Whatcom Farm Friends & Raspberry Commission Executive Director, a bulb grower and some other agency representatives. Sonya Schaller and Chuck Timblin are going to give a full-day workshop in connection with the conference on April 30.

Budget –

George reported that the state budget was adopted by the Senate, so we should be able to determine what impacts that will have on funding for the WA Conservation Commission and Conservation Districts' grant funds.

We are on pace to use up our entire WA Conservation Commission grant funds for Fiscal Year 2010. George reported that the Conservation District hired Emily Hirsch as our plant sale intern. He would like to retain her as a temporary employee to assist with CREP spring maintenance inspections and for other activities as needed to complete the grant deliverables. There are some

funds available to offer part-time employment. The Board agreed that the District should utilize the intern as funds permit.

May Meeting Date Change –

George will be out of the office for three weeks in May. The May Board meeting was rescheduled to May 5, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

Cultural Resources Assessments –

George explained that it was determined after twelve years or so that the Farm Service Agency is supposed to do a Cultural Resources Inventory with all CREP plans. An archeologist can answer if there is a cultural resource on the site, check the appropriate box and move on to the next stage of the project. Wayne Chaudiere is being trained as our staff person on the necessary process in case of a cultural resource discovery on a project. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was sent out to archeologists around the state. The RFP closure date is April 15, 2010.

Ed Stone moved to authorize the District to enter into a professional services contract with the lowest qualified bidder archeologist to do the Cultural Resource Inventory and pass the determination on to the Farm Service Agency for all CREP and District cost-share projects that require a Cultural Resource Review. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VIII. Record of Board Actions.

10-24 Ed Stone moved that the minutes of the March 10, 2010 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

10-25 Larry Davis moved to approve the Financial Report. Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed. Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Treasurer's Report was approved.

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- 10-36 Terry Lenssen moved to approve and adopt the FY 2011 Annual Plan of Work. Ed Stone seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- 10-37 Ed Stone moved to approve and adopt the 2010-2015 Long Range Plan of Work. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.
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IX. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the meeting, Ed Stone moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Dated: June 22, 2010

Approved: _____

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant