

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Public Meeting Minutes
May 14, 2008**

I. Time and Place of Meeting.

A regular meeting of the Board of Supervisor of the Whatcom Conservation District was held at the Ag Service Center, 6975 Hannegan Rd, Lynden, Washington on May 14, 2008, at 7:00 p.m.

II. Attendance and Quorum.

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jerry Van Dellen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dick Yoder
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sabina Gouran	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ed Stone

Also in attendance were:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	George Boggs, District Manager	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Alex Hall, NRCS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant		Robert Barker, Associate Supervisor
	Joseph Heller		Terry Lenssen

III. Meeting Called to Order.

Jerry Van Dellen as Chairman of the meeting called it to order at 7:01 p.m.

IV. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting.

Ed Stone moved that the minutes of the April 10, 2008 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.

V. Financial Report.

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

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

Ed Stone moved to approve the Financial Report. Sabina Gouran 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:

April 2008 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>15900</u>	through	<u>15920</u>	and totaling	<u>24,129.79</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>15921</u>	through	<u>15934</u>	and totaling	<u>25,231.45</u>
Voucher (check) number	<u>15935</u>			and totaling	<u>10.10</u>
May 2008					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>15936</u>	through	<u>15958</u>	and totaling	<u>21,700.26</u>

Payroll check numbers:	<u>15959</u>	through	<u>15972</u>	and totaling	<u>25,198.36</u>
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>15973</u>	through	<u>15976</u>	and totaling	<u>2,187.35</u>

moved by Ed Stone. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VI. Other Reports.

A. Supervisor Reports.

Dick Yoder –

Dick attended the local northwest area Conservation Districts meeting in Mt. Vernon. It was apparent that the State would like Conservation Districts to do certain activities without providing sufficient funds. Dick reported that the Whatcom Conservation District is a whole lot busier than most. Some Conservation Districts send funds back to the WA Conservation Commission.

There was discussion regarding which Districts were in attendance at the area meeting.

Ed Stone –

Ed informed the Board that Katie Johannes formerly a reporter for the Bellingham Herald is the new spokesperson for the Department of Ecology's Bellingham office. She is going by her married name Katie Skipper. Katie has written articles in the past that showcased district activities, programs and challenges.

B. Alex Hall, NRCS.

EQIP –

The 2009 EQIP sign-up is underway and ends July 15th. Alex reviewed a few changes under this year's sign-up. Funds can not be obligated until the next year, so all applicants will be one year out on implementation of their projects.

The NRCS local work group hopes to get a few new practices included in this round of EQIP eligibility. One is boom irrigation which would replace existing big gun application. It looks promising to be fundable. The second is diesel engine replacement. Old inefficient and air polluting engines would be retired.

NRCS is trying to diversify the types of farm operations in the program. Alex and Joy have contacted berry and crop growers regarding sprayers and enhanced nutrient management. There is currently a payment to reduce organo-phosphates (pesticides) that they would like to get some interest in. The problem is that the berry and crop farmers would not rank high enough at this point to get funded. One thing the local workgroup has done to ensure forestry projects received funding was to set up a separate fund pool for specialty crops. This would be the easiest way to address the concern without changing all of the ranking questions. The new EQIP practice cost list has not yet been approved by the NRCS State office.

Cost-share –

Alex explained that there is a concern regarding adding state cost-share to an existing EQIP contract. There could be the potential to get paid more than 100% of actual costs for a project. Alex informed the Board that the federal government would not allow participants to get more than 100% cost-share for practices. The state doesn't have any set rules without local control. He explained that the federal government doesn't want people making money on cost-share contracts and would cap if they knew that participants were paid cost-share by others.

Cultural Resources Assessments –

With the departure of Scott Williams, there is a growing backlog of cultural resources (CR) assessments. If someone received an EQIP contract this year, they would have to wait until next year to initiate if there is a CR "hit". Alex would like the option to use a private archeologist. It was decided that George will write a letter from the Board to the WA Conservation Commission

and NRCS for utilization of outside parties to do cultural resources assessments to facilitate projects. It was discussed that TSP funds could be used to fund the CR Assessments.

Dick Yoder moved to write a letter to the WA Conservation Commission and NRCS regarding the concern and requesting the utilization of outside parties to do cultural resources assessments to facilitate NRCS projects using TSP funds. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Farm Bill –

The President will probably veto the proposed new Farm Bill. If this happens, there may be a year extension to the current Farm Bill.

Miscellaneous –

Alex will be attending a leadership team meeting in Spokane. He asked the Board if there were any issues that he should bring up with Gus Hughbanks. There were none.

Alex distributed a list of potential topics to discuss with Supervisors. He asked the Board to review and inform him about what they would like further information. Alex was also told that NRCS and Conservation Districts should update their Cooperative Working Agreements every few years. Alex and George will work on that for the next month.

Dick asked if the recent ruling on Public Disclosure would affect release of NRCS farm plans and information. Alex had not heard of the ruling. George reviewed the Public Disclosure rules on State Farm plans. George discussed what has to be disclosed, financial records.

C. George Boggs.

Small Grants –

The Bertrand and North Lynden Watershed Improvement Districts (WID) are going to receive a contract through the WSCC from CRM for less than \$5,000 each. The WA Conservation Commission (WSCC) will contract with the Whatcom Conservation District to pass through to the WIDs.

Dick Yoder moved to approve the CRM contracts for the Bertrand WID and North Lynden WID through the WA Conservation Commission. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Stone Beaver Deceivers –

Four beaver deceivers were installed today by Brad Newell, Squalicum Mountain Enterprises. George gave a presentation on the installation. Frank is talking with the Thomas' regarding hedgerows. George explained that we are now using Lidar to better anticipate the potential flooding that may occur with beaver action on proposed CREP projects.

Raspberry Plan –

Chuck Timblin has developed draft model raspberry and blueberry farm plans. He will meet with four producers regarding the plan. It covers common resource concerns such as sediment, nutrient management, pesticide and herbicide use.

Ruckelshaus Center –

George was requested to talk with the Ruckelshaus Center regarding how to protect Critical Areas without putting producers out of business. Whatcom County's Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) is being discussed as a model for how to protect critical areas.

Air Emissions Conference –

George received a scholarship to attend the Mitigating Air Emissions from AFOs Conference in Des Moines, IA. The WA Conservation Commission and Iowa State University are paying for

George to attend. He will contribute to the NRI Ag Air Quality curriculum development committee while there.

Manure Discharge –

George informed that Board that there had been a manure discharge the week prior to the meeting. Water quality tests showed fecal counts of 5 million+ with 6,000 ppm at the end of Fishtrap Creek. It was our understanding that the producer told the inspector that he had been following his farm plan and with the rain produced a major run off discharge. George discussed the implications if the prescribed setbacks and vegetative filters were deemed inadequate. To move from the current 30' buffer to the EPA 100 foot standard set back on this farm would require 120 acres. George explained that staff will be reviewing the practices that we are using on dairies and bring to the Board recommendations on changes or affirm our current policy. The State Livestock Technical Advisory Committee met regarding the buffer standard. Questions included: Does the standard need to be reviewed or revised. How is it working? Is the current standard based on science and our own experience? .

VII. Action Items.

A. Approval of Conservation Plans.

Dairy Nutrient Management Plan –

One dairy nutrient management plan amendment was submitted for approval. The plan was changing land use from pasture to crop. George gave some background on the plan amendment.

Dick Yoder moved to approve the Dairy Nutrient Management Plan for Snook Brook Dairy. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Livestock Cost-share Applications –

There are two producers that are requesting livestock cost-share. The Board approved the applications subject to availability of funds, not to exceed \$25,000 per contract.

Dick Yoder moved to approve Livestock Cost-share contracts with Carey Hallberg at 75% of actual costs not to exceed \$22,500 and Mark Olson at 75% of actual costs not to exceed \$25,000 subject to availability of funds. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.

CREP Contracts –

One CREP maintenance contract to assume the Kay Ingram CREP project that was sold.

Sabina Gouran moved to ratify the CREP contract with Ken Schroder (formerly Kay Ingram 08-04-CR:08-06). Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) is the administrative lead on the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) joint program. The FSA County Committee approves all plans. The current policy is that once FSA approves the Federal Contract and CREP plan the contract is then brought to the Board meeting for its approval. The Board approved the standard-language contract. There were three new projects submitted for Board approval.

Ed Stone moved to ratify the CREP contracts for Bennett Woodland (08-04-CR:08-05), Terry Uyeyama (08-04-CR:08-03) and Elizabeth Kerwin & Jillian Froebe (08-04-CR:08-04). Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.

B. CREP Maintenance Cap Adjustment.

George reviewed the CREP Maintenance Budget Increase Approval Sheet. There is one project needing further maintenance requiring an adjustment to the \$2,000 per acre cap. Following

Board approval the memo showing new caps was forwarded to the WA Conservation Commission for approval.

Sabina Gouran moved to approve the Maintenance Budget Increase Approval sheet recommending to the Conservation Commission new maintenance caps for Roger Hawley (57) CREP projects. Ed Stone seconded the motion. The motion passed.

C. Memorandum of Agreement.

George explained that we currently have Memorandums of Agreement with Skagit, King and Okanogan Conservation Districts to share staff and resources. He explained that such an agreement would help assist the Puget Sound Conservation Districts. The Board agreed to pursue a Memorandum of Agreement with all the Puget Sound Area Districts.

D. Livestock Cost-share Policy.

It was explained that NRCS funds off of a list. Therefore there is the possibility if a producer has both an EQIP contract and receives state cost-share to get paid more than 100% of actual costs of the installation of a project. As Alex explained earlier the federal government would cap the federal portion. There was discussion on how the two cost-share programs should work together. It was decided that no producer should receive more than 100% cost-share with all cost-share sources combined.

Dick Yoder moved to set a District Cost Share policy in addition to those caps set by the Conservation Commission, that a cooperators could not receive more than 100% of total actual project costs when all sources of cost share sources are considered. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VIII. Other Business.

Annual Plan of Work –

George reviewed the annual plan of work draft sent to the Board. He explained the draft frame work budget for programs and the proposed increases and decreases in program areas from last year's plan of work. This year some storm water and forestry activities have been added.

Dick Yoder moved to approve the Annual Plan of Work. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Budget Survey –

George reviewed the budget survey draft sent to the Board. The budget survey contemplates funding needs from the WA Conservation Commission for the next biennium. George discussed the funds and programs. Forestry, storm water and crop farms are new programs that are contemplated for the next biennium. Irrigation efficiencies have not been addressed in the budget survey. The County and Bertrand WID were asked to provide input but had not done so.

Dick Yoder moved to approve the Budget Survey for the next biennium. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.

IX. Record of Board Actions.

08-32 Ed Stone moved that the minutes of the April 10, 2008 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.

08-33 Ed Stone moved to approve the Financial Report. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed. Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Treasurer's Report was approved.

08-34

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- 08-35 Dick Yoder moved to write a letter to the WA Conservation Commission and NRCS regarding the concern and requesting the utilization of outside parties to do cultural resources assessments to facilitate NRCS projects using TSP funds. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 08-36 Dick Yoder moved to approve the CRM contracts for the Bertrand WID and North Lynden WID through the WA Conservation Commission. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 08-37 Dick Yoder moved to approve the Dairy Nutrient Management Plan for Snook Brook Dairy. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 08-38 Dick Yoder moved to approve Livestock Cost-share contracts with Carey Hallberg at 75% of actual costs not to exceed \$22,500 and Mark Olson at 75% of actual costs not to exceed \$25,000 subject to availability of funds. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 08-39 Sabina Gouran moved to ratify the CREP contract with Ken Schroder (formerly Kay Ingram 08-04-CR:08-06). Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 08-40 Ed Stone moved to ratify the CREP contracts for Bennett Woodland (08-04-CR:08-05), Terry Uyeyama (08-04-CR:08-03) and Elizabeth Kerwin & Jillian Froebe (08-04-CR:08-04). Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 08-41 Sabina Gouran moved to approve the Maintenance Budget Increase Approval sheet recommending to the Conservation Commission new maintenance caps for Roger Hawley (57) CREP projects. Ed Stone seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 08-42 Dick Yoder moved to set a District Cost Share policy in addition to those caps set by the Conservation Commission, that a cooperater could not receive more than 100% of total actual project costs when all sources of cost share sources are considered. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 08-43 Dick Yoder moved to approve the Annual Plan of Work. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 08-44 Dick Yoder moved to approve the Budget Survey for the next biennium. Sabina Gouran seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

X. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the meeting, Sabina Gouran moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 p.m. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Dated: June 26, 2008

Approved: _____

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant