

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Public Meeting Minutes
August 12, 2009**

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 August 12, 2009, 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	Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant
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III. Meeting Called to Order.

Dick Yoder, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

IV. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting.

Ed Stone moved that the minutes of the July 8, 2009 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 July 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. Larry Davis 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:

July 2009 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>16987</u>	through	<u>17063</u>	and totaling	<u>102,848.84</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>17064</u>	through	<u>17077</u>	and totaling	<u>27,101.29</u>
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>17078</u>	through	<u> </u>	and totaling	<u>15,562.00</u>
August 2009					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>17079</u>	through	<u>17096</u>	and totaling	<u>29,754.74</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>17097</u>	through	<u>17110</u>	and totaling	<u>27,022.86</u>

Moved by Ed Stone. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VI. Action Items.

A. National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Dues.

NACD annual dues were discussed. George explained that the NACD dues are used to lobby for Farm Bill programs that support the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

NACD suggests the dues structure based on your District budget. Gold tier is 1% of a District's budget not to exceed \$1,775 and the silver tier is up to \$775. Dawn reported that the District's annual discretionary budget is \$67,352.92, so 1% is \$673.53.

Ed Stone moved to pay \$673.53 which is 1% of the District's budget for 2009 NACD Dues. Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

B. Approval of Contracts.

CREP Contracts –

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 for its approval. The Board approved the standard-language contract.

There were four projects submitted for Board approval.

Ed Stone moved to ratify the CREP contracts for William "Jim" Buchanan (08-04-CR:09-05), Meg Delzell (08-04-CR:09-06), Julia Lawrence (08-04-CR:09-03) and James & Janice Miller (08-40-CR:09-02). Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

CREP Hardened Crossing –

George reported that a new CREP project is looking to install a hardened crossing for livestock movement across a stream. The cluster engineer, Tom Slocum, has reviewed the area and determined that a bridge would be very long and very expensive. George drew an example of a hardened crossing by way of explanation for the Board. He explained that the crossing would be used in conjunction with managed pasture grazing. Cattle would not have free access to the area. It was explained that there would be minimal if any pollution due to controlled access. The environmental benefits of installing the CREP buffer outweigh any potential pollution from a hardened crossing.

George explained that the District was working on obtaining the necessary permits for the project. Wayne Chaudiere will keep the Board apprised of activity on the crossing.

There was discussion regarding stock water law changes that may limit the number of animals.

The Board was okay with the hardened crossing for this project.

C. Approval of Conservation Plans.

Livestock Nutrient Management Plan (LNMP) Approval –

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

Terry Lenssen moved to approve the Livestock Nutrient Management Plan for Laird Dairy LLC (Glen Laird). Ed Stone seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Livestock Nutrient Management Plan Certification –

There was one LNMP submitted for Board certification. Nichole Embertson submitted the certification checklist for Board review and approval.

Terry Lensen moved to certify the Livestock Nutrient Management Plan for Laird Dairy LLC (Glen Laird). Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Livestock Cost-share Application –

There was one application for livestock cost-share submitted for Board approval and submittal to the WA Conservation Commission for funding consideration.

Ed Stone moved to approve the livestock cost-share application for Marvin Vreugdenhil (Hillview Dairy) – manure transfer \$25,000 and submit to the WA Conservation Commission for funding consideration. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

D. Approval of Agreements.

Inter-local Agreement with Skagit Conservation District –

An Inter-local Agreement with the Skagit Conservation District to share personnel was signed by the Chair between meetings. Skagit Conservation District urgently needed the documentation for their Cluster Engineer Grant in order to avoid being penalized. Skagit and Whatcom have a history of working together through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) since March 2003. Neither costs nor obligations were incurred by the District prior to ratifying the agreement by the Board, should they have declined to renew the agreement. The current MOA is being extended through June 20, 2010.

Terry Lensen moved to ratify the interlocal agreement with Skagit CD. Ed Stone seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VII. Other Business.

A. Supervisor Reports.

Dick Yoder –

Dick is a member of the Whatcom County Ag Advisory Committee and he attended their recent meeting. The meeting was set up to handle some business, since it is difficult to get a quorum to handle business. Dick reported that the Committee had only 15 minutes to conduct business even though the meeting lasted for 2 ½ hours. There was standing room only the meeting space. George gave a presentation on the Conservation Planning on Ag Lands (CPAL) process. There were a lot of concerned citizens who were upset about the property rights issue and the rezoning.

George explained the history of the land use designated in 1997. Whatcom County did not follow the zoning for residential and commercial in the state Growth Management Act. Whatcom County needs to come into compliance with the zoning requirements. This could result in a loss of development rights.

George also reported on the Critical Areas & CPAL program. Dick reported that Rep. Doug Ericksen attended the meeting and pointed out to the group that the Conservation District is not an enforcement agency.

George and Chuck Timblin met with Mike Wallace, WSU Extension 4-H Advisory, regarding small farm planning.

The Board discussed septic tanks. Whatcom County is applying for a State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loan for a septic tank program. Whatcom County had a loan program several years ago, but cancelled it.

Larry Davis –

Larry attended the Puget Sound Conservation District caucus meeting on the Puget Sound partnership. George reviewed the program dynamics and concepts. The 12 Puget Sound Conservation Districts may seek funds. The program would be a sound-wide program and scope of work. The next steps towards the process are signing formal interlocal agreements and outlining the program and participation.

Larry has signed up to work 2 shifts at the Farming for Life exhibit at Northwest Washington Fair in Lynden.

Terry Lenssen –

Terry reported that gravel is removed from rivers in British Columbia and Chehalis. Would a similar program be workable for the Nooksack River? Terry explained that the Fraser River gravel mining actually improves the wildlife habitat with the way that they mine, as well as control flooding. George said that a model of the scalping and flooding could be done to show potential impacts on the river. He advised that there would be a need to get the Tribes involved in discussing the matter and the potential impacts and benefits to the river. It was suggested that Rep. Kelly Linville be contacted and a meeting organized with farmers and the Nooksack Indian Nation.

B. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Alex Hall did not attend the meeting. He gave George a report on NRCS activities, which George shared with the Board.

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) –

All funds for FY 2009 EQIP contracts have been obligated for a total of \$671,594. There are 6 conventional farms and 2 organic producers receiving funding. The remaining applicants that did not receive funding will be deferred for consideration in the 2010 ranking. There are 35 producers interested in funding for 2010 so far, with the sign-up deadline of August 14, 2009.

Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) –

Two WHIP contracts have been obligated for \$88,000, with another for \$100,000 in the works. These contracts are primarily for removing barriers to fish passage.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) –

There was limited information on this new program. It will be a national sign-up, not by watershed. The sign-up deadline is September 30, 2009.

C. George Boggs, District Manager.

Report of Accomplishments –

It is time to complete the Report of Accomplishments for the WA State Conservation Commission. The Commission has a set outline that they request all Districts use. George asked the Board what they would like to have as the feature project for the year. The Board decided to feature the Drainage Improvement District program.

Budget –

The 2009-2010 Budget was submitted to the Board for review. George pointed out that the District operates on soft funding.

Larry Davis moved to approve the 2009-2010 Budget. Ed Stone seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Upcoming Meetings –

The local Conservation District cluster meeting is scheduled for September 3, 2009.

NW Area meeting is scheduled for October 15, 2009 in Snohomish County.

Supervisor Election Process –

George explained that the WA Conservation Commission is seeking input on Conservation District supervisor elections. There was some brief discussion at the meeting.

Livestock Technical Assistance Grant –

George informed the Board that the Conservation Commission grant staff requested a list of work to be completed under the Livestock Technical Assistance Grant. It is time-consuming to generate the list and problematic to estimate hours to work with individuals and when work will be completed. The Whatcom Conservation District has over 97 referrals to work with on various items. The Board advised George to write a letter to the Commission explaining the limitations of creating such a list for a large workload and requesting that they come to Whatcom County to review our program and the workload. In a District with fewer than 20 people these forms are not taxing, but with our number of producers and workload it is problematic. He suggested that the District staff review the grant and suggest ways to track and capture information in a meaningful, but timely manner.

VIII. Record of Board Actions.

09-69 Ed Stone moved that the minutes of the July 8, 2009 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

09-70 Ed Stone moved to approve the Financial Report. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed. Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Treasurer’s Report was approved.

09-71

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09-77 Terry Lenssen moved to ratify the inter-local agreement with Skagit CD. Ed Stone seconded the motion. The motion passed.

09-78 Larry Davis moved to approve the 2009-2010 Budget. Ed Stone seconded the motion. The motion passed.

IX. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the meeting, Larry Davis moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:16 p.m. Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Dated: December 2, 2009

Approved: _____

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant