

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Public Meeting Minutes
July 7, 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 July 7, 2010, at 7:00 p.m.

II. Attendance and Quorum.

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

Joe Heller, Chair	Terry Lenssen, Vice Chair
Larry Davis, Treasurer	Ed Stone

Also in attendance were:

George Boggs, Executive Director	Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant
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III. Meeting Called to Order.

Joe Heller, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

IV. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting.

Ed Stone moved that the minutes of the June 9, 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 June 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. Ed Stone 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:

June 2010 - balance				
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>17795</u>	through	<u>17832</u>	and totaling <u>34,447.75</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>17833</u>	through	<u>17846</u>	and totaling <u>28,931.04</u>
July 2010				
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>17847</u>	through	<u>17857</u>	and totaling <u>14,306.51</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>17858</u>	through	<u>17871</u>	and totaling <u>28,426.18</u>

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

VI. Action Items.

A. Approval of Conservation Plans.

Livestock Nutrient Management Plan (LNMP) Approval –

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

Terry Lensen moved to approve the Livestock Nutrient Management Plan for Myshan Dairy (Mylon Smith). Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

B. Approval of Contracts.

CREP Maintenance Agreements:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) is the administrative lead on the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) joint program. The FSA County Committee approves all CREP 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 State Conservation Commission prescribed standard-language maintenance contract.

There is one CREP maintenance contract submitted for Board approval. The contract is a successor to an existing CREP project. John and Gayla Kramme CREP project was purchased by Robert Kaplan and Carole Hobson.

Larry Davis moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract for Robert Kaplan & Carole Hobson (10-04-CR:10-14). Terry Lensen seconded the motion. The motion passed.

C. Software.

The Board reviewed the information to upgrade District computer software. After some discussion it was decided to obtain more information regarding the age of current computers and ask Andrew to get an estimate to upgrade computers and set up a schedule for replacement. It would be better to get new computers when upgrading software. Further information will be provided at the next Board meeting.

D. Lummi Letter Response.

George spoke with Jeremy Freimund, Water Resources Manager for Lummi Natural Resources, regarding their letter to EPA. It was acknowledged that there are other significant sources of bacterial pollution that needed to be addressed. The problem could not be solely laid at the feet of the dairies. Jeremy stated that was not their intention. George suggested insofar as the dairies were concerned, a more effective strategy would be to give producers better tools for management rather than putting them all under permit. There was discussion regarding enforcement. George suggested that perceived deficiencies on the part of the Dept. of Agriculture were, from our perspective, due to the very complicated process laid out in statute. It was not that the Agency was being protective of producers. Ecology struggles with the same limitations. George informed Jeremy that there was a voluntary landowner initiative that a Subcommittee to the County's Ag Advisory Committee wants to use to achieve TMDL goals. Jeremy pointed out that individuals could voluntarily implement best management practices without any change in the Critical Areas Ordinance. Lummi believes that current state and local law needs to be enforced. Jeremy said that they were open to meeting with the producers.

George told the Board that he had confidence in the water quality data. While much better than the early days of the Nooksack River TMDL, it is trending up. The fecal coliform counts for many tributaries are higher than the goals set by that process.

The Board felt that it was for the Dept. of Ag and the Dairy producers to make the initial response to the letter. George should continue working informally with the stakeholders for a resolution.

VII. Other Business.

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

Alex was not in attendance at the meeting, but sent a report that Dawn shared with the Board.

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) – We have received funding for one additional EQIP ORGANIC application on a small farm (\$46,000.00).

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) – We have obligated one WHIP contract that has been funded under the special projects provision of the program. The project will replace an in-stream crossing with a bridge to protect water quality on a high value fish bearing stream.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) – The deadline for the 2010 CSP signup has passed. There are two producers that we will be working with this sign up.

Technical Service Provider (TSP) – Another TSP agreement has been approved for WCD staff Bill Bonsen and Chris Clark to help assist NRCS with EQIP planning and implementation through September 30th.

Student Trainee – Our student trainee, Mary Haldane, has been stationed in Fairbanks, Alaska for the summer. She will be returning to Lynden or Mt. Vernon in the fall to complete her internship.

B. Supervisor Reports.

Larry Davis –

Larry attended the EPA formal announcement of the Puget Sound Grant recipients. It was held at the Suquamish Tribe Longhouse at Port Madison. Congressman Dicks and Martha Kongsgaard, Vice-Chair of the Puget Sound Partnership Leadership Council, and Dennis McLerran, Regional Administrator for Region 10 of the EPA were in attendance. There were several speeches and a tour of the Chico Creek Estuary, which Larry and George attended. The tour group discussed knotweed and roundup. Larry shared a map of the project with the Board.

Ed Stone –

Ed heard George on the radio (KGMI) talking about the EPA grant awards.

Terry Lenssen –

Terry attended the Dairy Federation meeting. He completed his last planting on July 3rd and had to start irrigating then, too.

Joe Heller –

Joe attended the Washington Association of District Employees (WADE) training conference in Leavenworth. There were approximately 165 in attendance this year. Joe was initially interested in attending the Forestry sessions, but decided to go to the Administrative session since he is now the Chair. Conservation Commission staff gave a presentation on the budget and state budgeting process. The importance of creating a good Annual Report to provide legislators was expressed at WADE. Supervisor training and regional training of new supervisors was discussed.

Joe attended the Foothills Subarea meeting for the final public comment on the draft plan. He said that there were approximately 70 people in attendance. The Advisory Committee voted 6-1-1 to approve the draft Foothill Subarea Plan and send it to the Whatcom County Council.

C. George Boggs, Executive Director.

Wells –

George gave the Board an update on the “well” issue and soil testing. He sent a lengthy letter describing the process to Josh Baldi with a request that an opinion as to what activities were subject to regulations under State law

Swift Creek –

George reported that water samples showed that there is twenty times the national standard for asbestos in Swift Creek and Sumas River. There is concern that if this level of contamination exists when irrigation waters are being withdrawn, there could be health problems. It may be best to shift from surface to groundwater irrigation. Ecology has a backlog of permit applications. George is working to see if there is a way to get them processed at no expense to the landowner. EQIP funds could help offset the costs of making necessary changes to the irrigation system.

Nitrates in Groundwater

George shared that the issue of high nitrates in the groundwater was brought up privately at the EPA Puget Sound Grant award ceremony. EPA is working on this issue in Yakima. They will bring those experiences to Whatcom County in the not so distant future.

George related that the Canadians and Americans have been working on the issue since 1991 in the Abbotsford Sumas Aquifer. The ground water flows north to south. Agricultural is faulted for the source of nitrates. The Board talked about nitrates and farming activities that impact ground water. Rules in Canada are different for some ag industries. Some differences are that regulations are minimal and there are no farm plans or need of a land base. George discussed application rates that are causing issues. Ways to address the concerns with our Canadian friends were discussed by the Board.

Fruit Tree Farming –

George shared a program from the Fruit Tree Planting Foundation (FTPF). The FTPF encourages urban forestry and planting fruit trees which also provide food in depressed areas. The Board asked to have a presentation at the next meeting.

Building –

Additional energy rebate incentives are available through Puget Sound Energy. George suggested that the District’s operating costs would improve by converting to high efficiency Heating, Ventilation and Air Condition (HVAC) Units in the District and FSA office. The Board requested staff to get bids.

Verizon Issue –

George will check into the legal status of the parking lot issue.

NW Area Meeting –

The Whatcom Conservation District will be hosting the WACD NW Area Meeting on October 13, 2010 at the Bellwether Hotel in Bellingham, WA.

VIII. Record of Board Actions.

10-60 Ed Stone moved that the minutes of the June 9, 2010 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

10-61 Larry Davis moved to approve the Financial Report. Ed Stone seconded the motion. The motion passed. Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Treasurer’s Report was approved.

10-62

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- 10-63 Terry Lenssen moved to approve the Livestock Nutrient Management Plan for Myshan Dairy (Mylon Smith). Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- 10-64 Larry Davis moved to ratify the CREP maintenance contract for Robert Kaplan & Carole Hobson (10-04-CR:10-14). Terry Lenssen seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

IX. Adjournment.

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

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

Dated: August 26, 2010

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant

Approved: _____