



Missouri Department of Natural Resources

MINUTES

MISSOURI SOIL AND WATER DISTRICTS COMMISSION

DNR Conference Center

Jefferson City, Missouri

August 24, 2011

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Charles Ausfahl, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Richard Fordyce and Gary Vandiyer

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS: JON HAGLER, DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE: Judy Grundler; BOB ZIEHMER, DEPT. OF CONSERVATION: Mike Hubbard; SARA PARKER PAULEY, DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES: Dru Buntin

ADVISORY MEMBERS PRESENT: SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION

PROGRAM: Acting Program Director Colleen Meredith; Flood Coordinator Bryan Hopkins (Previous Program Director); **NRCS:** Drenda Williams; **MASWCD:** Steve Radcliff

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Chrisi Armbruster, Kurt Boeckmann, Jim Boschert, April Brandt, Allan Clarke, Kerry Cordray, Alan Freeman, David Goggins, Katy Holmer, Jesse Higginbotham, Jennifer Johnson, Jeremia Markway, Theresa Mueller, James Plassmeyer, Josh Poynor, Judy Stinson, Ken Struempf, Cody Tebbenkamp, Leon Thompson, Steven Walker, Colette Weckenborg, Bill Wilson

OTHERS PRESENT: DISTRICTS: Cole: Peggy Lemons; Jefferson: George Engelbach, Osage: Cindy DeOrnellis; **STATE OF MISSOURI: ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE:** Tim Duggan; **DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE:** Chris Klenklen; **DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES:** Van Beydler, Darrick Steen, Scott Totten; **SENATE APPROPRIATIONS:** Adam Koenigsfeld; **OTHERS:** MO Farm Bureau: Kelly Smith; **MASWCD:** Bev Dometorch, Kenny Lovelace; **MSWCDEA:** Sandy Hutchison

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Richard Fordyce called the meeting to order in Jefferson City, Missouri, at the DNR Conference Center at 10:15 am.

Chairman Richard Fordyce introduced the new Director for the Department of Natural Resources, Sara Parker Pauley. She gave her thanks for all the work and guidance provided to Missouri farmers in saving soil and protecting the water resources by the

Commission, Department and District staff. She reflected how these efforts are important to citizens of the State of Missouri.

B. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Kathryn Braden made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2011 Commission meeting as mailed. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Charles Ausfahl, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Gary Vandiver and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Kathryn Braden made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2011 Commission meeting as mailed. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Charles Ausfahl, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Gary Vandiver and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

C. MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

1. Soil and Water Program Good Governance Initiatives

Bryan Hopkins presentation covered Good Government Initiatives report provided to the Governor's office. In summary the program has made steps forward in transparency and accountability. He informed the Commission that the state of Missouri is a national leader in soil and water conservation. The recent efforts to improve accountability include: standardized time keeping for the district offices, centralized accounting system for districts, software-based conservation practice tracking, needs assessment and conservation planning, and state-wide district performance review and improvement initiative.

2. Update on Natural Disaster Impacts

Bryan Hopkins and Ken Struempf presented the updates from the impact of the natural disasters that have occurred around the state. Bryan Hopkins stated the high water events created unique elements for the agricultural community with half a million acres of crops lost and federal funding being reduced. He also stated that this recovery event will take two to three years and discussion will be necessary to determine new practices verses repair of old practices.

Ken Struempf informed the Commission that a memo was sent to all the districts asking for any disaster related impact in each district. The deadline to submit the Natural Disaster Needs Assessment is September 1, 2011, but that date may need to be extended.

D. SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

1. FY11 District Grant Summary

Jim Boschert presented the review of the fiscal year 2011 (FY11) district assistance grant expenditures. The information was a summary of expenditures from the quarterly reports that are submitted by the soil and water conservation districts. He indicated this report includes data from one hundred and nine of the one hundred and fourteen districts. Five districts were not able to meet the deadline of July 15th for submitting the fourth quarter report. He informed the Commission that a letter was sent to four districts stating that if their report is not received by September 1st, funding will not be sent to the district until after their 1st quarter report is received and verified. The fifth district was not sent a letter because the Department is aware of their issues and has been working closely with the board on their financial records. At this time there are only two districts that have not submitted their 1st quarter report.

For FY11 a total of \$10,809,011 was allocated to the districts, of that total \$9,884,739 was allocated for personnel and \$924,271 was allocated for non-personnel items.

For FY11 a total of \$10,366,073 was spent by the districts, of that amount \$9,588,280 was spent on personnel expenses and \$777,793 was spent on non-personnel expenses. These amounts will increase when the quarterly reports from the five districts are included.

For FY12 a total of \$10,809,146 was allocated to the districts, of that 91.77 percent goes to personnel expenses. It is estimated the health insurance premiums will increase by 10 percent for January-June. A new allocation sheet will be sent to the districts once a decision is made on health insurance for 2012.

2. FY11 Cost-Share Summary

April Brandt presented the Cost-Share summary report, which provided a review of FY11. At the beginning of FY11, a base cost-share allocation of \$21,800,000 was entered for districts based on the needs assessment. In October, a midyear supplemental allocation was made in the amount of \$5,400,000. In January the Soil and Water Conservation Program received authorization from the Office of Administration to utilize \$2,500,000 of the Cross-Year Mitigation fund. An additional supplemental allocation was made bringing the total allocation in excess of \$30,000,000 for FY2011 regular cost-share. She stated it was necessary to allocate more to fully expend the budget appropriation of \$24,000,000.

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April reported to the Commission that 2011 was the third best year ever in cost-share usage with claiming \$24.3 million, despite the natural disasters and flooding events that took place across the state.

3. **FY11 SALT Cost-Share/Project Summary**

Katy Holmer presented the FY11 SALT Cost-Share/Project summary. She stated that there were 46 active SALT projects in 2011 with 13 ending June 2011.

She reported to the Commission that 33 SALT projects remain, with the next round of field reviews scheduled for 2013. The SALT projects have \$2,800,000 appropriated for FY12.

She also reported that over \$3,100,000 was allocated in SALT cost share funds for FY11 with \$2,100,000 paid to 647 land owners. Also in 2011, the SALT Program was able to provide funding to implement conservation practices on over 27,000 acres.

4. **FY11 Program Expenditures Summary/Program Financial Update**

Bill Wilson presented the FY11 Program Expenditures summary. He reported total expenditures for 2011 of \$40,700,427 with the landowners receiving 66.05 percent of the funds spent.

Mr. Wilson reviewed the program's financial status with the Commission. Noted in the discussions were expected revenue projections and a planned spend down of the reserve funds.

He also reviewed the program's budget for FY12 that projects spending a total of \$43,343,406 with 63 percent going for funding soil a water conservation projects implemented by landowners.

5. **State Audit of Soil and Water Program**

Bill Wilson reported the State Auditors had completed the initial work on the audit of the Soil and Water Conservation Program. The preliminary findings are expected to be completed in January. The preliminary audit findings will be presented to the Commission for review. Comments from the Department and Commission will be incorporated into the final audit report from the auditor's office. Based on the pre-exit meeting, issues of concern reported were; monitoring and expenditure of funds, district board minutes, and district compliance with Sunshine Law. He indicated that the auditors were supportive of the policy initiatives that had been implemented during the review period.

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6. **Calendar Year 2012 District Health Insurance Benefits**

Jim Boschert presented the calendar year 2012 district health insurance benefits being offered through Missouri Consolidated Health Care Plan (MCHCP) that is offered for public entities. He reported that staff attended a meeting with MCHCP staff on August 11, 2011. At that meeting we were told that the structure of the plans that have been offered to the soil and water conservation district employees would not change for calendar year 2012. The district employees have two plans to choose from, the PPO2000 plan where the premium is \$469.21 and is 100 percent paid with state funds and the PPO600 with a premium of \$601.08 with \$560.08 paid with state funds and the remaining \$41.00 paid by the employee.

He stated that currently 30 employees do not participate in the health insurance plans offered. There are 250 district employees participating in the health insurance benefit with 87 employees' participating in the PPO2000 and 163 employees participating in the PPO600.

7. **District Time Reporting Update**

Jim Plassmeyer presented the update on the district time reporting system. He reported to the Commission that in May the first 33 districts had the time reporting system activated, with 39 additional districts turned on in August for a total of 72 districts using the system. The remaining 42 districts have been asked to send in updated leave balances in order to have the system ready for use by late September.

He also updated the Commission on a letter received from Gentry County, asking for modifications to the time keeping software.

8. **Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Partner Grant Opportunities**

a. **Strategic Watershed Action Teams**

Ken Struempf presented the first part of the NRCS Partner Grant, Strategic Watershed Action Teams (SWAT). The 2011 proposed SWAT agreements is funding 11 technical positions with NRCS providing salary, 941 tax expenses, office space, computers, and the Department of Natural Resources providing health insurance, retirement contributions, and travel.

He stated that these positions are temporary full-time positions lasting 1-3 years based on funding. Districts will pay SWAT staff out of their local funds for the salary expenses associated with these positions and then be reimbursed by federal funds. The state will provide these districts with a grant to start their health insurance benefits and retirement contributions, once the individual is employed by the district.

b. **Other**

Colleen Meredith reported to the Commission about the development of partner contribution agreements with NRCS. These agreements are being developed to receive reimbursement for technical assistance for federal program delivery. The funding received through these grants will be utilized to support the districts. District employee development and training would be an example of a potential use of the funds.

E. **REVIEW/EVALUATION**

1. **District Operation Section**

a. **District Support**

1. **FY12 Cost-Share Fund Status**

Colette Weckenborg presented the Cost-Share fund status to the Commission. The status of the cost-share for fiscal year 2012 allocated amount is \$22,762,883.72 and of that amount \$1,330,264.33 has been paid out. The Cost-Share report was broken down by resource concerns and current obligations as of August 23, 2011.

2. **Review of Watering Tank Component for FY13 Cost-Share**

Katy Holmer presented the Watering Tank cost-share report to the Commission. She stated that the program staff reviewed the cost-share funds paid for watering tanks, which showed that many of these contracts had change orders due to the installation of different tanks by the landowners than originally planned. Additionally the amount paid to landowners varied significantly statewide mainly due to the components utilized.

At the March 9, 2011 meeting, the Commission approved a review of grouping watering tank components through a district comment period that ended May 13, 2011. Staff presented a summary of the comments to the Commission. Through the comment review process, districts had an opportunity to comment on the proposed change in policy for the grouping of tank components. With the comments received, staff asked the Commission to consider adopting the grouping of watering tank components with landowner payments for permanent tanks be set at \$825.00 and portable tanks be set at \$140.00.

After discussion, Kathryn Braden made a motion to accept the staff recommendations. Tom Bradley seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Charles Ausfahl, Kathryn Braden, Thomas

Bradley, Gary Vandiver and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

b. Supervisor Appointments

1. Johnson SWCD

Charles Ausfahl made a motion to approve the appointment of Dwight Parrott to the Johnson SWCD board of supervisors. Kathryn Braden seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Charles Ausfahl, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Gary Vandiver, and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Livingston SWCD

Gary Vandiver made a motion to approve the appointment of Larry Davies to the Livingston SWCD board of supervisors. Kathryn Braden seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Charles Ausfahl, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Gary Vandiver and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Reynolds SWCD

Charles Ausfahl made a motion to approve the appointment of J.T. Mann to the Reynolds SWCD board of supervisors. Kathryn Braden seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Charles Ausfahl, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Gary Vandiver and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Shannon SWCD

Gary Vandiver made a motion to approve the transfer of Armand Spurgin from Area II Shannon SWCD board of supervisors position to the Area I position. Charles Ausfahl seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Charles Ausfahl, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Gary Vandiver and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Kathryn Braden made a motion to approve the appointment of Garry Cutts to the Shannon SWCD Area II board of supervisors. Charles Ausfahl seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Charles Ausfahl, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Gary Vandiver and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

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F. REPORTS

1. Department of Conservation

Mike Hubbard presented the Department of Conservation (MDC) report to the Commission. He reported that the MDC cost-share docket has been approved for FY12. He also suggested that MDC would like to work with DNR on the Birds Point Levee for restoration efforts.

Mr. Hubbard also informed the Commission on the progress of mountain lions, elk and black bears in the State of Missouri.

2. Department of Agriculture

Judy Grundler presented the Commission updates on the Black Walnut disease, Dogwood disease, Wayne County quarantine for the Emerald Ash Borer, and the USDA funding outreach on the potential disease transmission caused by moving of firewood verses using local firewood.

3. NRCS

Drenda Williams presented to the Commission the NRCS report. She provided the Commission a summary of the EQIP, CCPI, MRBI, WHIP, and CSP programs offered by NRCS.

She also informed the Commission that NRCS is still doing additional outreach on the recent settlement awareness for Woman and Hispanic Farmers: Compensation for Claims of Discrimination.

4. MASWCD

Steve Radcliff presented to the Commission the MASWCD report. He said that MASWCD has cancelled all Area Meetings with the exclusion of two in southern Missouri.

He informed the Commission that Tan Tar A is confirmed for November 28th, 2011 Commission meeting, as well as an open forum on November 29th, 2011. The Commission is invited to set in on the open forum.

He stated that Mr. Henke did an interview of the districts across the state and a draft report has been made available.

He also noted the MASWCD meeting is being held on September 15, 2011 and the Commissioners are invited to attend.

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G. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sandy Hutchison mentioned the news commenting on a cost of living increase for state employees and asked the Commission to take that into consideration for the district employees.

H. SUGGESTED DATE(S) OF NEXT MEETINGS

The next scheduled meeting is November 28, 2011, in Osage Beach at Tan Tar A.

I. ADJOURNMENT

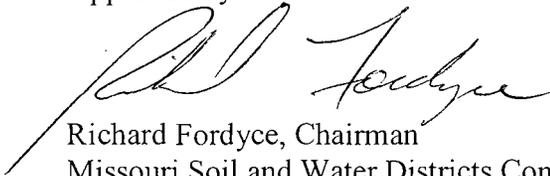
Tom Bradley moved the meeting be adjourned. Gary Vandiver seconded the motion. Motion approved by consensus at 1:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Colleen Meredith, Acting Director
Soil and Water Conservation Program

Approved by:



Richard Fordyce, Chairman
Missouri Soil and Water Districts Commission

/clm