



# Missouri Department of Natural Resources

**MINUTES**  
**MISSOURI SOIL AND WATER DISTRICTS COMMISSION**  
**Bradford Farm, University of Missouri**  
**Columbia, Missouri**  
**April 8, 2015**

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, Jeff Lance and Gary Vandiver

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS:** **RICHARD FORDYCE, DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE:** Judy Grundler; **BOB ZIEHMER, DEPT. OF CONSERVATION:** Lisa Potter; **SARA PARKER PAULEY, DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES:** Joe Engeln; **DEAN THOMAS PAYNE, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI:** David Baker

**ADVISORY MEMBERS PRESENT:** **SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM (SWCP):** Colleen Meredith; **NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS):** J.R. Flores; **MISSOURI ASSOCIATION OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS (MASWCD):** Kenny Lovelace; **ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE:** Tim Duggan

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Van Beydler, Patty Chapman, Alan Freeman, Theresa Mueller, Jennifer Pellett, Darlene Schaben, Jim Plassmeyer, Bill Wilson

**OTHERS PRESENT:** **BOONE:** Ethan Miller; **HOWARD:** Bev Dometrorch; **JEFFERSON:** George Engelbach; **LIVINGSTON:** David Morris; **MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE:** Chris Klenklen; **MISSOURI FARM BRUEAU:** Kelly Smith; **MISSOURI SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION (MSWCDEA):** Sandy Stratman; **UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI:** Randy Miles; **UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION:** Todd Lorenz, Will McClain

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Gary Vandiver called the meeting to order at the University of Missouri Bradford Farm in Columbia, Missouri, at 9:02 a.m. Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, Jeff Lance and Gary Vandiver were present, which made a quorum.

**B. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Thomas Bradley made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2015, Commission Meeting. Jeff Lance seconded the motion. When asked by the Chair, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, Jeff Lance and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**C. DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

Joe Engeln thanked Dave Baker for hosting the meeting at Bradford Farm and looks forward to touring the Soil Health Assessment Center. Mr. Engeln said the Department of Natural Resources (department) is working to finalize contracts between the Soil and Water Conservation Program (SWCP) and the Natural Resources Damages group to do projects in both the southeast and southwest parts of the state. This is in partnership with Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and The Nature Conservancy. These projects will assist farmers with practices in the riparian corridor to stabilize areas impacted by mining activities in the past and keep the lead and other metal tailings out of the stream.

Outreach will begin in the next few months in fourteen different basins of the Our Missouri Waters (OMW) watersheds. Existing data has been gathered so now the partners and watershed coordinators will engage citizens in conversations to learn their concerns. A key principle of the OMW is to move decision-making into the watersheds.

Mr. Engeln announced that Andrea Collier, previously Director at the department's Kansas City Regional Office, has been selected as the new Director of the Water Resources Center. Staff will soon be working on the State Water Plan.

Mr. Engeln added that the department went through a program review a few years ago. From this review, a new initiative was formed called "Enhancing Effectiveness and Efficiency (E3)," which is a process-oriented way to look at how to improve business and how to serve customers. The department is joining a large list of agencies around the country that are bringing these LEAN events into government. Mr. Engeln is one of the staff serving on the committee. The focus will be on finding where time and efforts are wasted, reducing costs and inefficiencies, and how to give customers what they want; focus on what is really important. This is a long-term effort. The programs will be able to provide suggestions over the next 24 months. Mr. Engeln felt this is a perpetual process because of constant work toward improvements.

**D. SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

Colleen Meredith mentioned the department is working on the "Our Missouri Waters Targeted Conservation" Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) project. There are seven watersheds in the project for the first year. SWCP and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will be working on Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) sign-ups. This is a five-year project and other watersheds will be also be involved. Staff are working closely with the districts within these watersheds.

Ms. Meredith announced there is a regional Envirothon being held today at the Runge Conservation Nature Center in Jefferson City.

Ms. Meredith brought to the Soil and Water Districts Commission's (Commission) attention to their copies of the March/April Soil and Water Resources Newsletter, as well as the Living Soils activity book, which has been recently revamped. The activity books are available to the districts for use with their education programs.

**1. FY15 Cost-Share Fund Status and Supplemental Cost-Share Allocations**

Alan Freeman presented the Fiscal Year 2015 (FY15) Cost-Share Fund Status and Supplemental Cost-Share Allocations. He said that as of April 7, 2015, approximately \$37 million has been allocated and of that amount, approximately \$26.1 million was obligated and \$12.2 million paid to landowners. For the FY15 Agricultural Nonpoint Source Special Area Land Treatment (AgNPS SALT) cost-share, approximately \$534,517 has been allocated; \$327,604 has been obligated with \$144,138 being paid to landowners.

For supplemental allocations, Mr. Freeman said the threshold to qualify is 90 percent obligated of the total allocation in each resource concern. The supplemental allocation for qualifying resource concerns is \$20,000. The supplemental allocations were reviewed on a weekly basis, starting October 9, 2014. As of April 2015, there is \$7.7 million in FY15 supplemental allocations completed. One district met the maximum \$500,000 total supplemental allocation, which was approved by the Commission at the December 2014 meeting. The current statewide allocation is \$37 million, which does not include the \$500,000 allocated to 20 districts through disaster declaration, FEMA-4200-DR. A total of 88 districts received supplemental allocations in FY15.

**2. Disaster Declaration FEMA-4200-DR Update**

Alan Freeman presented the Disaster Declaration FEMA-4200-DR Update. Mr. Freeman explained that currently there were 36 reconstruction contracts for a cost-share estimate of \$141,800. The practices that are being reconstructed include terraces, diversion, seedings, pond, and sod waterway. Colleen Meredith mentioned the payments were being tracked separately.

**3. Plan for the Future Update**

Colleen Meredith said the Plan for the Future's Info/Ed Committee and the Program Delivery and Operations Committee have recently held meetings. At the last Commission meeting, the Program Delivery and Operations Committee presented a request to combine the Info/Ed and Administrative Grants due to overlap of eligible expenses, and reduce the total grant by \$500. Combining grants will allow more flexibility and the reduction in the combined grants will help offset the increased from five to seven percent in district employee retirement benefits. The Commission had tabled the request until the committees could meet again. The committees decided to develop a small subgroup with representative members of each subcommittee. Recommendations formed from this workgroup will be presented at the next Commission meeting.

**4. Update on Component Entry into State Average Cost List**

Colleen Meredith said the Commission tabled discussion on the well drilling component at the December meeting. As staff looked into the issue, they found that all districts were not entering costs into the state average cost list. Only a small number of districts have set the state cost for the well drilling component. Staff are working with NRCS and Farm Service Agency (FSA) to place an Excel spreadsheet onto the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) Intranet web site which can be used as an alternative to the NRCS web site. These costs are needed so the landowner can get the state average cost as close as possible to the actual cost. This should be available soon so districts can get their information entered by mid-May.

In response to a question, Ms. Meredith said the information should be available at the end of May. Mr. Vandiver requested this be brought back to the Commission at the June meeting. As additional information, Ms. Meredith said a memo is sent to the SWCDs every year to remind them to enter this information. She felt the district board could provide encouragement to get the information entered since it would affect their district, rather than the Commission making it mandatory. The database is available for entries all year.

Sandy Stratman responded to a question and felt the Commission should not make cost-data entry mandatory due to NRCS computer access issues and contracts coming in for the end of the year payments making a hardship on staff. She felt it may be more effective if the boards could strongly encourage districts to get the information entered as soon as possible. A suggestion was made by the Commission for Ms. Stratman and Kenny Lovelace to send out a memo to their members encouraging them to complete their data entries.

**5. University of Missouri – Columbia, College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources**

Dave Baker, Assistant Dean, welcomed the group on behalf of Dean Payne to the Bradford Research and Extension Center. The Center is 591 acres and the research focuses on crops, soils and related disciplines. This is one of 17 research

sites throughout in the state. The diversity of the research conducted at these sites is comprehensive and locally driven. Missouri ranks internationally 14<sup>th</sup> and nationally in Plant and Animal Science Research. On behalf of the University Administration, Extension and Research faculty, Mr. Baker thanked the group for being strong supporters.

Assistant Dean Baker said they have a team in the 12 central states looking at cover crops. A survey was sent out to inventory these states. One question was "Why did you choose to plant cover crops?" The top three responses were soil health, nutrient management and soil erosion control. He thought these reasons were why this partnership was very important. He introduced Dr. Randy Miles and said he has also been instrumental in moving the Soil Health Assessment Center forward.

**a. Introduction to Missouri Soil Health Assessment Center**

Dr. Randy Miles also thanked the partners for their support to get the Soil Health Assessment Center (SHAC) going. He said Donna Brandt and Russ Dresbach are colleagues who are also involved. They are looking to see how to make the soil healthy for its many vital functions. The goals are to be quantitative, soil specific, contextual, prescriptive and evaluative. The clientele will include researchers, land managers and consultants.

Dr. Miles talked about the soil sampling, what they will evaluate and determine when and where they will be sampling and the depth of the soil sample. Something new will be bulk density sampling to get more physical properties. He explained they will be developing a "Soil Health Package" for an array of analyses. A committee will help with this along with input from partners.

Dr. Miles explained they want to provide a variety of results in various ways and he showed some examples. Comparative reports would also be provided. They needed to further develop the potentially mineralizable nitrogen which he felt would be a water quality tool in the long term, as well as the phospholipid fatty acid analysis for biological assessment.

He said they are working to develop a consensus on what would be some other suggested analyses or services that the lab could provide over time. The Soil Health Consortium (an advisory group of various entities from around the state) is starting with a defined core and working from there. Input from partners will be requested at a later date.

Within the next year or so, Dr. Miles said they will complete the move to South Farm and get the analyses protocol firmly established. Because of sampling and other new things they are doing, they want to start a train-the-trainer program relative to sampling protocol followed by expression and interpretation of the results. Dr. Miles added that over the next year

they want to be highly visible and establish relevance. Staff will attend field days, workshops, state meeting, natural resources meetings, etc. They want to be adaptable, attempt to suit the customers' needs and provide additional information as needed. They always welcome input.

Dr. Miles will lead the tour of the Soil Health Assessment Center.

Assistant Dean Baker added that this facility is one of three similar facilities in the United States. Dr. Miles explained that the Soil Characterization Lab has worked closely in the past with a national soil survey lab in Lincoln, Nebraska. They plan to continue that working relationship. He considers this a regional/national initiative and looks forward to working with them.

**b. Cover Crops – Where are we?**

Assistant Dean Baker introduced Todd Lorenz, who has been instrumental in providing leadership.

Todd Lorenz presented information on Sustainable Soil Health for Improved Food Securities. The challenge is how to feed approximately nine billion people by the year 2050. Other issues are absentee ownership, increased farm sizes, clean tillage, smooth seedbeds, huge equipment, extensive monoculture, commercial fertilizers, chemical application and short term cash flow goals.

In working to get the soil health and cover crop information out to the farmers, a multidisciplinary team from various agencies will work with farmers across the state. They are approaching it from a science based foundation and including farmers as stakeholders at the local level, in the hopes of bringing about a cultural change in thinking about the concept of soil health and cover crops.

He felt the Soil Health Consortium is a step in the right direction. The proposed solution is environmental and ecological awareness, soil health based production, long term goals in production capacity, best management practices, improved plant and animal health and cultural shift for generational benefits.

Mr. Lorenz mentioned a cover crop on-farm research project in northwest Missouri coordinated by Rich Hoorman and Charles Ellis that has been on-going since 2009. They are also working on a Cover Crop Integration System, which will be part of the train-the-trainer program. This is still in the preliminary development stages. Mr. Lorenz had pictures of another on-going project on the Graves-Chapple Research Center in northwest Missouri. He is working on the impact of cover crops to aid in the recovery of flooded soils. Mr. Lorenz thought maybe if cover crops had

been in place there would have been less sediment loss and, different crops work better in different parts of the state.

In using a cover crop survey, the results have shown a 30 percent increase in cover crops each year. More and more farmers are adopting this management practice back into their system. The national speakers on cover crop agree on the least amount of soil disturbance, armor the soil surface, diversity in species and leaving the root in the ground as long as possible.

Mr. Lorenz felt the Cover Crop/Soil Health Program integration had a great past and is looking forward to the future, which is moving along swiftly. The scientific community agrees that soil health will improve the water cycle, integrated pest management, building soil organic matter in time, nutrient cycling, enhance pollinators, adjust carbon and nitrogen rations, wildlife winter food and shelter, and livestock integration. They are trying to improve the physical soil structure and biodiversity of plants and animals.

Mr. Lorenz mentioned they are trying to partner with the Missouri Prairie Foundation, which is a private, nonprofit, 501(c)(3) prairie conservation organization, governed by a volunteer board of directors. They are in collaboration with Regional Extension Specialist and NRCS. This is the initial year with the Missouri Prairie Foundation.

Mr. Lorenz said the potential of our soil systems has been reduced over time. The conventional tillage and residue removal are the main contributors; lost crop and rotation diversity should help turn this around. He hoped the animal component could be reintroduced into the system.

In summary, Mr. Lorenz said each farmer has their own management system they are using. The university and partners are trying to introduce them to some of the research based information and provide them with the resources to determine the best practice.

Assistant Dean Baker added he was very fortunate to have this team working with him on this project.

Discussions followed on flood damaged soils, the economic benefit of engaging in conservation practices and including wildlife cover crops.

**E. TOUR 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**  
**Tour of the Missouri Soil Health Assessment Center – South Farm and Bradford Research Center**

Note: The agenda was changed to hear informational reports from the partners then begin requests at 1:00 p.m.

## **F. REPORTS**

### **1. University of Missouri**

Dave Baker thanked everyone for coming to Bradford Farm.

### **2. Department of Conservation**

Lisa Potter mentioned they found two more cases of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in deer. This season they took 3,800 samples from harvested deer. Eleven cases were found in free ranging deer. A buck harvested in Cole County tested positive. This was the first case of CWD found outside the 6-county CWD containment zone. The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) is currently analyzing how they plan to address CWD outside of the containment area and will present the strategy to the public. Ms. Potter said the Commission would be updated as well. They still have other samples to analyze, hopefully no other cases will be found.

Journagan Ranch (over 3,000 acres), donated to Missouri State University (MSU), is a farm that provides research opportunities for students and demonstration for practices that can be conducted on working farms. Ms. Potter said recently MDC entered into an agreement with MSU for providing assistance in managing the natural community areas along Journagan Ranch. Clint Dalbom will assist in the natural community management on the farm.

Ms. Potter informed the group that more information will soon be coming out about monarch butterflies. In June 2014, the White House sent a memo to the United States Department of Agriculture and the Department of Interior to start addressing both pollinator and monarch habitat. As a result, the Department of Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), will have approximately \$2 million to put towards this effort. Monarch populations are 90 percent in decline. Recently, NRCS and USFWS met to discuss how to develop a strategy. The MDC will also be involved and have plans to assist with their cost-share program. They have \$1.8 million available per year through the Landowner Assistance Program, which is used for private landowners to put conservation practices on their private farms and lands. Ms. Potter thought they would provide an incentive for farmers to plant milkweed. Milkweed is a host plant and a pollinator source for the monarch butterfly.

Judy Grundler commented that the milkweed also provides a food source for certain beetles.

**3. Department of Agriculture**

Judy Grundler said the steering committee from the Beef Summit submitted a recommendation that has been forwarded to the Governor's Office for review. They looked at all aspects of the beef industry.

Missouri Department of Agriculture (MDA) has started planning for the Missouri State Fair, which will be held August 13-23, 2015. Ms. Grundler invited the Commission to hold their meeting during that time at the State Fair. The photo competition is now open for entries and closes in June.

They have started the first survey of the season for the pine shoot beetle, which is a federally regulated insect. Some were found in Scotland County, which will have some quarantine impacts. The quarantine areas will be reviewed after the surveys are completed.

Ms. Grundler said that MDA had received complaints earlier in the season on the Pesticide Program dealing with flyovers of fertilizer applications. The fertilizer program actually resides with the University of Missouri School of Natural Resources. Those complaints were forwarded to Joe Slater.

Ms. Grundler thanked Assistant Dean Baker for the tour and the meeting space.

The Governor and Director Richard Fordyce traveled to the Bootheel where they announced an upcoming trip to Cuba to lock down some contracts to export rice to Cuba. Ms. Grundler said rice will be one of the first items to export. There is a permit process they have to go through to export and receive commodities. Plus, there is another permitting process the receiving country will have to go through.

Ms. Grundler added that Director Fordyce had also gone on a European tour with the Governor.

Tom Bradley mentioned there was a really nice export facility in New Madrid County.

**4. Natural Resources Conservation Service**

J.R. Flores thanked Assistant Dean Baker for allowing the group to meet at Bradford Farm. He said NRCS received their budget for this year and are in better shape than last year. Funding should be available for partner opportunities with MDC and the SWCP. Staff have been really busy since the fiscal year began in October. They received over 1,200 applications for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). Contracts were renewed on over 590,000 acres with a \$9 million allocation. Payments were made on approximately 4,800 contracts for a total of \$32 million. At the CSP renewal sign-up they had over 400 applications for 2015. The obligation deadline for Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is May 15. He said EQIP received a 16 percent increase in the budget for 2015; approximately \$26.3 million.

Mr. Flores announced the Joint Chief Partnership between the U.S. Forest Service and NRCS. Missouri has a first time project called the Ozark Highlands Project. The project will provide financial assistance to landowners, with land surrounding the Mark Twain National Forest, who have sediment and water quality issues.

A map was distributed with the new Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative project areas. The past projects were very successful. This will bring additional funding to Missouri.

Natural Resources Conservation Service is working with MDC and DNR to finalize their Regional Conservation Partnership Program projects.

Mr. Flores announced the next State Technical Committee meeting will be held on June 30 at Bradford Farm. Participation of the Commission and partners is always appreciated.

Nationally there will be \$20 million available for Conservation Innovative Grants (CIG), which is part of EQIP funds. In the past, the University of Missouri has received CIG funding.

Missouri landowners will have \$3.9 million available to protect wetlands and \$757,000 will be available for easements to protect agricultural land from non-agriculture uses. Landowners can receive \$2,700 – \$5,000/acre in exchange for permanent easements, depending on the location.

The Emergency Watershed Protection Program received \$1.8 million for repair of damage to bridges, roads, and streams. Staff will be busy getting the funding out and the repairs completed.

Mr. Flores said he often receives requests for more staffing in the districts. Funding is limited; however, they are working on agreements, like they have with MDC and similar to what has been done with DNR SWCP. Eleven technicians have been hired to do field work and they are anticipating expanding. Mr. Flores will be working with SWCP on an agreement for additional district staff positions.

**5. Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts**

Kenny Lovelace participated in a conference call with the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) the evening of April 7, 2015. There was a concern regarding a lawsuit in Iowa focused on drainage districts that have been shown to have high concentrations of nitrates. Depending on the outcome, Mr. Lovelace felt this could be a concern for Missouri. He thought more information would be available for the June meeting.

Mr. Lovelace said NACD is asking for 150 “champions,” which are farmers and ranchers who work with cover crops that keep records and would share those. He said NACD would like three from each state. They would be selected by the states.

At the March 17-18 Education Seminar, there were several legislators in attendance. Mr. Lovelace felt the meeting was successful and very informative. Colleen Meredith did a presentation on the budget. A decision was made to continue having these meetings. Lula Gregory, Program Director of Agriculture Education on the Move and Missouri Farmers Care, was also in attendance. She teaches agriculture topics to third grade students. It was good to know educators are still teaching the young people. Contact Kenny Lovelace if you need her contact information.

Mr. Lovelace said NACD has literature on the Pollinator’s Education Stewardship. One NACD staff person is working on this. They have had 40+ requests from Missouri. Mr. Lovelace has contact information if anyone is interested.

Mr. Lovelace thanked all the partners for helping get the Soil Lab up and running.

**G. REQUESTS – 1:00 p.m.**

**1. Supervisor Requests**

**a. Butler SWCD**

Jennifer Pellett presented a request from the Butler County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to allow the board to appoint Mr. Zane Clark to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Andy Clark due to his inability to fulfill his elected term. Mr. Zane Clark and the board chairman have signed the Verification of Supervisory Eligibility form, verifying the candidate meets the qualifications to serve on the board.

Thomas Bradley made a motion to approve the appointment of Mr. Zane Clark to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Andy Clark to the Butler SWCD Board of Supervisors. Jeff Lance seconded the motion. When asked by the Chair, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, Jeff Lance and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**b. Linn SWCD**

Jim Plassmeyer presented a request from the Linn County SWCD to allow the board to appoint Mr. Greg Williams to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Jack Thieme due to his death. Mr. Greg Williams and the board

chairman have signed the Verification of Supervisor Eligibility form, verifying the candidate meets the qualifications to serve on the board.

H. Ralph Gaw made a motion to approve the appointment of Mr. Greg Williams to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Jack Thieme to the Linn SWCD Board of Supervisors. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion. When asked by the Chair, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, Jeff Lance and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**2. Plan for the Future Conservation Practices Subcommittee**

Jim Plassmeyer stated that an update of the committee work was presented at the last meeting. For this meeting Mr. Plassmeyer is requesting Commission approval on committee recommendations. Three Commission members have been involved with the committee. The group focused on conservation practices and how to develop a procedure for all districts to provide input on the policies. Similar to NRCS Standards and Specifications reviews, the committee looked at setting a schedule for practices for policy review so the districts know the timeline. The committee suggested looking at a five-year cycle so that within a ten-year period districts could comment twice for every practice. The groups for review, combining similar practices are: 1) Sheet and Rill/Gully - Seedings; 2) Sheet and Rill/Gully – Structural; 3) Grazing Management; 4) Animal Waste; and 5) Nutrient and Pest; Irrigation Management; and Sensitive Areas/Woodland. The committee decided the order of the groupings for the review schedule would be: 1) Sheet and Rill/Gully -Seedings; 2) Grazing Management/Animal waste/Nutrient and Pest; 3) Sheet and Rill/Gully - Structural; 4) Sensitive Areas/Woodland; and 5) Irrigation Management.

When a practice is open for comment, there will be a 60-day comment period. Since districts will know when a practice is scheduled for review, they can be preparing comments throughout the year to be ready for the comment period. The comments will then be reviewed with the Commission to determine if policy changes are needed. Staff will draft policy changes and review those with a technical committee. Mr. Plassmeyer said the Conservation Practices Subcommittee discussed creating a small group, similar to the State Technical Committee, of agency staff, district staff and board members, to review the comments to determine what policies work to get practices on the ground. There will then be a second comment period of 30 days for review of the completed draft policies. The final draft will be submitted to the Commission for a decision.

To assist in making the review process easier and smoother, the group developed some questions for the districts to think about and use when reviewing a practice. Mr. Plassmeyer said the committee also discussed reasons to deviate from the review schedule, which may include a significant change in the NRCS Standards and Specifications that would impact a practice; practice implementation issues

found during program office practice reviews or audits; or a major agriculture or economic shift that would impact practice implementation or use.

Mr. Plassmeyer said the committee went through the steps/procedures for the current process on how to request a new practice and developed a written process for districts to follow when making a request.

In answer to a question, Mr. Plassmeyer said this committee has their portion wrapped up, but thought there were other topics/issues that this group could discuss, i.e., cost-share rules, landowner payments, etc. Mr. Gaw mentioned he was impressed with the enthusiasm of the group. Mr. Vandiver shared this impression and felt all the groups should be commended for their work.

H. Ralph Gaw made a motion to approve the Plan for the Future Current Conservation Practices committee's recommendations on practice policy review and new practice procedure to be incorporated into the Plan for the Future effective on January 1, 2016. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion. When asked by the Chair, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, Jeff Lance and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**a. Scotland SWCD – Request to Expand Existing Livestock Exclusion Practice Components**

Jim Plassmeyer presented a request from the Scotland County SWCD to have cost-share assistance made available for water supply components in the N472 Livestock Exclusion practice. This practice was originally set up to exclude livestock from woodland areas, but was later changed to include fencing off a pond or other sensitive areas from livestock access. The district's request is for a landowner receiving cost-share to exclude livestock from a pond, to also include cost-share for installing a water tank with water being piped from that pond.

Mr. Plassmeyer explained that in November 2009, the Commission concurred with implementing a Practice Policy Review. If comments were received on a practice, those comments would be retained until that practice was opened for policy review.

The livestock exclusion practices (N472 and DFR-5) went through a policy review in FY13 with policy changes being implemented in FY14. During this review process, comments were submitted from districts about providing cost-share assistance for a water supply, but were not adopted in the policies. A resolution from the Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts addressing this issue was also received. Mr. Plassmeyer said the ponds were existing ponds and not those built through the cost-share program. Several options were taken into consideration when the practice was last reviewed. Discussions and clarifications were held on the cost for the use of the pond for a watering source vs. a

watering tank and what would actually be covered. In response to a question, Mr. Plassmeyer estimated the policy would be up for review again in 2020.

Jeff Lance made a motion to hold Scotland SWCD's comments until the N472 practice comes up for review as outlined in the Plan for the Future schedule. H. Ralph Gaw seconded the motion. When asked by the Chair, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, Jeff Lance and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**b. Crawford SWCD – Request to Allow More Than One Liming Event per Maintenance Period**

Jim Plassmeyer presented a request from Crawford County SWCD to have the DSP 3.4 Grazing System Lime Practice policy changed to allow application of lime more than once per field.

Mr. Plassmeyer read from the DSP 3.4 Policy in the Cost-Share Handbook that covered the lime application policy. He then introduced Will McClain, Crawford County board member University Extension. Dr. McClain said that some soils need more than one lime application, especially in Crawford County. The board was asking to change the policy language to add "as needed in the contract period." In answer to a question, Dr. McClain responded that the pH is very, very low in some fields. The soil test would be the guide for a control of the number of applications. The board is asking for approval if a soil test required another application within the contract period. He stated another reason would be if at the end of the fiscal year the district had funding available, this would allow them to get more cost-share on the ground. Dr. McClain commented that even though this request could be for all counties, soils are not all the same across the state. As mentioned, the soil test would be the guide.

Colleen Meredith commented that having to go back into contracts over multiple years can be difficult administratively. She mentioned there is also a cap for lime on grazing systems for each acre.

H. Ralph Gaw made a motion to hold Crawford SWCD's comments until the DSP 3.4 Grazing System Lime Practice comes up for review as outlined in the Plan for the Future schedule. Jeff Lance seconded the motion. When asked by the Chair, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, Jeff Lance and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**3. Nodaway – Request for Policy Variance on the DSL-1 Permanent Vegetative Cover Establish Practice**

Jim Plassmeyer presented the Nodaway SWCD request for approval to continue with contract SGE 019-15-0034 DSL-01 Permanent Vegetative Cover Establishment for Mr. Herbert Nicholson on fields that do not currently meet the erosion requirements. Mr. Plassmeyer informed the Commission of the DSL-01 erosion requirements and provided some background information. Mr. Nicholson had signed up for the DSL-01 contract on three fields. The District Technician worked on RUSLE2 calculations and determined the fields were eligible based on erosion requirements. The contract was signed and approved by the board on December 19, 2014. The NRCS District Conservationist reviewed the calculations and found them to be incorrect. The landowner was contacted and informed that he was not eligible for the DSL-01 practice. The landowner appealed to the Nodaway County Board of Supervisors since the contract was already approved. The lime and phosphorus had already been applied. The Nodaway SWCD is requesting approval to continue with the contract on fields that do not currently meet the erosion requirements. Mr. Plassmeyer talked about some specifics of the contract and provided language from the rules where the Commission has authority to grant a variance. Discussions were held regarding whether fertilizer, lime and seed have already been applied, or ordered and not yet applied.

Thomas Bradley a motion to grant a variance on the erosion requirement of the DSL-01 Permanent Vegetative Cover Establishment to Nodaway SWCD allowing the continuation of contract SGE 019-15-0034 for Mr. Herbert Nicholson. Jeff Lance seconded the motion. When asked by the Chair, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, Jeff Lance and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Plassmeyer added that NRCS is providing RUSLE2 training and utilization to their staff. This training is being recorded and made available to the district staff.

**4. Follow-up on Request to Extend Maintenance Life for Stream Buffer Practices**

Alan Freeman presented information as a follow-up to the request from Hickory County SWCD to provide an additional out-of-production incentive as the maintenance life expires on WQ10 Stream Protection Buffer practices, which was first presented at the June 10, 2014, Commission meeting. Staff received comments and now has draft policy language for Section G. Buffer Maintenance Extension of the Cost-Share Handbook for Commission approval. The practices include WQ10 Stream Protection, N391 Riparian Forest Buffer, N393 Filter Strip, and N386 Field Border. This policy will be effective July 1, 2015 (FY16).

Jim Plassmeyer added that the district boards would make the decision whether to offer this practice for extending buffer contracts and provide the additional incentive, since the funding would come from the district's cost-share allocation.

Acres in buffer are not automatically approved; this is dependent on the decision of the local SWCD boards.

H. Ralph Gaw made a motion to approve the establishment of a one-time incentive payment for buffer maintenance extensions for N386 Field Border, N391 Riparian Forest Buffer, N393 Filter Strip, and/or the WQ10 Stream Protection practices to begin July 1, 2015, according to the policy presented. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion. When asked by the Chair, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, Jeff Lance and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**H. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments made.

**I. SUGGESTED DATE(S) OF NEXT MEETINGS**

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 10, 2015, at the Delta Center, near Portageville.

**J. ADJOURNMENT**

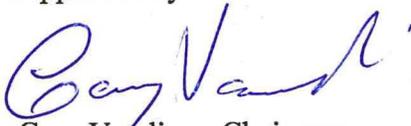
H. Ralph Gaw made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:23 p.m. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion. When asked by the Chair, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, Jeff Lance and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Colleen Meredith, Director  
Soil and Water Conservation Program

Approved by:



Gary Vandiver, Chairman  
Missouri Soil and Water Districts Commission

/djs