



Missouri Department of Natural Resources

MINUTES

MISSOURI SOIL AND WATER DISTRICTS COMMISSION

DNR Conference Center

Jefferson City, Missouri

March 21, 2014

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Charles Ausfahl, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, and Gary Vandiver

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS: RICHARD FORDYCE, DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE: Judy Grundler; BOB ZIEHMER, DEPT. OF CONSERVATION: Clint Dalbom; SARA PARKER PAULEY, DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES: Sara Parker Pauley, Joe Engeln

ADVISORY MEMBERS PRESENT: SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM: Bill Wilson; NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS): J.R. Flores; MISSOURI ASSOCIATION OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS (MASWCD): Kenny Loveless; ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE: Tim Duggan; UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI: David Baker

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Boschert, Van Beydler, Alan Freeman, Christa Moody, James Plassmeyer, Judy Stinson, Ken Struempfler, Leon Thompson, Matt Elliott, Patricia Chapman, Allan Clarke, Josh Poyner, Colette Weckenborg, Deanna Smith,

OTHERS PRESENT: DISTRICTS: Cole: Peggy Lemons; Gasconade: Diana Mayfield; Jefferson: George Engelbach; Lafayette: Susie Struchtemeyer, Phillip Boydston, Lafayette Landowner: Bob Ramey; Pulaski: Kassi Morgan, Kent Ledbetter; MISSOURI FARM BUREAU: Kelly Smith; MISSOURI SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION (MSWCDEA): Sandy Stratman; MISSOURI LAND IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION (MLICA): Jeff Lance; MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES: Kurt Boeckmann; MISSOURI ASSOCIATION SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS: Beverly Dometrorch

A. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Gary Vandiver called the meeting to order at the DNR Conference Center in Jefferson City, Missouri, at 9:07 a.m. Charles Ausfahl, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, and Gary Vandiver were present, which made a quorum. Mr. Vandiver mentioned the appointment of former Chairman Richard Fordyce as Director of Agriculture and what a quality person he is to represent the state in that position. Mr. Vandiver mentioned that the Commission will honor Mr. Fordyce for his service to the Commission at a future meeting and was sure that Mr. Fordyce will engage with the Soil and Water Districts Commission every chance that he can.

B. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

1. December 16, 2013 Minutes

Thomas Bradley made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2013 Commission meeting. Charles Ausfahl seconded the motion. When asked by the Vice Chair, Charles Ausfahl, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

C. ELECTION OF COMMISSION CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Joe Engeln opened the floor for nominations for the position of chair for the Soil and Water Districts Commission. H. Ralph Gaw nominated Gary Vandiver. Thomas Bradley seconded the nomination. H. Ralph Gaw made the motion to close nominations and Charles Ausfahl seconded the motion.

Joe Engeln opened the floor for nominations for the position of Vice Chair for the Soil and Water Districts Commission. Thomas Bradley nominated H. Ralph Gaw. Charles Ausfahl seconded the nomination. Due to one nominee for each position Joe Engeln offered the option of voting by acclamation. Charles Ausfahl made the motion to vote by acclamation. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion.

Commissioner Vandiver thanked Mr. Engeln for presiding over the election and thanked the other members of the commission for the confidence they put in him and Vice Chair Gaw. He said the commission will continue to operate in a way that prior Chairman Fordyce and he have in the past, with common sense, an open mind, and the knowledge that work happens at the ground level with district boards and staff. If there is anything the commission can do to assist districts, to please let them know.

D. MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

1. Department of Natural Resources 40th Anniversary

Sara Parker Pauley, Director of Missouri Department of Natural Resources, congratulated Chairman Vandiver and Vice Chairman Gaw on their positions and thanked them for their service and that of the other commissioners. Director Pauley presented information about the 40th anniversary of the Department of Natural Resources. A video was presented showing the history and impact that the Department has had over the past 40 years.

As part of the 40th celebration, a Natural Resources Conference has been scheduled for November 12-13, 2014. The purpose of this conference is twofold: to look back at the last 40 years and determine the greatest environmental challenges that Missouri faced and how Missouri approached those challenges. The next day will include looking to the next 40 years. Key stakeholders will be invited to this conference.

The main focus of this conference will be the Missouri approach, and how Missouri does things differently from other states. The best example is the Parks, Soils and

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Water Sales Tax and how Missouri has dealt with soil resources, water quality protection, preserving Missouri's parks, and providing greater recreational opportunities.

Part of this conference will be to highlight the Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax, the Soil and Water Districts Commission and its efforts, and the Missouri State Parks System. The Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax renewal process has started. Mr. Dave Murphy who worked very closely with the Citizen's Committee during the last renewal of the tax updated the Commission on the efforts that the committee has taken to begin the renewal effort. Mr. Murphy stated that the investments made through the tax dollars entrusted to the program, under the commission's direction, has completely changed our state during his lifetime. He stated that it is a privilege to be associated with the renewal effort. During the last renewal he was Executive Director of the Conservation Federation of Missouri and worked closely with Estil Fretwell, a boyhood friend. The committee has identified the honorary chairs for the committee as Mr. Blake Hurst and Mr. Steve Mahfood; Mr. Darwin Hindman will be on the committee as well. Mr. Dave Murphy and Mr. Estil Fretwell will be the Operational Chairs for the committee. Commission Chairman Vandiver stated the Soil and Water Districts Commission will support the committees' efforts.

Mr. Vandiver thanked Directory Pauley and Mr. Murphy for presenting at the meeting and commented that each person involved with the program will work to ensure that the tax is successful again.

E. SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

5. Missouri State Parks Update

Deputy Director of State Parks, J.C. Kuessner, presented the Missouri State Parks update. Missouri has 87 state parks and historical sites throughout the state and most Missourians are within a 60-minute drive to reach a park. In 2013, Missouri State Parks welcomed 17.5 million visitors. Interpreters interacted with nearly 1.8 million guests, which is a 5.9 percent increase over 2012. From September through November, Missouri State Parks saw a 7 percent increase in attendance over the previous fall. The revenue generated by Missouri State Parks totaled \$9.7 million. For every dollar of sales tax funds received, Missouri State Parks returned \$27 to the state's economy and receive a 97 percent approval rating from their guests.

In 2013, Missouri was named the Best Trails State by American Trails. Missouri has been named in the top four states the last 14 years. Missouri State Parks offer almost 1,000 miles of managed trails and is the home of the Katy Trail State Park, the longest developed rail-to-trail conversion in the nation.

One year ago, the Missouri State Parks released the publication "Trails of Missouri State Parks". This book provides detailed information for more than 230

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Missouri State Parks trails. The database and resulting trail books were recognized by the Society of Outdoor Recreational Professionals with the 2013 Project Excellence Award.

In 2013, to celebrate Missouri as the best trail state and encourage Missourians to enjoy the outdoors, Governor Jay Nixon and First Lady Georganne Nixon invited Missourians to join them to complete 100 miles of outdoor physical activities by the end of the year. There were more than 12,500 participants that logged more than 1 million Missouri miles. March 19, 2014, the Governor and First Lady started the 2014 program at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park in Columbia, Missouri.

Also in 2013, Missouri State Parks was named a National Gold Medal Finalist for excellence in the field of park and recreation management.

Mr. Kuessner talked about partnerships and creative actions to maintain parks. Camp Pin Oak Lodge reopened in October 2013 due to a partnership with Missouri State Parks, Department of Economic Development and State Fair Community College to rebuild the lodge which burned in 2010. Parks acquired 330 acres in Shannon County in 2013, which historically was referred to as Camp Zoe adjacent to Current River State Park.

The State Parks Youth Corps has continued since 2010 to provided 70,000 hours of stewardship in the parks in 2013. The Learn2 Camp is in its second year at selected parks and provides training in camping and paddling; it is tailored to people with little experience in the outdoors.

To highlight the award winning state trails, 2014 is The Year of Trails in Missouri State Parks. Events and activities will focus on Missouri trails and encouraging people to hike, bike and paddle in Missouri's parks and historic sites.

In 2013, the Battle of Island Mound State Historic site was opened. This site was the location where African American troops engaged Civil War combat. A film was created through a collaborative agreement between Motion Path Productions and Missouri State Parks. A group of high school students from Ruskin High School in Kansas City were the first to view the film on February 21, 2014. Mr. Kuessner presented the trailer to this film

1. **Staff Updates**

Bill Wilson introduced Jim Boschert who accepted the Environmental Specialist IV position. He will be the supervisor for the coordinators for the Eastern portion of Missouri.

Jim Boschert introduced Deanna Smith who accepted an Environmental Specialist II position. She has recently received her doctorate from the University of Missouri with an emphasis in plant and soil sciences. She will be coordinator for 10 counties in southeastern Missouri.

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Ken Struempf introduced Van Beydler who accepted the Public Information Coordinator position. Mr. Beydler has been with the Department of Natural Resources for 16 years and looks forward to working with the Soil and Water Conservation Program.

2. **FY2014 Cost-Share/SALT Fund Status**

Ken Struempf presented the fiscal year 2014 (FY14) Cost-Share/SALT Fund Status. The FY14 Cost-Share Fund Status totals were as of March 17, 2014, \$30,972,559 allocated with \$20,645,030 obligated. Of that obligated amount, \$10,572,404 has been paid. The amounts obligated and paid are less than those in FY12 for the same period that year.

The FY14 SALT Cost-Share totals were, as of March 17, 2014, \$1,090,557 allocated with \$562,183 obligated. Of that obligated amount, \$365,705 has been paid. FY15 is the last year for the SALT projects.

3. **FY14 / FY15 Budget Updates**

Colette Weckenborg presented the FY14/FY15 Budget Updates. The current Soil and Water Conservation Program expenditures per Statewide Advantage to Missouri (SAM II) data are as of March 18, 2014, \$21,414,103. The total FY14 appropriations are \$46,870,762. Overall, 46 percent of the total program appropriations have been spent.

The Governor's FY15 recommended budget is \$49,241,034. The recommended budget includes increasing the cost-share appropriation from \$27.7 million to \$31 million. This increase in the cost-share appropriation is made possible through core budget redirects along with an expansion utilizing uncommitted funds.

Ms. Weckenborg stated that year-to-date tax revenues have increased by 4 percent in comparison to last year at this time.

4. **Plan for the Future Update**

Ken Struempf presented information from the Outreach and Education Subcommittee of the Plan for the Future. Mr. Struempf listed the subcommittee members and stated there have been four meetings between July 2013 and November 2013. At the December 2013 Training Conference, the goals and objectives were presented to the districts for their feedback. The next meeting will be scheduled for late April or early May where the districts' feedback will be presented to the committee.

The mission statement that the Outreach Committee developed for their portion of the Plan for the Future is: "Through Outreach and Education increase Missouri farmers' awareness and knowledge of the Soil and Water Conservation Program opportunities to protect the soil and water resources of the state and to make known the benefits of these efforts to the general public."

The targeted audiences were defined as farmers and the public. The outreach goal for the farmers is: "To increase the farmers understanding of the benefits derived

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from the Soil and Water Conservation Program to enable the most effective use of the soil and water resources". The outreach goal for the public is "To increase the public's understanding of the economic, recreational, water quality and soil savings benefits of the Soil and Water Conservation Program".

Mr. Vandiver stated that he attended a Plan for the Future meeting the previous day led by Jim Plassmeyer. He encouraged stakeholders to attend meetings if the opportunity is available and provide input. Mr. Plassmeyer presented information from the Current Practices Subcommittee of the Plan for the Future. He stated that March 20, 2013 was the first meeting of that subcommittee. There were 40 invitations sent with 25-30 participants at the meeting. A summary of the information from the 2013 Area Meetings and the December training conference was presented to the committee to determine which direction this committee would like to take. The second meeting will be scheduled six to eight weeks from March 20, 2013. Commissioner Gaw also attended that meeting and commented that he was impressed how many people spoke up and provided opinions and insight. Commissioners Vandiver and Gaw both stated their appreciation to the board members that were involved with their group, and their input, opinions and interest in the purpose of the program, staying focused on soil and water resources.

Colette Weckenborg presented information from the Program Delivery and Operations Subcommittee of the Plan for the Future. This committee has met four times with the committee comprised of 10 district technicians, 10 district program specialists, 10 board members and several representatives from partner agencies.

The first action of this committee was to work on a staffing plan. This staffing plan will provide better recruitment, better retention and a career progression for employees. A plan has been created where eight counties have been asked to participate in a pilot program of sharing district staff expertise across districts. This pilot will run at least through the end of this summer, and the committee will evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot.

While working on the staffing plan, a request from the Warren and Montgomery Soil and Water Conservation Districts was sent to the subcommittee to request concurrence from the Soil and Water Districts Commission to research soil and water district employees becoming State of Missouri employees.

Mr. Joe Engeln encouraged the commission to ask the committee to carefully look at positives and negatives of this proposal and mentioned that the committee is an appropriate group to look at this because of the broad representation. It should be a thorough examination of the question but not something that leads to a recommendation. He also mentioned that this should not hold up Plan for the Future efforts since this is not tied to that document. After discussion, H. Ralph Gaw made a motion to allow the Program Delivery and Operations Subcommittee to do a thorough study to determine if the Commission should recommend to the powers that be, that district staff become state employees. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion. A poll vote was taken. Charles Ausfahl, Thomas Bradley,

H. Ralph Gaw, and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Colette Weckenborg presented the Program Delivery and Operations Subcommittee 2014 SWCP Intern Program. The discussion that the committee had was to identify ways to: best fill staffing needs in district offices during heavy summer work periods, staff the office economically and effectively, and identify potential candidates for future employment. She stated these would be the goals of a summer intern program.

The proposed guidelines would be: the intern must be a college student, funds would only be available between May 1 – September 1, 2014, an estimated \$2,500 stipend per district to provide the intern with compensation and cover related costs with recommended compensation of minimum wage or slightly higher. With additional information, the program has obtained the actual stipend would slightly exceed the previously discussed \$2,500 stipend per district.

After discussion, Thomas Bradley made a motion to concur that the Plan for the Future Program Delivery and Operations Subcommittee move forward with an Intern Program for summer 2014. Charles Ausfahl seconded the motion. A poll vote was taken. Charles Ausfahl, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

F. REQUEST/REVIEW

1. Supervisor Appointments

a. Taney Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)

Josh Poynor presented the Taney SWCD supervisor appointment. The Taney SWCD Board requests the appointment of Mr. Wayne Gailey to complete the unexpired term of Mr. John Cantrell, who has resigned. Mr. Gailey and the board chairman have signed the Verification of Supervisor Eligibility form, verifying the candidate meets the qualifications to serve on the board.

Charles Ausfahl made a motion to approve the appointment of Mr. Wayne Gailey to complete the unexpired term of Mr. John Cantrell to the Taney SWCD Board of Supervisors. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Charles Ausfahl, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

b. Webster Soil and Water Conservation District

Allan Clarke presented the Webster SWCD supervisor appointment. The Webster SWCD Board requests the appointment of Dr. Jerry Fry to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Tim Essary. Mr. Essary submitted a letter of resignation. Dr. Fry and the board chairman signed the

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

Thomas Bradley made a motion to approve the appointment of Dr. Jerry Fry to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Tim Essary to the Webster SWCD Board of Supervisors. Charles Ausfahl seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Charles Ausfahl, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

c. Vernon Soil and Water Conservation District

Jim Plassmeyer presented the Vernon SWCD supervisor appointment. The Vernon SWCD Board requests the appointment of Mr. Joe Charles to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Darren Wiley, who submitted a letter of resignation. Mr. Charles and the board chairman have signed the Verification of Supervisor Eligibility form, verifying the candidate meets the qualifications to serve on the board.

Thomas Bradley made a motion to approve the appointment of Mr. Joe Charles to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Darren Wiley to the Vernon SWCD Board of Supervisors. H. Ralph Gaw seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Charles Ausfahl, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Briefing for next two agenda items

Commission Administration of the Cost-Share Program 10 CSR 70-5.060

Jim Plassmeyer reviewed the timeline contained in the Cost-Share Maintenance Violation Procedures Rules. The district board identifies a maintenance violation and requests that the landowner correct the problem within a reasonable and fair timeframe. If not corrected by the board established date, the board demands repayment of a prorated amount of the cost-share payment by certified mail, to be made within 30 days of receiving the letter.

The landowner has the option to appeal the board's decision to the Commission in writing during the 30-day period. If payment or appeal is not received during the 30-day period, the board sends notification to the Commission asking for assistance to recover funds.

If the landowner makes an appeal to the Commission, the Commission reviews the request during a Commission meeting. The Commission determines whether or not there was a maintenance violation. If a violation occurred, the demand for payment within 30 days is renewed or the landowner corrects all deficiencies at landowner expense in the time specified by the Commission.

If payment is not received within 30 days or deficiencies corrected, the Commission may refer the matter to the Attorney General's Office for recovery of funds.

If no violation is found by the Commission, then the demand for repayment is withdrawn.

2. Webster SWCD – Fick Grazing System Policy Maintenance Violation

Leon Thompson presented the maintenance violation. The Webster SWCD requests assistance in collecting repayment of \$4,199.89 of cost-share funds from Delane and Cindy Fick for a DSP-3.1, Grazing System Water Development Practice (water well). The Webster SWCD approved contract number SN077-11-0001 on July 26, 2010 and paid \$4,199.89 on October 25, 2010.

The Commission policy for the DSP-3.1 practice number 1.c, states that: “The entire grazing system must meet the standard and specifications for Prescribed Grazing (528) within three years after payment of the first contract or the entire amount of cost-share received must be repaid.”

The Fick’s received cost share for a DSP 3.1 well construction on their property for a planned grazing system. At this time, Mr. Fick has only completed the well and no other portion of the planned grazing system has been installed, resulting in a violation of the policy previously described.

Mr. Thompson outlined the timeline of actions and communication that had taken place with the landowner and the request for repayment based on Soil and Water Districts Commission policy. The Webster County SWCD has documented contacts made or attempted with the landowner. The Soil and Water Conservation Program sent a certified letter that was received and signed for on February 18, 2014, asking for repayment of \$4,199.89 or to request an appeal to the Commission within 30 days of receipt of the letter. The program office has not received any feedback from the Fick’s on the certified letter.

After discussion, H. Ralph Gaw made a motion to support the local board’s request to obtain repayment on the DSP 3.1 Grazing System Water Development practice by maintaining current policy and referring the matter to the Attorney General's Office for collection. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion. A poll vote was taken. Charles Ausfahl, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Pulaski SWCD – Variance Request for DSL-01 Permanent Vegetative Cover Establishment Impacted by Flooding

Patty Chapman presented the request to utilize the DSL-01 practice on fields impacted by flooding. An Emergency Declaration was issued for South Central Missouri due to excessive rainfall and flooding that occurred in late July and early August 2013, with Pulaski County receiving over 20 inches of rain in August 2013. The rain created flooding covering thousands of acres for up to two weeks in Pulaski County. Pulaski County was eligible for the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) through the United States Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency. The ECP provides funding for debris removal, fencing repair and

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flood scouring repair, but only for reseeding in areas that have been rehabilitated after debris removal, or to repair scouring, not to reseed an entire field.

The district states the fields that were flooded have inadequate stands of grass but are not experiencing erosion rates above Tolerable Soil Loss (T) based on the RUSLE II calculations. This makes the fields ineligible for the seeding practices that require soil loss through the Soil and Water Conservation Cost-Share Program.

The Pulaski Board is requesting a variance to the erosion requirement of the DSL-01 Permanent Vegetative Cover Establishment practice. The proposed criteria to determine eligibility would be to utilize the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) JS Agron-24 with a "Poor" or "Very Poor" evaluation for the grass stand. The seeding and fertility standards and specifications would continue to be followed as defined in policy.

Mr. Kent Ledbetter, the Pulaski SWCD Technician, addressed the Commission. Mr. Ledbetter stated there are almost 50 miles of the Gasconade River that runs through Pulaski County. During the flood there were 10,000 acres covered by water for 10 to 15 days and requests have been made weekly asking if there are any programs for these acres to reestablish permanent vegetation. The landowners' requests for assistance total approximately 1,500 acres at this time, only for the fields that were flooded by the Gasconade River. The district proposes assisting with seeding the fields in the fall using FY15 allocations because most of the pastures affected are cool season, although some farmers are requesting help this spring. The district asks for any help the Commission can provide and proposes to use their current FY14 and FY15 allocations, and any other funds the commission might provide should they become available.

After discussion, H. Ralph Gaw made a motion to table this request until the next Commission meeting to allow for more time to evaluate the grass stands impacted by the flooding for potential fall seeding. Charles Ausfahl seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Charles Ausfahl, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

G. APPEALS

1. Lafayette SWCD – Landowner Appeal for Practice Started Prior to Contract Approval

Matt Elliott presented the Lafayette SWCD landowner appeal for a practice started prior to contract approval. The issue is: Should the Commission grant Mr. Bob Ramey a variance and allow the Lafayette SWCD to develop a contract to pay for two tile lines (lines B and D) within a terrace project that were completed prior to board approval of a contract.

The Cost-Share policy states: “Cost-Share assistance is not authorized for practices installed or started prior to board approval of the contract. A practice has been started when the required components of the practice have been applied or fabricated to an extent that they cannot be returned for a complete refund.”

The Lafayette SWCD local policy states that a landowner is limited to \$15,000 per year for cost-share. In November 2012, the project was staked by the district technician and designed in March 2013. On April 5, 2013, the NRCS technician was notified that the terraces would not be built until the fall. On September 27, 2013, Mr. Ramey signed cost-share contract SGE 021-14-0021 for two terrace tile lines A and C. During the preconstruction conference, the construction plans for the entire system were provided to Mr. Ramey because he was not sure if he would wait for cost-share funds to construct planned tile lines B and D, which were not on the original contract due to the local board policy limiting the landowner to \$15,000 per year.

In early October, the district technician completed a tile inspection for the entire system, which included all four tile lines during the USDA furlough. In late December, contractor Curtis Lewis inquired about cost-share funds on the second part of the system, but was told since the project had been started with all tile lines already installed on that portion of the system, a contract could not be created. On January 29, 2014, the board discussed Mr. Ramey’s request to have the second part of the terrace system considered for cost-share funds, but ruled since it was already started they could not create a contract. On February 14, 2014, the contractor’s checkout of the terraces was completed to process payment on SGE 021-14-0021 for lines A and C, the original contract.

Mr. Elliott provided cost estimates for lines B and D for the terrace project for the Commission’s information.

Mr. Bob Ramey, the landowner, and Phillip Boydston, the Lafayette SWCD technician addressed the Commission explaining what transpired between the Lafayette SWCD and landowner.

After discussion, Thomas Bradley made a motion to provide a variance to Commission policy and allow the board to develop and approve a contract for lines B and D of the terrace system that were completed prior to board approval. Charles Ausfahl seconded the motion. A poll vote was taken. Charles Ausfahl, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

H. REPORTS

1. University of Missouri

Dave Baker congratulated Gary Vandiver and H. Ralph Gaw on being elected as chair and vice chair. Mr. Baker stated the University of Missouri is celebrating its 175th year and the University of Missouri Extension is celebrating its 100 year

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anniversary. He extended an invitation to the Commission to an event being held at the quadrangle on campus on May 1st.

Mr. Baker also commended the Commission for the Internship Program, stating that there is a high correlation between where a student takes an internship and where they take their first job. Mr. Baker recommended extending the Internship Program to include the summer of 2015 because most students have identified and committed to a summer internship by January.

2. Department of Conservation

Clint Dalbom reported that this time of year is wild fire season. The Missouri Department of Conservation works closely with rural fire departments across the state with \$350,000 in matching grants and training for 400 firefighters. The wild fire season is currently in effect until the first part of May.

Mr. Dalbom also reported on deadlines for MDC cost-share programs; natural grassland work in Northeast Missouri with private landowners; a flowering tree forecast is now on their website to showcase attractive drives within the state; study of bears that are radio-collared to track movement and population estimates; feral hog activities with eight internal task forces around the state that have had some successes with eradicating some of the outlying hog populations; and Governor Nixon's proclamation that April 4th is Arbor Day, one-third of the state is in forest cover and the department provides 100,000 tree seedlings to fourth graders each year. .

Mr. Dalbom answered questions by the Commission concerning location of bears in the state, their movement and if there are impacts to livestock.

3. Department of Agriculture

Judy Grundler began by responding to Commission questions regarding regulation of movement of fire wood between states. It is a large concern for the walnut industry not only for the nuts but for the wood, and for transmittal of pests and diseases such as the Emerald Ash Borer and Thousand Cankers Disease. Ms. Grundler congratulated the new chair and vice chair on their positions with the Soil and Water Districts Commission. Ms. Grundler stated that the former chair of the Soil and Water Districts Commission and now Director of Missouri Department of Agriculture, Richard Fordyce, regretted not being able to attend the meeting but asked her to convey some of his priorities for the next few years as he takes on his role of Director of Agriculture. He plans to concentrate efforts on international marketing; value added agriculture and youth in agriculture.

Ms. Grundler stated the week of March 24th is National Agriculture Week. During this week, the Missouri Department of Agriculture will have its annual display of farm equipment in front of the George Washington Carver building, as well the farm equipment display at the State Capitol. These displays draw a large amount of attention from the public.

Ms. Grundler also stated there is a film called Farmland being put together by many farm agencies and will be shown at 7 p.m. March 26, 2014, in Columbia Missouri at the Regal Theatre. This film shows the next generation of farmers and the decision making processes they face to continue on with farming.

Ms. Grundler also reported on the Emerald Ash Borer quarantine that includes all of Missouri and Iowa, which means fire wood can be moved between these states. She also reported on surveys that are being conducted for Thousand Cankers Disease, the Gypsy Moth, and Pine Shoot Beetle. Judy also agreed with comments the Commissioners made earlier regarding the Plan for the Future process with the subcommittees. She is impressed with the dialogue going on in the committees and by the open, honest and thoughtful opinions for making improvements in the district offices. She applauds the efforts being taken to better improve the program.

4. Natural Resources Conservation Service

JR Flores congratulated the new chair and vice chair on their positions and looks forward to working with them as he did with Director Fordyce. He commented that he has worked for the agency for 32 years and in 7 other states and complimented the Commission on their partnership efforts and for the amount of conservation they are getting on the land. Mr. Flores reported on the Emergency Watershed Protection Program with the flooding that occurred four or five years ago. The last project was completed in February with approximately \$31 million being paid out for cleanout of several hundred miles of drainage ditches.

Mr. Flores gave updates on the new Farm Bill. The administration looked at efficiencies and cut conservation title programs from 23 to 13. Three easement programs for wetlands, grasslands and farm and ranchland protection have been consolidated into one program, the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is robust and will initially have \$1.3 billion nationwide, and by the end of the Farm Bill it will be at \$1.75 billion. One new program is the Regional Conservation Partnership Program that will allow Missouri the opportunity to participate and apply for funding in partnership efforts similar to the Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative (MRBI). Mr. Flores attended an Ag Round Table a week ago hosted by Farm Bureau for USDA agency heads. The meeting had great dialogue directly with agricultural producers. He also attended the NACD meeting in Anaheim in February and appreciated Colleen's attendance and participation on a panel discussion, and the opportunity to show other states what we are doing and to learn what they are doing. Mr. Flores answered Commission questions on ways to compete for federal funds for Missouri and said that most of these funds begin with a proposal from the local level and will require leveraging of funds.

The next State Technical Committee Meeting is June 17, 2014 in Columbia.

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

Kenny Lovelace congratulated Chairman Gary Vandiver and Vice Chairman H. Ralph Gaw on their new positions with the Soil and Water Districts Commission and also thanked the other Commissioners for the work they do.

Mr. Lovelace reported on the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee (MRRIC) group made up of eight states. Bruce Biermann who is MASWCD Area 1 Director is an alternate to Jack Majeres to represent conservation districts. They work with the Army Corps of Engineers and the committee has been around for quite some time and most people know it as MRRIC.

Mr. Lovelace also reported that at the Training Conference last December, Tim Palmer from Iowa who is the Executive Board Member for the North Central Region for National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) spoke at a few sessions. Susan Schultz is now full time with NACD and is working with education. Kirk Hanlin, the Associated Chief of Natural Resources Conservation Service, was present at the Training Conference and held an invitation only White House Roundtable where Commissioner Bradley provided valuable input regarding cotton and the ability to produce a finished product in Missouri.

Mr. Lovelace stated that NACD met in Anaheim, California in early February and Missouri was well represented with eight representatives. Missouri received an award the last three years for education because of the workshops and training provided at Tan-Tar-A. He thanked all the partners, employees and supervisors for all the work they do and recognized that this is due to their passion for saving soil which can be seen driving around the state.

Commissioner Bradley commented that he attended a meeting sponsored by Farm Bureau in the Bootheel which focused on cotton and rice production. Speakers discussed the cotton industry and said that three thread mills are to be built in America. The country is finally getting back to producing thread which may bring associated industries back to America which makes us more self-sustaining.

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. **Missouri Soil and Water Conservation Districts Employee Association Sharing the Vision Presentation**

Sandy Stratman congratulated Gary Vandiver and H. Ralph Gaw on being elected to the chair and vice chair positions. Ms. Stratman also presented the "Sharing the Vision Presentation" to the Commission which included pictures of activities going on in the districts. She was overwhelmed with the response from the districts and had to divide it into two presentations.

F. REQUEST/REVIEW (CONTINUED)

3. Jasper SWCD – Dawson, DSP-02 Permanent Vegetative Cover Enhancement Maintenance Violation

Josh Poynor presented the Jasper SWCD – Dawson, DSP-02 Permanent Vegetative Cover Enhancement maintenance violation. The Jasper SWCD requested assistance in collecting repayment of cost-share funds from Richard Dawson for a maintenance violation on two contracts in the prorated amount of \$3,427.50.

Mr. Richard Dawson has maintenance violations on contracts GM 058-11-058 and GM 058-11-059. Both contracts are for DSP-02 Permanent Vegetative Cover Enhancement practices. The fields have been removed from permanent pasture and placed into crop production. Mr. Dawson has failed to repay the prorated amount or reestablish the practice.

The DSP-02 practice is designed to improve pastureland through the demonstration of interseeding of legumes through no-till. Practice requirements are: permanent vegetative cover, adequate perimeter fence, a minimum of four paddocks, a water source for livestock and meeting the 528 Prescribed Grazing standards and specifications. The DSP-02 has a maintenance life span of five years.

Both contracts were approved by the board on March 5, 2011. Payment was issued to landowner on December 8, 2011 in the amount of \$4,113.28. The current contract maintenance requirements end December 2016 and the contract included 44.5 acres.

In June 2012, the district coordinator, along with the Jasper SWCD Technician II found no perimeter fence and wheat only in the field during a practice review. Mr. Poynor outlined the communication that had taken place with the landowner and the request for a prorated repayment of \$3,427.50 based on Soil and Water Districts Commission policy.

A certified letter was received by Mr. Dawson on February 18, 2014 from Soil and Water Conservation Program office that requested repayment and explained the process of appeal to Soil and Water Districts Commission. An appeal letter from Mr. Dawson was received on March 17, 2014 requesting the repayment to be waived.

After discussion, H. Ralph Gaw made a motion to support the local board and demand repayment within 30 days. If not received within that time, refer the maintenance violation of Mr. Richard Dawson to the Missouri Attorney General's Office for collection of cost-share funds in the amount of \$3,427.50. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion. A poll vote was taken. Charles Ausfahl, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw and Gary Vandiver, voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

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I. PUBLIC COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

Beverly Dometorch congratulated the new Soil and Water Districts Commission chair and vice chair. Ms. Dometorch has concerns about the training of district technicians. She commended Bill Wilson for assisting the MASWCD in receiving their education award from NACD. Mr. JR Flores said that NRCS is working closely with the Soil and Water Conservation Program for training district employees and moving forward with as much training as possible.

Chair Vandiver in closing mentioned that Director Pauley spoke today about our state resources and that what hit home with him was that he had two gentlemen from South Korea at their grain facility for six weeks. Every day they admired the sun and told Commissioner Vandiver that they rarely saw the sun shine in Korea due to the pollution that came from China. He said that although we have complaints about laws and regulations and how it pertains to our quality of life that we have a very good thing going in this country. He thanked the other Commissioners for their support in his becoming their chairman and thanked staff and partners. He said regardless of disagreements that our end goal is the same and we always do the best for agriculture.

J. SUGGESTED DATE(S) OF NEXT MEETING(S)

The next suggested Soil and Water Districts Commission meeting is May 21, 2014 in Jefferson City.

K. ADJOURNMENT

H. Ralph Gaw made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:38pm. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion. When asked by the chair. Charles Ausfahl, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Bill Wilson, Deputy Director
Soil and Water Conservation Program

Approved by:



Gary Vandiver, Chairman
Missouri Soil and Water Districts Commission

/clm