



Missouri Department of Natural Resources

MINUTES

MISSOURI SOIL AND WATER DISTRICTS COMMISSION BRADFORD RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER COLUMBIA, MISSOURI MAY 12, 2010

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Dan Devlin, Gary Vandiver and Richard Fordyce

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS: DEAN THOMAS PAYNE, UNIV. OF MISSOURI: Dave Baker; **BOB ZIEHMER, DEPT. OF CONSERVATION:** John Knudsen; **JON HAGLER, DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE:** Judy Grundler; **MARK TEMPLETON, DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES:** Mike Wells

ADVISORY MEMBERS PRESENT: SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM: Bryan Hopkins; **NRCS:** J R Flores; **MASWCD:** Steve Radcliff

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Chrisi Armbruster, Milt Barr, Kurt Boeckmann, Jim Boschert, Allan Clarke, Jesse Higginbotham, Jennifer Johnson, Eric McGeorge, Colleen Meredith, Theresa Mueller, Jim Plassmeyer, Josh Poynor, Jeremy Redden, Jennifer Sieg, Judy Stinson, Ken Struempf, Cody Tebbenkamp, Leon Thompson, Colette Weckenborg and Bill Wilson

OTHERS PRESENT: DISTRICTS: FRANKLIN: Lori Nowak; **HOWARD:** Bev Dometroch; **MARIES:** Sandy Hutchison; **ST. CHARLES:** Frankie Coleman; **ST. LOUIS:** Jennifer Lewis; **WARREN:** Polly Sachs; **STATE OF MISSOURI: ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE:** Tim Duggan; **OTHERS:** MO Farm Bureau: Kelly Smith; **MLICA:** Jeff Lance, Tom Lawly; **SEMO College:** Dr. Michael Aide

NOTE: The following is a general summary of the information presented at the commission meeting. For specific information on commission proceedings, please refer to the DVD/Video or Audio.

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A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Richard Fordyce called the meeting to order, in Columbia, Missouri, at the Bradford Research and Extension Center, at 8:38 a.m.

B. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Gary Vandiver made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2010, and March 26, 2010 commission meetings as mailed. Kathryn Braden seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Dan Devlin, Gary Vandiver, and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Kathryn Braden made a motion to approve the closed minutes of the March 10, 2010, and March 26, 2010 commission meetings as presented. Gary Vandiver seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Dan Devlin, Gary Vandiver, and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

C. WELCOME FROM UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

Dr. Mark Linit, the Associate Dean for the College of Agriculture Food and Natural Resources from the University of Missouri, welcomed the commission. He provided a brief overview of the need for research farms and the importance of them.

Tim Reinbott the Superintendent of the Bradford Research and Extension Center covered some of the research that they do at Bradford such as breeding and genetics, basic and applied. He also covered how they deliver this information to the public such as field days, clinics and workshops. Next Mr. Reinbott covered some of the green aspects of the center. He proceeded to cover some of the alternative energy sources that the farm uses.

D. DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Mike Wells thanked the program staff that was working on the Mississippi River Basin Health Watershed Initiative proposals. Next Mr. Wells provided some background on the workgroup that was being developed regarding strategic planning. Mr. Wells provided the commission with a brief update on the soil and water conservation budget that was recommended.

E. SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Bryan Hopkins provided an update on a meeting that Mike Wells and he had with Steve Radcliff and some other MASWCD members. He stated that it was very productive meeting for all.

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1. **Landowner Surveys Feedback**

Ken Struempf updated the commission on a landowner survey that is being sent with a direct deposit letter. He stated the survey provides feedback from the landowners on how the process is and how the program is doing. He stated that the feedback has been positive. Districts will receive the survey results at least annually.

Mr. Struempf introduced Jennifer Johnson who was hired as a District Coordinator for the north central part of the state.

2. **Stakeholder Work Group**

Bryan Hopkins provided an update on the workgroup meeting that is scheduled for June 4, at the Bradford Research and Extension Center. He covered some issues that will be looked at in future meetings. He stated that the members of the workgroup would depend on the issues being worked on. He stated that MASWCD and the Employees Association would be included at the meetings. Mr. Hopkins pointed out that the report that is developed at the June meeting would be available on the web and public comments would be taken.

Gary Vandiver made a motion to nominate Dan Devlin to represent the commission on the workgroup. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Gary Vandiver and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

3. **Election Policy Compliance Update Follow Up**

Jim Plassmeyer provided a timeline on the election procedure changes. He stated the election procedures were initially reviewed on July of 2008 due to a contested election. In March and April 2009 Commissioners Braden and Fordyce met with program staff to review and discuss the election rules, in May 2009 the commission approved policies effective July 1, 2009 and approved to initiate the process to change the rules, and in June – December memorandums and training were provided to the districts on the election procedures. He stated the program staff was reviewing the elections that had been held since the policies were adopted to evaluate the effectiveness of the policies by looking at the number of votes cast in the individual elections, the number of candidates running in the election and administration of the election policy.

- Next Jim Boschert updated the commission on some issues that the program had noticed with the policy process. He proceeded to review some of the new election policies. He stated 24 districts did not have issues with the new policies

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- but 24 did. Next, he covered specific issues that the districts had. He stated that one of the major issues was that the policy states months and the program staff would like for the policy to state days instead of months.

Gary Vandiver made a motion that instead of month the policy be stated in days so that three months equals 90 days and two months equal 60 days and that with any elections currently being held, allow any expenses for ads that are three months/12 weeks/90 days or two months/8 weeks/60 days. Kathryn Braden seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Dan Devlin, Gary Vandiver and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Boschert stated that another issue was in order for a district to be eligible for the election reimbursements, did all mandatory policies have to be followed. He asked if each policy was to be treated separately or were all of the policies contacted.

Kathryn Braden made a motion to allow some flexibility with these new election procedures and that each item is viewed separately. Dan Devlin seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Dan Devlin, Gary Vandiver and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Cost-Share Fund Status Report

Colette Weckenborg presented an update on the FY10 cost-share fund status. She stated the current appropriation for FY10 regular cost share is \$24,000,000 and of that amount, \$13,393,942.13 had been paid to landowners, leaving the appropriation balance at \$10,606,057.87. She pointed out that the remaining obligation amount was \$10,459,762.55. Next Ms. Weckenborg informed the commission the appropriation for the FY10 SALT program was \$4,620,454, of that \$3,778,136.66 had been paid to landowners, leaving the appropriation balance at \$842,317.34. She pointed out that the remaining obligation amount was \$1,625,454.93.

Ms. Weckenborg stated that 97 districts had requested a total of \$3,200,030.56 for FY11 advance cost-share allocation. She pointed out that \$1,162,597.20 has already been obligated on 407 contracts.

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5. **SWCD Contract Audit Process**

Jim Boschert provided an update on the audit process. He stated that within the next month the next round of audits would begin. He informed the commission that there would be between 25 and 30 districts audits per year and the audits would be done by auditors contracted with DNR Internal Audit. Mr. Boschert stated the audits would be for the last three complete fiscal years. He pointed out that all the districts would be audited over the next four years.

6. **Fund Balance Update**

Milt Barr presented a review of the sales tax revenues and interest income rates of change for the first ten months of FY10 compared to FY09 and FY11 and FY12 budget process as well as timelines used in the planning cycles. He stated that there was a \$1,378,010 or negative 4.26 percent difference from FY09 to FY10 for the months of July through April for a total of \$30,935,392. He informed the commission the interest for the same time was down by \$331,951 or approximately 60 percent. He stated that the FY11 budget was passed by the general assembly and is now awaiting the Governor's review and signature. The projected budget allocation is still at the \$44,491,064 already briefed to the commission, which included a \$3,445,454 reduction because of project revenue shortfalls for the next year.

Next, Mr. Barr presented a review of the budget cycle for FY12 showing the timelines for the budget input from June through September and that the FY12 budget is due from the Department to the Office of Administration no later than October 1, 2010.

Mr. Barr then stated that Director Hopkins had indicated that he wanted to present the fund balance part of the briefing information and turned the podium over to him.

Bryan Hopkins presented the rest of the briefing information with an update discussion on the FY12 budget and the over all fund balance. He stated the fund balance as of April 30, 2010 was \$32,263,832; \$5,762,471 was the estimated revenues/earning for the remaining FY10 for a total of \$38,026,302. He stated that of this amount, \$15,103,920 was the projected remaining liabilities leaving a projected fund balance as of July 1, 2010, of \$22,922,388, of this amount, the projected long/short term liabilities is \$21,815,175 leaving a balance of projected uncommitted fund balance as of July 1, 2010 of \$1,107,213. Mr. Hopkins informed the commission what the short and long-term liabilities were and the amounts for each. Next Mr. Hopkins discussed the sales tax revenue deposits, the expenditures for district grants, cost-share and SALT. He reiterated that there was a myth out there that the program has an approximate \$30,000,000 uncommitted

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reserve and as he discussed today, this is not the case. He stated there is a need to describe the program fund as similar to a "revolving fund" balance that farmers have to use for their operations and would be more understandable when it comes to this budget issue.

7. **Update on MRBI**

Colleen Meredith presented an update on the Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watershed Initiative (MRBI). She stated that there was competitive funding for watersheds in 12 states, and Missouri is one of those states. She stated that in these 12 states there are 41 focus area watersheds. Ms. Meredith stated the funding is provided to avoid, control, and trap nutrient runoff; protect, restore, and enhance wetlands; maintain agricultural activity; and improve wildlife habitat. She informed the commission that for federal fiscal year 2010 there was \$50,000,000 in Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative, \$25,000,000 in Wetland Reserve Enhancement Program and \$5,000,000 in Conservation Innovation Grant. She informed the commission that the six watersheds in Missouri that could compete for the funds were the Lower Grand, North Fork Salt, South Fork Salt, Little River Ditches, Lower St. Francis and Cache. Bryan Hopkins stated that he thought NRCS did a good job in selecting watersheds to meet needs nationally and also address state and local nutrient concerns. Ms. Meredith proceeded to cover the program's and the commission's contributions to MRBI. She stated there were 13 projects submitted for consideration, which included 75, 12-digit watersheds, and involved 20 soil and water conservation districts. Next, she covered the timeline for the proposals.

8. **Update on the State Envirothon**

Judy Stinson provided an update on the Missouri Envirothon. She stated the program consists of seven regional events, and 100 teams participated in those events. The top three teams from each regional event advances to the state competition and there were 19 teams that advanced. She informed the commission that this year's winner was Pembroke Hill High School from the Kansas City area and they will advance to the Canon Envirothon in Fresno, California to compete against teams from the United States and Canada.

F. **REVIEW/EVALUATION**

1. **Administration Section**

a. **FY11 Grants to the Districts**

Jim Boschert presented a review of the FY11 District Assistance Allocation. He stated the FY11 total allocation amount is \$11,680,820, which is the same as the current year. He stated that \$7,512,875 was

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budgeted for the personnel grant, \$900,999 for additional personnel expenses, such as taxes, unemployment, workers compensation, travel and training for district employees, \$627,000 for administrative grant, \$115,951 for information/education grant, \$70,830 for AgNPS grant, \$100,800 for rent and utilities, \$45,000 for election expenses, \$373,723 for retirement, and \$1,933,642 for health insurance.

G. REVIEW/EVALUATION

1. District Operations Section

a. District Support

1. Supervisor Appointments

a. Shannon SWCD

Kathryn Braden made a motion to approve the board's request to appoint Armand Spurgin and Tim Reed to the Shannon SWCD board of supervisors. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Dan Devlin, Gary Vandiver and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Research Update – Subirrigation/Drainage Management Study

Colleen Meredith stated that Dr. Michael Aide received \$5,000 from the commission's research funds to evaluate water quality impacts of subsurface controlled drainage water management. She stated that Dr. Aide was from the Southeast Missouri State University.

Dr. Aide proceeded to update the commission on the project and provided copies of the project reports to commissioners. Crop growth and development were optimized using this system with corn and soybeans reaching near record levels for the county. The water quality data indicated that: 1) the transport of nitrate nitrogen in the tile-drain effluent waters was appreciable, 2) soil denitrification pathways do not effectively reduce soil nitrate nitrogen, and 3) the best strategy for reducing nitrate nitrogen concentrations in the tile-drain effluent waters was adjusting nitrogen fertilization rates and timing of application. Dr. Aide also concluded that transport of microelements in tile drainage was very limited in this system.

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3. **Supervisor Appointments**

a. **St. Louis SWCD**

Chrisi Armbruster informed the commission that the program office had developed a form for districts to use when filling supervisor vacancies. The form helps ensure the new supervisor meets the qualifications to be a district board supervisor. This form was utilized by the St. Louis SWCD supervisor vacancy.

Gary Vandiver made a motion to approve the board's request to appoint Kristina Flegel to the St. Louis SWCD board of supervisors. Kathryn Braden seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Dan Devlin, Gary Vandiver and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

b. **Barry SWCD**

Kathryn Braden made a motion to approve the board's request to appoint Donny Sorensen to the Barry SWCD board of supervisors. Dan Devlin seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Dan Devlin, Gary Vandiver and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

c. **Pulaski SWCD**

Thomas Bradley made a motion to approve the appointment of Randy Doyle to the Pulaski SWCD board of supervisors. Kathryn Braden seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, Kathryn Braden, Thomas Bradley, Dan Devlin, Gary Vandiver and Richard Fordyce voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

4. **Practice Review Summary and Policy Consideration for Pest Management**

Kurt Boeckmann provided a practice review summary and policy for Pest Management. He proceeded to provide the commission

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with some background on the practice. He stated it was the commission's intent that the practice be a demonstration practice. He stated that the practice demonstrates the importance of scouting for pests and only treating the needed acres needing pest control. He stated the practice review was initiated following the January commission meeting. He informed the commission that a memorandum was sent to the districts on January 25, 2010, which initiated the comment period until March 31.

Next Mr. Boeckmann provided a summary of the districts comments for Pest Management.

Bryan Hopkins asked if the commission would want to hear the report on nutrient management before they made a decision.

5. Practice Review Summary and Policy Consideration for Nutrient Management

Kurt Boeckmann presented a practice review summary and policy consideration for Nutrient/Waste Management. He stated it was the commission's intent that the practice be a demonstration practice to demonstrate the importance to budget and supply nutrients for plant production by source, amount, timing and method of nutrient application; to properly utilize manure/organic by products as plant nutrient sources; minimize agricultural nonpoint source pollution of surface and/or ground water; and maintain or improve the physical, chemical and biological condition of the soil. He proceeded to cover the concerns the commission had with the Nutrient Management Policies. He stated the practice review was initiated when a memorandum was sent to the districts on January 25, 2010 giving them until March 31 to comment on the practices.

Next Mr. Boeckmann provided a summary of the districts comments for Nutrient Management and compared EQIP rates to SWCP.

Mr. Boeckmann stated the program would like some direction from the commission on proceeding forth with policy development/changes with the comments received from the districts.

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After some discussion, it was the consensus of the commission to have the staff bring back more analysis's on all three practices.

6. **Cost-Share Allocation Process Follow Up**

Ken Struempf stated that at the last commission meeting there were several districts that made presentations regarding the need for flexibility in the allocation process. He informed the commission that since the last commission meeting four additional requests had been received. He stated the program did not have a recommendation today for the commission on any allocation flexibility. He stated that staff is looking at the allocation flexibility utilized last fiscal year. For example, the commission had made some adjustments such as the \$10,000 for districts to use to get their first contract going in a resource concern if they did not have enough in that concern, also addition funds were provided to districts that obligated 80 percent of their initial allocation. He stated that the flexibility utilized last year was successful in that the full \$24,000,000 appropriation was obligated to landowners in early March. He informed the commission that staff was working to bring the issue to the commission at the July meeting.

Bryan Hopkins stated that some level of flexibility was necessary. He informed the commission that the program would bring something to them at a future meeting and that it could be implemented as early as September or October. He proceeded to explain an idea that if a district spent most of their funds, funds from the mid year withholding and funds that go unspent could be used to help the districts that have spent a certain amount.

Next Mr. Hopkins updated the commission on FY10 funding in certain practices.

Ken Struempf asked the commission if they wished, the program would send a letter to the districts regarding the additional funding.

It was the consensus of the commission for program to send the letters.

Next Mr. Struempf updated the commission on Energize Missouri Initiative. He stated the program was a success in the fact that there were twice as many applications than was projected. He stated the initial budget for this was approximately \$3,200,000 and

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the application received totaled approximately \$6,000,000. The Department was exploring if there are other Stimulus funds not being utilized to fully fund the requests. He stated the program was handled by the Energy Center and the purpose was to provide more energy efficient items for agriculture, such as solar pumps, solar fencers, insulated water drinkers, etc.

Richard Fordyce informed the commission that David Baker was awarded the Outstanding Facility Award.

H. REPORTS

1. UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

Dave Baker provided an update on their budget for the next fiscal year. He stated that MU Extension was in the process of developing an Urban Agricultural program in St. Louis, Kansas City and Springfield.

Mr. Baker stated the partnership between the commission and the university was very important

2. DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

John Knudsen stated that their cost-share program for private landowners has approximately \$1,000,000. He stated that some of that money is used in conjunction with some of the commission's practices. He stated that they try to enhance the incentives of the commission's practices where fish and wildlife benefit. He proceeded to discuss a few of those practices. He stated their docket for FY11 was in a draft form and it was sent to the program staff for their review and comments.

3. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Judy Grundler provided an update on their budget that they are working on. She stated they had some bills that would increase fees and create a fee fund. She stated they were crucial for them to maintain their programs. She proceeded to update the commission on some of their programs. She stated that MDA had recently issued a quarantine on the movement of walnut products from western states to protect the state's black walnut industry from the thousand cankers disease. She stated they had recently started an outreach program to educate the public on the hazards of moving firewood in from other states. This program is targeted to protect Missouri's forest industry from invasive species such as Emerald ash borer, which was recently detected in a Wayne County campground.

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She informed the commission that the annual Gypsy moth survey was underway and that this was a cooperative monitoring program with MDC, USDA and the US Forest Service to prevent the spread of this insect into Missouri.

4. NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

J.R. Flores informed that commission that he has visited some farms around the state. He stated that the Conservation Stewardship Program's next sign up would begin on June 11. He stated in the first sign up had approximately 1,000 contracts for an approximate total of 500,000 acres, at a cost of \$8,200,000. He stated that for the Environmental Quality Incentive Program Organic Producers they have \$1,000,000 approved. He stated that for the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program another \$450,000 was received and obligated.

Mr. Flores informed the commission that their next State Technical Meeting is scheduled for June 23 in Columbia, Missouri. He stated that from May 24 through 26 the Regional Conservationist would be visiting Missouri.

Mr. Flores informed the commission that the soil survey information would be updated this year.

5. MISSOURI ASSOCIATION OF SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Steve Radcliff informed the commission that the association had been working with Aflac and now any paid member of the association as well as supervisors could get insurance through them. He stated he appreciated the meeting held with Mike Wells and Bryan Hopkins. He stated that some of the issues discussed was certification for supervisors and the Tech II training.

I. SUGGESTED DATE (S) OF NEXT MEETINGS

The next scheduled meeting is July 14, 2010, in Jefferson City, MO.

J. ADJOURNMENT

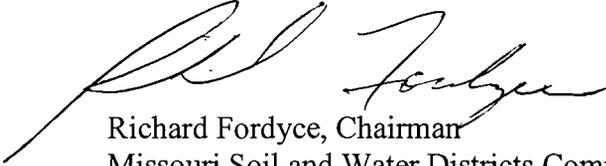
Kathryn Braden moved the meeting be adjourned. Gary Vandiver seconded the motion.
Motion approved by consensus at 3:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Bryan T. Hopkins, Program Director
Soil and Water Conservation Program

Approved by:



Richard Fordyce, Chairman
Missouri Soil and Water Districts Commission

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