



Missouri Department of Natural Resources

MINUTES
MISSOURI SOIL AND WATER DISTRICTS COMMISSION
MU Fisher Delta Research Center
147 State Highway T
Portageville MO
June 17, 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, UNIV. OF MISSOURI: David Baker

ADVISORY MEMBERS PRESENT: SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM: Colleen Meredith; NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS): J.R. Flores; MISSOURI ASSOCIATION OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS (MASWCD): Kenny Lovelace;

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Van Beydler, Jim Boschert, Matt Elliott, Theresa Mueller, Jennifer Pellett, Jim Plassmeyer, Jeremy Redden, Leon Thompson, Colette Weckenborg, Bill Wilson

OTHERS PRESENT: DISTRICTS: BUTLER: Cathy Mansbridge, Rob Nations; CAPE GIRARDEAU: Dakota Oehl, Paula Meier, Kenny Spooler; CARTER: Michael Kelley; DUNKLIN: David Blakemore, David Daniels, Sean Droke, Casey Keating, Jeff Richardson, Brice Wyrick; IRON: Brooke Benz, Terri Mathews, Ken Wooten; JEFFERSON: George Engelbach; NEW MADRID: Nancy Walker, Butch Williams; PEMISCOT: Mike Crafton; Karen Tucker, RIPLEY: Rachel Griffin, Michael Thornton; STODDARD: Allen Below, Ethan Bryeans, Janet Johns, Josh Lemmons, Tyler Moore, ST. FRANCOIS: Wilma Carlyon, STE. GENEVIEVE: Sue Denninger, Robert Eckenfels, Rebekah Naeger; MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES: Travis Abernathy, Kurt Boeckmann, Jackson Bostic, Michael Hefner, Jennifer Hoggatt, Mary Mulhearn; MISSOURI SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION (MSWCDEA): Sandy Stratman; UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI: Randy Miles; OTHER: Travis Barnes, W Dustin Boatwright

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Gary Vandiver called the meeting to order in Portageville, Missouri, at 8:07 a.m. Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, Jeff Lance and Gary Vandiver were present, which made a quorum.

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Dave Baker welcomed the Commission and attendees to the Fisher Delta Research Center. He stated the facility has extension and research faculty in one place. He introduced Janet Kline, Missouri Extension Regional Director, and Trent Haggard, Director of the Fisher Delta Research Center.

Trent Haggard welcomed everyone to the center and provided some history and an overview of the Fisher Delta Research Center. He stated that primarily the center does agricultural research on 1,049 acres. He stated they directly serve the agricultural needs of the 10 surrounding counties, which account for 30 percent of the state's annual agricultural output. They do research on corn, cotton, soybeans, rice, wheat, grain and sweet sorghum. The main difference between the Delta Center and other research centers is the work they do on cotton and rice. The campus has eight research departments which are: Crop Production, Cotton Production, Soybean Breeding, Entomology, Plant Pathology, Soil and Tissue Laboratory, Weed Science and Irrigation Management. He stated they also have the Colonel Clyde Southern Tele-Communication Resource Center for trainings, meetings and ITV educational classes. He provided an update on irrigation management and soybean breeding.

Mr. Haggard invited the Commission to the 2015 Fisher Delta Research Center Field Day on Tuesday, September 2, 2015.

B. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

H. Ralph Gaw made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2015, Commission Meeting. 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.

C. DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Joe Engeln introduced Mary Mulhearn, who is the Department of Natural Resources' Legislative Director, and provided updates on several projects.

He informed the Soil and Water Districts Commission (Commission) that the first round of sign-ups for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) ended on June 5. The applications are sent to NRCS and entered into the system for ranking. He stated that the next sign-up would likely be in September.

He stated that Our Missouri Waters is going to start the public information sharing through regional planning organizations carrying out meetings in five watersheds. They will be working in the Meramec, Niangua, Upper Mississippi Cape Girardeau, Sac and Lower Missouri Crooked watersheds.

He stated that two projects were awarded to the department's Soil and Water Conservation Program (SWCP) using the Natural Resources Damages funding. The projects will be administered jointly by the department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He stated there are several projects in southeast and southwest Missouri. The awards to SWCP are \$500,000 for one project and \$250,000 for the other.

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He provided an update on the Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy, and stated nutrient trading is part of the strategy; a workgroup will work on a framework for potential nutrient trading.

He updated the Commission on the Community Assistance, stating the department is focusing on smaller communities with populations in the range of 500 to 5,000 because these communities often lack financial and technical resources when making decisions on what needs to be done for their community. He stated there are many partners involved with this project to help these communities.

He informed the Commission that in the next 4-6 months the department would be implementing "Lean" E3 (Enhancing Efficiency and Effectiveness) efforts in increasing processes within the department. He thought there would be some very good results from this process.

D. SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Colleen Meredith welcomed all of the districts that were at the meeting and thanked Delta Center staff for all of their help and assistance with the meeting. She introduced Jennifer Hoggatt, the Our Missouri Waters Statewide Coordinator; Travis Abernathy, the southeast region Watershed Coordinator; and Kurt Boeckmann, Agricultural Liaison for the department.

1. N312 Animal Waste Systems, Equalize Maximums

Jim Plassmeyer presented the N312 Animal Waste Systems-Equalize Maximums for Cost-Share. The Commission was asked to consider an increase to the practice maximum per cooperator on the N312 Beef Waste Management and N312 Poultry Waste Management practices to \$50,000, which would make the maximums for those practices at the same dollar amount as the swine and dairy systems. Current policies took effect on March 13, 2008; beef and poultry waste storage facilities have a maximum of \$25,000 per cooperator and the dairy and swine waste storage both have a maximum of \$50,000 per cooperator. Policy also states the practice for all species only pays for the minimum and necessary waste storage system based on the number of animal units at the time of application. There are different cost-share rates for different components of the facility: 75 percent cost-share for manure storage area including floor, walls and roof; 50 percent cost-share for roof and floor in feeding and travel area to collect waste; and cost-share is not authorized for bedding and bunk areas. Mr. Plassmeyer pointed out that when a landowner signs up for an animal waste system they have to sign an agreement that the buildings will be used only for manure storage and manure handling equipment.

He reminded the Commission that at their April 8, 2015, meeting they approved the Plan for the Future Current Practices committee's recommendation on practice policies. He stated the change to the practice maximum falls into one of the exemptions to deviate from the practice review schedule because it is a major agriculture or economic shift that impacts a practice implementation or use. He

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provided the Commission with some dollar amounts on a few of these waste systems.

When asked if a cooperators has to enter into an agreement to spread the animal waste in a certain manner based upon soil needs, Mr. Plassmeyer answered that policy requires them to apply the nutrients according to the NRCS N590 Nutrient Management standard. A Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan is not required but is recommended.

Thomas Bradley made a motion to increase the cooperators lifetime maximum on the N312 Beef Waste Management and N312 Poultry Waste Management to \$50,000. Jeff Lance seconded the motion. After discussion, Thomas Bradley amended the motion to include the effective date of July 1, 2015. Jeff Lance seconded. When polled, Thomas Bradley, H. Ralph Gaw, Jeff Lance and Gary Vandiver voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Thomas Bradley made a motion to change the N312 Beef Waste Management System to eliminate the term "winter feeding station" and include language as described in the N312 Dairy Waste Management feeding area. 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.

2. N340 Cover Crop, Finalize for Regular Cost-Share

Jim Plassmeyer presented information on the cover crop pilot that was offered statewide. In the past fiscal year in the pilot, \$117,498 was obligated for 209 board approved contracts within 48 districts that had landowners participate. Each of the 48 districts received an allocation of \$4,800 and the contracts were limited to 20 acres. The N340 Cover Crop Policy had an open comment period for districts from December 1, 2014 through May 1, 2015, and 31 districts submitted comments. He discussed some of the comments that were received. The new N340 Cover Crop Policy applies to cropland acres where row crops are grown; the production crop following the cover crop must be planted using a no-till system on the contracted acres; must be in compliance with the Cover Crop (340) standard and Conservation Crop Rotation (328) standard; all cover crop seeding must be planned with a minimum of 25 percent cool-season annual grass, small grain component or warm season annual; spring planted cover crops must be planted at least 60 days prior to being terminated; cover crops will not be harvested for grain, seed or hayed; cover crops may be grazed once the forage has reached a minimum height of 6-8 inches and grazing will need to stop at 4 inches; a cost-shared soil sample for the initial Standard Soil Health Package test through the Missouri Soil Health Assessment Center must be taken prior to planting the first year; incentive payment of \$30/acre/year for a one or two species cover crop mix or \$40/acre/year for three or more species cover crop mix; a lifetime maximum of \$20,000 per operator; and the practice will be added to the Sheet, Rill and Gully Resource Concern.

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H. Ralph Gaw made a motion to approve the N340 Cover Crop Practice Policy effective July 1, 2015, and add it to the list of practices in the Sheet, Rill and Gully Resource Concern. Thomas Bradley seconded the motion.

Dr. Randy Miles presented an overview/update of the Soil Health Assessment Center and information on cover crops. The center is doing some analyses. He stated his view of the center is to provide high quality assurance and quality control and relevancy. He presented photos of the center. Phase I and II (lab and office/sample storage and prep) are completed and Phase III (connecting breezeway) will start in late 2015. Since the last Commission meeting, they have been working on the cover crops with NRCS nationally through their soil health division looking at samples from 48 states. Dr. Miles stated that due to the quick turn-around time needed this year for cover crops the sampling method will likely be refined two or three years from now. Some of the analyses they will be looking at in the first round of samples are: soil texture, nitrogen, active carbon, total carbon, wet aggregate stability, bulk density, pH and phosphorus. They are developing sampling protocols so that recommendations can be made. He stated they would have the analyses for the cover crops by July 1 and at that time they will be working on the recommendations simultaneously, they are working on train-the-trainer program and being visible and informative.

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.

Lisa Potter stated MDC is also looking at cover crops because of the benefits for soil and water quality, as well as the benefits for wildlife. She informed the Commission that they have met with the SWCP and discussed the possibility of creating a MDC piggyback cost-share to work in coordination with the N340 Cover Crop Practice. The purpose is to encourage and incentivize the use of wildlife friendly cover crop mixes and to encourage the use of a multi-species mixes; MDC will add \$15/acre in addition to the N340 per acre incentive. One exception is the maximum through MDC cost-share is \$6,000 per landowner per fiscal year and the other exception is the termination of the cover crop no later than May 1. This practice will function like MDC's other piggyback practices with SWCP

3. **Handbook Updates**

Bill Wilson presented the FY16 Cost-Share Handbook update. The updates for the handbook are the addition of the new policy for implementing buffer extension incentive, updating the conservation mapping process, clarification of "Extents Installed" for reseedings, clarification of policy that digital signatures are acceptable, addition of new policy for utilizing public water supply for livestock, clarification of policy regarding contract payments and the addition of the new policy for implementing the N340 Cover Crop Practice and the new cost-share maximums and language clean-up of the N312 Animal Waste practices.

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4. **FY15 Cost-Share Fund Status/FY16 Allocations**

Bill Wilson presented the FY15 Cost-Share Fund Status/FY16 Allocations. As of June 12, 2015, approximately \$37 million had been allocated and of that amount approximately \$26 million obligated and \$22.5 paid to landowners. For the FY15 Agricultural Nonpoint Source Special Area Land Treatment (AgNPS SALT) cost-share, \$534,517 has been allocated; \$306,080 has been obligated with \$301,459 being paid to landowners.

On December 18, 2014, the FY16 Allocation was approved and it included the supplemental process. Beginning on January 9, 2015, the Advance Allocations were implemented, providing 100 percent of Animal Waste funds in the amount of \$1,395,000, 100 percent of Nutrient and Pest Management in the amount of \$1,124,745 and a portion of the other five Resource Concern Areas in the amount of \$2,522,351. On June 8, 2015, the FY16 funds were made available and on August 6, 2015, the supplement allocations will start. Mr. Wilson pointed out that this will be a rolling allocation process evaluated monthly; the threshold will be 90 percent of the total allocation obligated in each Resource Concern and the Supplemental allocation for a qualifying resource concern(s) will be \$50,000. For the Supplemental Cost-Share process the Master Fund Status Report will be pulled at the end of day on August 6, September 3, October 1, November 5, December 3, January 7 and February 4; MoSWIMS will be locked on those dates for the allocations to be loaded. Districts receiving the additional funds will receive an email; there is a limit of \$500,000 total supplemental allocation for a district. The Commission will be updated regularly on the Supplemental status.

5. **Plan for the Future Program Delivery and Operations Subcommittee**

Colette Weckenborg presented the Plan for the Future Program Delivery and Operations Subcommittee. She stated since being tabled at last meeting, both the Program Delivery and Operations and the Marketing and Outreach Subcommittees had met individually as well as the formation of a subcommittee who developed the consideration for the Commission. She stated there were four different subcommittees working on the Plan for the Future.

Ms. Weckenborg provided background information; the Information/Education Grant currently is allocated based on the number of public school students in each district. Current funding is allocated based on youth in a district, though the duties of the Commission and the districts are the saving of soil and water as indicated in statute and rules. The Marketing and Outreach Subcommittee developed and defined the targeted audience as farmers and public, in that order. Public includes the student population. One of the recommendations from the subcommittee is to combine the Admin/Info Ed Grants into a single grant starting in July 2015, for FY16 funding. She pointed out that Info/Ed activities currently are eligible expenses from both the Info/Ed Grants and the Administration Grant. The subcommittee also recommended for the combined the Admin/Info Ed Fund, giving each district \$6,500 effective July 2015, for FY16 state funds. She stated that a third of the districts spent all of their funds in the Administrative and Info/Ed Grants, a third had less than \$500 left, and a third had greater than \$500. The funding for the Administrative Grant is \$627,000 and the Info/Ed Grant is

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\$168,364 for a total of \$795,364. By combining these and giving each district \$6,500 the total would be \$741,000, a cost savings of \$54,000. With combining the two, 91 districts would see no change in their total allocation and the remaining 23 would see a reduction.

Thomas Bradley made a motion to approve the Subcommittees recommendation to combine the Information/Education Grant and the Administrative Grant, effective July 1, 2015. 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.

Jeff Lance made a motion to approve the Subcommittees recommendation to fund the Administrative Grant at \$6,500 per district, effective July 1, 2015. 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.

6. 2015 Area Meetings Update

Bill Wilson presented an update on the 2015 Area Meetings scheduled for the week of August 24, 2015. Work continues on meeting venues and times for each of the eight areas of the state.

7. Envirothon Update

Bill Wilson presented an update on the Envirothon. The State Envirothon was held in Jefferson City on May 1, 2015, and the winner of the event was Pembroke High School, from Jackson County. They will represent Missouri at the National Envirothon in Springfield on the campus of Missouri State University. The event is scheduled for July 27 – August 2, 2015. There will be 53 teams participating from the United States and Canadian Provinces.

8. Staff Updates

Colleen Meredith presented the staff updates since the last Commission meeting. She reported that Deanna Smith, David Goggins and Alan Freeman left the program and Ed Schneider was hired as a part-time employee to work on monitoring district issues so that districts can be informed in a timelier manner than provided by contract audits.

9. History of Little River Drainage District

W. Dustin Boatwright presented information and the history of Little River Drainage District. He stated that from Cape Girardeau to the Arkansas line was once considered useless land. The Government mandated that the state do something with it, reclaim it, and make it useful. The state gave that responsibility to the counties and they sold the land to a private landowner who wanted to make use of the land. At that time the land was 95 percent covered in timber and water. In 1907 a bill was introduced to the Missouri Legislature to create the Little River Drainage District. The Little River is in part of seven counties in the Bootheel and they are Cape Girardeau, Bollinger, Stoddard, Dunklin, Scott, New Madrid and Pemiscot. He stated the plan consisted of 1,000 miles of ditches in the approved

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plan, 300 miles of levees, three detention basins and three pumping stations. To implement the plan they had to survey the land and when that was completed they moved to engineering and design. The district's diversion channel and levee in the top part of the district diverts 750,000 acres of upland drainage coming out of the Missouri Ozarks. The levee system starts with The Little River Drainage District and runs from Greenbrier, Missouri to the Gulf of Mexico protecting the entire delta through that region. The lower part of the district protects 1.2 million acres. Funding for this project is still from the 1907 assessment that was placed on the land when the district was formed. The district is 100 percent funded by the local private landowners within the 550,000 acres. The max assessed rate is \$3.60 per acre that the landowner pays the Little River to maintain drainage of their land. Today the district is in maintenance only, they make sure the levees and channels are taken care of properly.

E. REQUEST

1. Supervisor Requests

a. Sullivan SWCD

Matt Elliott presented a request from the Sullivan County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to allow the board to appoint Mr. Steve Hodge to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Lloyd Nichols due to his resignation. Mr. Steve Hodge 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. Steve Hodge to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Lloyd Nichols to the Sullivan 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. Carter SWCD

Jennifer Pellett presented a request from the Carter County SWCD to allow the board to appoint Mr. Allen Gibbs to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Wayne Gibbs due to his inability to fulfill his elected term. Mr. Allen Gibbs 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. Allen Gibbs to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Wayne Gibbs to the Carter 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.

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c. **Oregon SWCD**

Jennifer Pellett presented a request from the Oregon County SWCD to allow the board to appoint Mr. Kent Newman to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Jerry Strain due to his inability to fulfill his elected term. Mr. Kent Newman and the board have signed the Verification of Supervisor Eligibility form, verifying the candidate meets the qualification to serve on the board.

Jeff Lance made a motion to approve the appointment of Mr. Kent Newman to the Oregon County SWCD. 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.

2. **Tabled: Follow-up on Increase Cost Share Well Drilling Component in Southeast Missouri**

Jim Boschert presented a follow-up report to increase cost-share well drilling component in Southeast Missouri. He stated this item was first presented to the Commission in June 2014 and again in August and December 2014. After hearing the information presented at the December 18, 2014, meeting, the Commission decided to table the issue. At this meeting staff is requesting the Commission to take this item from the table for consideration.

H. Ralph Gaw made a motion to remove this item from the table. 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. Boschert presented a map of the water well drilling areas in the state and pointed out the 15 counties in the southeast portion of the state. The issue is the difficulty of drilling in this part of the state. The Commission heard information at the December meeting on how the state average cost is developed and the low number of districts that input actual cost data into the database, not only for well drilling but also other components. The Commission directed staff to look at different ways to encourage more districts to enter their cost data into the database. On April 16, 2015, Memorandum 2015-013 – Component Cost Data Entry into NRCS Actual Cost Database - was sent to the soil and water conservation districts. Component cost data could be entered into the actual cost database by NRCS, FSA and SWCD staff at any time during the year. Staff also developed a spreadsheet and made it available on the SWCD intranet web site. Districts were to enter their information by May 15, 2015.

On a map presented, it showed that statewide 64 districts entered information into the NRCS database; 21 districts entered information into the spreadsheet, for a total of 85 districts entering component information. Over 3,000 various component costs were entered. Another map displayed showed that 12 districts entered information into the spreadsheet for the well drilling component.

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Mr. Boschert displayed a chart showing the number of practices with the well drilling component in the districts. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 there were 53 practices completed with the well drilling component; in FY2015 there were 81. In FY2014 state wide, the well drilling component was entered 16 times into the database and 25 times in FY15. For FY15 the cost entered for well drilling ranged from \$5.50 to \$9.00 per foot.

Staff worked with NRCS on the state average cost for FY16, beginning July 1, 2016, estimated the cost for well drilling will be at \$6.50 per foot. This is an unofficial cost since partner staff that use the database are still looking at the data. The estimated costs for steel well casing is \$10.50, plastic well casing is \$8.50 and well lining is \$5.25. These unofficial costs were derived from the entries in the spreadsheet and NRCS database.

In response to questions, Colleen Meredith mentioned that depending on the area, the depths of well drilling varies considerably. Mr. Boschert felt more districts have entered data with the spreadsheet available.

Michael Thornton, Ripley County, addressed the Commission stating they have issues getting landowners to drill wells due to the high cost. Therefore, it's difficult to get the data to enter into the spreadsheet. He felt there would need to be several entries for it to affect the state average. Ms. Meredith mentioned that receipts from Ripley County from previous years showed a higher cost on the drilling. Only invoices from the current year are used to develop the state average costs.

Ms. Meredith stated the purpose of the program is to provide an incentive to landowners who try a practice they have not done before and to help to incentivize or take away some of the cost risk. The well drilling practice would be used for grazing systems so it would be the minimum necessary needed to provide water for the grazing system.

Commissioner Lance discussed that there are many issues associated with practices across the state due to soil type or terrain and it is not feasible to change average costs for each situation.

H. Ralph Gaw made a motion to maintain current policy and continue to use state average cost that is determined by SWCD, NRCS and/or FSA employees entering information into the actual cost database. 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.

Chair Vandiver strongly encouraged districts to enter the data into the spreadsheet or database to ensure the costs are figured accurately each fiscal year.

3. Cape Girardeau SWCD - Reconstruction for N410 Drop Pipe and DSL-11 Permanent Vegetative Cover Critical Area

Jim Boschert presented the request from Cape Girardeau SWCD for reconstruction for a N410 Drop Pipe and DSL-11 Permanent Vegetative Cover Critical Area. The cost-share practices were damaged by a significant storm event on March 25, 2015.

He stated on October 1, 2014, the Cape Girardeau SWCD Board of Supervisors approved the contracts for payment for approximately \$4,900. On March 25, 2015, a significant storm event occurred washing the fill away from the drop pipe and damaging the adjoining critical area. He pointed out that the area received 2.5 inches of rain in one hour. He stated the Board of Supervisors are requesting reconstruction cost in the amount of \$1,184.67 for the critical area seeding, grading/shaping and the side inlet drainage structure. This is the only request the district has received for this storm event.

Next, Mr. Boschert covered Commission policy regarding reconstruction assistance. Policy states reconstruction assistance is available for practices that failed during the maintenance life of the practice. Districts must request cost-share if a single storm event causes widespread failure of state cost-shared structural practices. The request must document the seriousness and the extent of the damage, along with estimates of cost for repairs.

H. Ralph Gaw made a motion to approve the board's request and allow reconstruction assistance for the N410 Drop Pipe and the DSL-11 Permanent Vegetative Cover-Critical Area in the amount of \$1,184.67. 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.

4. Ste. Genevieve SWCD – DSL-01 Permanent Vegetative Cover Establishment Cost-Share Maintenance Violation

Jennifer Pellett presented the request from Ste. Genevieve SWCD for a DSL-01 Permanent Vegetative Cover Establishment cost-share maintenance violation. She stated the board was requesting assistance in collecting repayment in the amount of \$1,060.64 from Travis Barnes for three DSL-01 Permanent Vegetative Establishment practices. She stated the three contracts were paid on November 4, 2010, in the amount of \$4,242.57. The maintenance life for the practices is five years from the date of payment. On August 13, 2014, a random spot check occurred on the practices. On September 10, 2014, the district sent a certified letter to Mr. Barnes indicating lack of compliance with the maintenance and the option to bring the practice up to specifications or repayment of cost-share funds. Mr. Barnes was given until October 15, 2014, for reseeding of the original contracts and was requested to contact the district within 10 days after completion. She informed the Commission that Mr. Barnes contacted the district requesting cost-share assistance with the reseeding, but by policy any reseeding must be done at the landowner's cost. On October 15, 2014, a second certified letter was sent again requesting repayment in the amount of \$1,060.64 since the

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reseeding was not completed by October 15, 2014. Since the district did not hear from Mr. Barnes upon receiving the certified letter, on November 19, 2014, the district requested assistance for the program office to resolve the maintenance violation or collect the cost-share funds. The program office sent Mr. Barnes a certified letter on January 2, 2015, and Mr. Barnes signed for it on January 7, 2015. On January 15, 2015, there was a phone conversation between SWCP staff and Mr. Barnes detailing requirements to bring the practices into compliance by May 15, 2015. A letter from the program office was sent on March 3, 2015, detailing the requirements for compliance. On May 19, 2015, the program office staff, the district technician from Ste. Genevieve and NRCS performed a site visit.

Ms. Pellett covered the requirements for compliance with contract maintenance that were not completed. Travis Barnes stated that his gullies had been fixed, his fences and well were also good. He stated he had been working the gullies since he bought it; he has had the gullies tracked in good. He stated he could have put posts around his faucets and on his reseeding he could have put down mulch to help. He stated he did not feel that he had wasted any tax money. He stated when he bought the farm the fields had no vegetation; he bought it from an energy company that redid lead yards. He stated it is an ongoing battle with the vegetation and he reseeded and fertilized, but had not applied any lime yet.

H. Ralph Gaw made motion to approve the Ste. Genevieve board's request to obtain repayment of the DSL-01 Permanent Vegetative Establishment practices by maintaining current policy and referring the matter to the Attorney General's Office for collection in the amount of \$1,060.64. 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.

NOTE: H. Ralph Gaw stated that at the February 2015 meeting, the Commission voted not to proceed with referring a request to the Attorney General's Office to request repayment in the amount of approximately \$186.00 on a practice maintenance violation. At that time the statement was made that it would cost more to collect the refund than the amount of the repayment. Since the meeting, questions arose regarding maintenance violation repayments. Mr. Gaw stated that he should have indicated there were several other considerations involved with the decision other than just the financial part of it. The situation was that the person that signed the agreement was a lessee with a contract to purchase the land from the owner and the owner did not sign the agreement. The lessee signed for the owner and at that time, the program office was not requiring written signature authorizations. The thought was that by the time the issue was litigated as to who would owe the money, and the fact that the property had sold to another person so none of the persons involved were the owners, that it was a legitimate reason to make the motion that he did. He wanted to explain the reason behind the motion that he made.

F. REPORTS

1. University of Missouri

Dave Baker thanked Dr. Miles for leadership in the development of the new Soil Health Assessment Lab and for traveling to the Bootheel to update the Commission. He also reported that Dr. Tom Henderson is currently serving as the Interim Director of Extension. He stated the administration was working on identifying his replacement and he hoped to have a decision by next month. He informed the Commission that he had established a Commercial Ag Stakeholder Advisory Committee and its role was to identify priority issues that were impacting the industry they would like the University to address. The Committee has representation from across the industry as well as the Bootheel, and they will be reviewing and recommending grant projects they would like funded. He stated there is now a new Region 7 EPA Administrator and CAFNR will hold a session with that person to discuss research the University is doing that is EPA related. He thanked the partners for their working relationships and leadership.

2. Department of Conservation

Lisa Potter provided an update on Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). She reported there have been 26 positive cases confirmed in free-ranging deer. In response to the detection of CWD in Adair and Cole counties during the 2014-2015 surveillance season, the former 6-county CWD "Containment Zone" will be expanded to encompass all counties within a 25-mile radius of both the Macon/Adair CWD-detections and the Cole County detection, effective for the 2016-2017 deer seasons. These additional 13 counties will be part of larger "CWD Management Zones".

She stated that USDA announced they will have a general CRP signup this year from December 1 through February 26. They are offering to producers with current CRP contracts that expire in September the ability to extend their contracts for one additional year. They are also releasing 800,000 more acres for wildlife friendly continuous CRP practices.

She stated on July 13 and 14 there will be a collaborative strategy meeting to benefit monarch butterflies and pollinators of Missouri. The goal of the meeting is to develop a statewide strategy on how to address sustainable management for monarchs and pollinators. She stated June 27 will be the Annual Quail Field Day, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, at Bradford Farm in Columbia; the event is titled Bob White Quail Management in Modern Agriculture.

3. Department of Agriculture

Judy Grundler reported the Missouri Department of Agriculture (MDA) is working on the State Fair that runs from August 13 – 23. She stated the Beef Initiative is moving forward from MDA's point of view. She reported they will be looking at research in certain institutions on covered facilities for beef cattle and they may have a cost-share program for some of the facilities. She stated that MDA has an emphasis on Agricultural Stewardship Assurance Program (ASAP). The main goal is a checklist that farmers would apply for within the department to see if they are in compliance with good stewardship of the farm. There will be an

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award or signage given to the farms to have for display. This certification would cover such things as Homestead, Cropland, Grassland, Livestock, Energy and Forestry. She reiterated that is program is still in development.

She stated that EPA had put together proposed labeling for certain insecticides for use with commercial pollinator services. She said this would have a huge impact on this area if it were to go through. She reported the comment period had been extended to 60 days instead of 30. She reported they are working on their survey for the Thousand Canker Disease in black walnuts and monitoring of boll weevils. She reported that Emerald Ash Borer was detected in the St. Louis County area.

4. **Natural Resources Conservation Service**

J.R. Flores stated they received a 16 percent increase on EQIP funding for more than \$26 million. For RCPP there were 330 applicants for the program and the ranking process will end on July 17. He stated for next fiscal year there is \$225 million available under the RCPP program and they are looking for a large turn out from Missouri.

The Conservation Innovative Grants has \$20 million available, Missouri applied for six proposals and all proposals are in the review process.

He informed the Commission that NRCS was going to sponsor two Soil Health Workshops in July. One will be in Mexico, Missouri, and the other in northwest Missouri. A State Technical Committee meeting is scheduled for June 30, in Columbia, Missouri.

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

Kenny Lovelace stated there was an issue in Ralls County that he would like to have on the agenda for the next Commission Meeting. He stated they wanted to discuss Cover Crop Specifications.

He stated that NACD wanted a Network of Champions for soil health. The Network goal is to raise awareness and increase adoption of soil health systems by farmers and other landowners and to recruit 150 farmers, ranchers, woodland managers and other landowners from all regions of the country, who are willing to use, demonstrate and show interest in soil health practices.

G. **SUGGESTED DATE(S) OF THE NEXT MEETING(S)**

The next meeting is scheduled for August 19, 2015, at the State Fair in Sedalia, Missouri.

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H. ADJOURNMENT

H. Ralph Gaw made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:48 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

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