

SWEETWATER COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT (SWCCD)  
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING  
Thursday September 3, 2020 - 4:00 p.m.  
79 Winston Drive, Suite 103, Rock Springs, WY 82901

**REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING**

**Call to Order**

**Mary Thoman, Chairman** called to order the meeting of the Sweetwater County Conservation District (SWCCD) at 4:00 PM on **September 3, 2020**, at the Sweetwater County Conservation District, 79 Winston Drive, Suite 103, Rock Springs, WY 82901

**Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance**

**Mary Thoman, Chairman** conducted a roll call and introductions. The following persons were present and via conference call.

Mary Thoman, Chairman and Rural Supervisor (SWCCD)  
Tom Burris, Vice-Chairman and Rural Supervisor (SWCCD)  
Jean Dickinson, Rural Supervisor (SWCCD)  
Stephanie Anderson, Rural Supervisor (SWCCD)  
Karen Pecheny, District Clerk (SWCCD)  
Doc Wendling, SWC Commission (SWC)  
Mark Kot, SWC Planning Office (SWC)  
Jenissa Meredith, Executive Director, SWC Travel & Tourism  
Mark Lyon, City of Rock Springs Parks Superintendent  
Justin Caudill, Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA)

Absent: Joshua Coursey, Supervisor (SWCCD)

**Minutes**

A **motion** was made by Jean Dickinson, seconded by Tom Burris, to approve the August 6, 2020 regular minutes as written. Motion carried.

**Agenda**

A **motion** was made by Jean Dickinson, seconded by Tom Burris, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report**

A **motion** was made by Tom Burris, seconded by Jean Dickinson, to approve the Treasurer's Report, and pay the bills in the amount of \$30,856.80. Motion carried.

Department of Audit: Internal Audit – For Special Districts

Worksheets include: Proof of Cash, Internal Control and an Annual Report Summary which is new this year, reports are all due October 31, 2020.

Staff will send the Proof of Cash worksheet to Jonny Lamb, accountant, to complete.

The Board approved Associate Supervisor Bliss to complete the internal audit.

Sweetwater County Vendor EFT Payment Enrollment Form

Staff asked the Board if they would like to sign up for vendor electronic fund transfers through Sweetwater County. The transfer will be deposited directly into the District's account for faster payments and in less than three business days. Funds are available as soon as they are credited to the account.

A **motion** was made by Jean Dickinson, seconded by Tom Burris, to sign the Vendor EFT Payment Enrollment Form and send to the county. Motion carried.

**Special Reports**

Community Enhancement Grant Report Update

Jenissa Meredith, Travel & Tourism, reported on the educational material racks that were purchased using Conservation District Community Enhancement Grant funds and are currently being displayed at the new Visitor Center on Elk Street. Meredith thanked the Board for the grant and said the brochures will provide visitors and residents a level of awareness and interest in local attractions.

Mark Lyon, Rock Springs Parks and Recreation, reported on land-scaping materials for exit 102 and 107 gateway entrances into Rock Springs using Conservation District Community Enhancement Grant funds. Due to a cold snap last fall the grant funds helped replace some of the trees that did not survive the winter. Lyon thanked the Board for the grant funding and said we are able to provide a critical first impression to visitors and local residents as well.

Randy 'Doc' Wendling

Gave an update on the county's reduction in revenue and its impacts to the county. Includes: Decreased property valuations and a 20% projected decrease in sales tax for the county. The county is asking agencies to start thinking about how to reduce budgets and be more self-sufficient in the coming years.

Wendling reported that the Transwest Express Transmission Line has been put on hold for two years.

Justin Caudill. (WDA)

- Reported that water quality contracts should be forthcoming for the 2021-22 Biennium. (SWCCD grant approved: \$20,000 with a \$6,000 match, the grant expires December 30, 2022)
- Attending the Area V Meeting on August 11, in the virtual format.

- Reported on the Wyoming Landscape Conservation Initiative (WLCI) Development Team meetings. The Rock Springs meeting will be held virtually on August 11.

#### Jeff Lewis, NRCS (written report)

##### Conservation Planning

- Currently, working on the 2020 applications. The new programs are really working poorly, and we are having many issues trying to complete the contracting process. This is happening all across the nation. The obligation deadline is September 15<sup>th</sup>.

##### Farm Bill Activities

- Received a dozen or so requests for different projects in both Sweetwater and Uinta counties. Between trying to get applications obligated, I have been going out getting people signed up for next year or just doing site visits for technical assistance requests.

##### Meetings Coming Up

- Area V meeting in Lyman – September 11th

##### Staff Coordination

- Has been working on and involved with filling the soil conservationist/planner position in Rock Springs. The announcement should be on USA jobs in the near future. A former NRCS employee that I have worked with in the past is going to apply and I'm hoping we can reach her through the process and get her hired.

- I'm also going to have a new hire helping me from the Area Office in Riverton with the contracts up in Farson. She will help certify all the SGI contracts up there. This employee is brand new and has never worked for NRCS. This will be part of her training as well as gaining experience.

##### Non-Program Activities

- Taking turns with the Area Engineer as being the Acting Area Conservationist while Tiffany is on leave. I also have been on the interview panel for the Soil Conservationist position in Riverton.

- Both the Rock Springs and Lyman Field Offices are in Phase III of the reopening due to COVID 19. This means all employees can be back in the office and the break rooms and conferences rooms can be used, but the public can only come in if they make an appointment. The door to the offices remains locked.

##### Unfinished Business

##### Drop Structure Maintenance

The Board discussed the D & D Oilfield Services quote regarding the grout on the Drop Structure Project.

Thoman reported that Larry Folks said he would do the seeding again this fall and will get the District a cost for the seed. Folks will supply the labor.

A **motion** was made by Tom Burris, seconded by Jean Dickinson, to authorize D&D to complete the maintenance (grout) on the drop structure. Motion carried.

A **motion** was made by Jean Dickinson, seconded by Tom Burris, to coordinate with Larry Folks on the seed reclamation of the project. Motion carried.

Burris requested staff to contact Bryan Englehart, D&D, and let him know when they will be able to pour the grout so that Burris could be there at that time.

#### Killpecker Creek Assessment

Burris reported on the Killpecker Creek drainages and slopes and said the meanders in the upper reaches were completed using Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) funds.

Staff was directed to add Killpecker Creek to the October agenda.

#### Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) Water Quality Grant – Watershed Based Planning and Data Collection

The WDA water quality grant \$20,000 was approved and contracts will be forthcoming. The grant will be used to assess sampling locations for collection of water quality data to address the chloride impairment, reports, use data from this and historic monitoring to address and implement BMPs developed in the 2020 Bitter Creek Watershed-based plan.

#### Long Range Use Plan & Policy (LRUPP)

The Board will discuss the draft plan at the October meeting. Staff will send out the draft plan when it becomes available.

#### Watershed Based Plan (draft)

EDE Consultants provided a draft plan to the Board and BKWAG for review. Please send comments electronically to the office or call Russ, EDE, directly by September 10. The Watershed Based Plan will need to go to WDEQ for their review and comments. The plan is expected to be finalized by December 30, 2020.

#### Area V Meeting

The Area V Meeting will be held on Friday, September 11. In person and virtual meeting options are available.

### **New Business**

#### Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) Convention

The convention will be held November 16-19 in Torrington. An in-person event and a virtual component will be available. An agenda will be out soon.

#### Annual Report 2020

Staff will be starting to work on the Annual Report and Plan of Work.

**Supervisors Reports**

Mary Thoman

- Attended the Coalition of Local Governments (CLG). The next CLG Meeting will be September 17, in Kemmerer.

Tom Burris

- Attended the Killpecker Creek Assessment tour.

Jean Dickinson

- Attended the Coalition of Local Governments (CLG) meeting.

Stephanie Anderson

- Reported on algae blooms at the reservoir, the blooms are deadly to wildlife and pets. Recreation use is down a little bit, but they are still extremely busy.

**Staff Reports**

Karen Pecheny

- Attended the Killpecker Creek Assessment tour
- Worked on the WDEQ 205 (j) Grant request and the WDA Killpecker Creek grant.
- Working on access agreements for the Killpecker Creek tour and future water quality monitoring.

Public Comments

No public comments.

**Information and Education**

- Rawlins Field Office announced the availability of the Proposed decision for the lower North Platte River Watershed Grazing Permit renewal.
- Wyoming Natural Resource Foundation (WNRF) drawing for gator tickets are now available for sale at the District Office. \$25.00 apiece.

A **motion** was made by Tom Burris, to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Thursday October 1, 2020, at 4:00 p.m. at the Sweetwater County Conservation District Office, 79 Winston Drive, Suite 103, Rock Springs, WY.

1s/ Mary Thoman Chairman

1s/ Stephanie Anderson Secretary

//Submitted by Karen Pecheny