

SWEETWATER COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT (SWCCD)
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING
Thursday June 6, 2024 - 4:00 p.m.
550 Uinta Drive, Suite E, Green River, WY 82935

REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING

Call to Order

Tom Burris, Chairman called to order the meeting of the Sweetwater County Conservation District (SWCCD) at 4:00 PM on **June 6, 2024**, at 550 Uinta Drive, Suite E, Green River, WY 82935

Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance

Tom Burris, Chairman conducted a roll call and introductions. The following persons were present.

Tom Burris, Chairman and Rural Supervisor (SWCCD)
Larry Folks, Vice-Chairman and Rural Supervisor (SWCCD)
Jean Dickinson, Treasurer and Urban Supervisor, (SWCCD)
Stephanie Anderson, Secretary and Rural Supervisor (SWCCD)
Henry Bliss, At-Large Supervisor (SWCCD)
Karen Pecheny, District Administrator (SWCCD)
Dave Kimble, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFW)

Minutes

A **motion** was made by Jean Dickinson, seconded by Stephanie Anderson, to approve the May 2, 2024 regular minutes and Local Work Group minutes as written. Motion carried.

Agenda

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

SWCCD Budget Amendment

Chairman Burris opened the public hearing, hearing no comments, the public hearing was closed.

Due to unanticipated expenditures in the administration budget, totaling \$4,000. It has been determined that the funds need to be transferred from the operations budget to the Administration Budget within the 2023-24 SWCCD Budget.

Expenditure Increase Administration (Office): \$4,000.

Expenditure Decrease Operations Budge: (\$4,000)

Following discussion:

A **motion** was made by Jean Dickinson, seconded by Stephanie Anderson, to approve the budget amendment as presented. The amendment would increase the administration budget to \$107,000.00 and decrease the operations budget to \$114,160.00. Motion carried.

Staff will send the amended budget to the state and county per Department of Audit requirements.

Treasurer's Report

A **motion** was made by Jean Dickinson, seconded by Larry Folks, to approve the Treasurer's Report, and pay the bills in the amount of \$122,276.25. Motion carried.

Budget Hearing

The SWCCD budget hearing will be held Thursday, June 27, at 10:00 a.m. Call in number will be provided.

Reserve Account End of Year for fiscal year 2024

SWCCD Reserve Amount

Staff went over the reserve funds for the District for end of year FY 2024. The District has an *estimated* \$62,232.00 held in reserves. (\$20,979.00 are WDA grant funds, Assigned) = \$41,253.29. The funds are held in emergency reserves (not committed) and are held for unexpected expenses that may arise during the fiscal year and will note the expenditure in the minutes by Board motion.

State Budget FY 2025

Staff submitted the proposed budget by June 1. The final budget is due by July 31 to Department of Audit and County Clerk.

A **motion** was made by Jean Dickinson, seconded by Stephanie Anderson, to ratify the draft budget that was submitted. Motion carried.

Special Reports

Dave Kimble, USFW

- In cooperation with the landowners, funding partners, the USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and Trout Unlimited are proposing habitat projects on properties on Trout Creek. The primary objectives for USFWS-PFW and Trout Unlimited are to improve habitat conditions for fish and other riparian-dependent wildlife species. The projects are also likely to reduce sediment in Trout Creek and improve livestock forage production.
- Kimble said there was a change in the costs regarding dam construction, after receiving four contractor bids and the construction amount has changed.

- Dam construction is planned for 2024. Fence construction will be after dam construction, as some parts of the fence will likely be built across the completed dams.
- 1. SWCCD approves the project.
- 2. USFW Partner Fish Wildlife Program would be via routed through SWCCD (if approved).
- 3. WACD sends the fund, plus 2% of project costs to SWCCD. SWCCD pays invoices to landowner or contractor on the project.

Unfinished Business

Bitter-Killpecker Creek Update and Actions Drop Structure

- Folks reported on the BKWAG meeting and had input from WWC personnel. Folks would like to have a meeting with WWC and Little Snake River CD on the drop structure project to check on options before construction starts.
- Hold an on-site visit for the project.
- Folks will mention it to LSRCD.
- Burris suggesting having a meeting at the LSRCD office.
- Staff will request the as-builts from Inberg Miller Engineers and send to the Board, engineers and consultants.
- Staff will coordinate with WWC regarding organizing a meeting with LSRCD, WWC, SWCCD Board and SWC Engineer Gene Legerski.

Water Quality Monitoring/BKWAG Meeting

The BKWAG Meeting was held Tuesday, May 14, at the White Mountain Library.

The EPA study report is complete, but Ron Steg WDEQ, needs permission to release it. Follow up with Ron on a time-line.

Russ Hamilton and Norm Hargis, WWC, gave an update on the 2024 Bitter Creek Watershed-Based Plan Implementation Project.

2024 Project Work includes: June and August/ September Synoptic Sampling.

USFW Trout Creek Project

A **motion** was made by Henry Bliss, seconded by Stephanie Anderson, to approve the pass-through grant from WACD to SWCCD on the Trout Creek Project. Motion carried.

SWCCD Boundary Map – Corrected Petition – Legal Description

A legal description was provided by JFC Engineering for the District boundary. The description coincides and supplements the boundary show on the map that was approved by the Department of Revenue by letter dated January 29, 2024.

Staff was requested to submit the legal description and boundary map to Department Of Revenue.

WWC Project Work Order #2 Proposal FY 2025

A work order was submitted outlining tasks and estimated costs for WWC to complete Bitter Creek Project work for SWCCD Fiscal 2025. (June 2025)

After discussion, staff was directed to add the work order #2 to the July 1, Board Meeting agenda. Staff will get with WWC regarding the work order.

Cattle Chute

- Bliss will update the cattle chute form to add power wash and increase the usage to \$100.00.
- Burris reported the chute needs new tires and has hydraulic leaks.
- Kenny Burton, Farson, will do the repair work on the chute.
- Discussion included paying the mechanic on a quarterly to assess the chute, so the chute is in a clean and workable order.
- Staff will add to the July 1, Board Meeting agenda to approve the new form.

Community Enhancement Grant

- Burris spoke with Weed & Pest and found it is the right chemical application. Burris has concerns with the reputable application of the chemical. Burris will call John Freeman about his concerns.
- The District received one grant application from the Green River Greenbelt Task Force, regarding chemical treatment for Russian Olive/Tamarisk trees along the river corridor.
- To ensure effectiveness of the project, the District requests a report about the project.

A **motion** was made by Jean Dickinson, seconded by Larry Folks, to approve the Community Enhancement Grant submitted by the Green River Greenbelt Task Force for \$5,000.00. Motion carried.

New Business

Pre-Decisional – CLG Comments Re:

- Scoping comments on BLM's WY 2024 Fourth QTR Competitive Lease Sale: DOI-BLM-WY-0000-2024-00004-EA 4-10-24
- Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS for the ROW Applications Associated with Exxon Mobile's Carbon Capture Phase 1 Project. 4-19-24
- Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS for the Proposed Jackalope Wind Energy Project in SWC 4-25-24
- BLM Draft Evaluation Report for the Rawlins Resource Management Plan 5-3-2024
- BLM Draft Resource Management Plan Amendment/Environmental Impact Statement for Greater Sage Grouse Range wide Planning – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern 5-14-24

A **motion** was made by Larry Folks, seconded by Stephanie Anderson, to ratify the comments that were submitted. Motion carried.

National Old Growth Amendment MOU

After discussion, Burris will sign the MOU. The MOU is due June 10.

A **motion** was made by Jean Dickinson, seconded by Henry Bliss, to submit the Old Growth MOU with Danielle Bettencourt as principal contact. Motion carried.

Re-schedule July Board Meeting

The Board moved the July Board Meeting to Monday, July 1, at 4:00 p.m.

Conservation District Board Elections – August 7-27

Information was included in Supervisor’s packets.

2024 Small Water Applications submitted by Little Snake River Conservation District (LSRCD) in Sweetwater County

LSRCD submitted five small water applications in Sweetwater County.

<u>2024 Small Water Project Applications</u>	<u>Estimated Costs</u>	<u>Small Water</u>
<u>2024 - expires 11/2026</u>	-	-
<u>Adams Livestock Water Well - NRCS - Sweetwater</u>	<u>\$70,000.00</u>	<u>\$35,000.00</u>
<u>Bitter Creek Drop Structure Rehab</u>	<u>\$225,000.00</u>	<u>\$35,000.00</u>
<u>North GL Stock Water Well - NRCS - Sweetwater</u>	<u>\$70,000.00</u>	<u>\$35,000.00</u>
<u>Snowbank Pipeline West - NRCS - Sweetwater</u>	<u>\$90,000.00</u>	<u>\$35,000.00</u>
<u>South GL Stock Water Well - NRCS - Sweetwater</u>	<u>\$70,000.00</u>	<u>\$35,000.00</u>

The Board reviewed the information that was handed out at the Board meeting.

Tom Burris

- Attended and reported on the BKWAG meeting and met with the Rock Springs Mayor regarding Bitter and Killpecker Creek Meeting.
- Reported on speaking with the County Commissioners and their support for the District.
- Burris will work and research more information on the Irrigation District as it relates to center pivots.

Jean Dickinson

- Reported on working on CLG comments and the next Coalition of Local Governments (CLG) meeting with be held on June 21 in Lyman.

- Reported on a follow up discussion regarding the center pivots, which are under a federal program. There is nothing in the state with regards to water development at this time. It is important to make sure the local irrigation district gets documentation or a resolution to come to the Conservation District with their concerns. The project would come under a federal program and a federal obligation with the Colorado River Salinity. Locally led is very important to request the funding from the legislature. This is a state wide program in regards to the infrastructure.

Stephanie Anderson

- Attended and reported on the BKWAG meeting.
- Reached out to Don Schramm, RSGA, for information regarding Aggie Grazing.
- Working with the SW County Commissioners on county road one. Anderson said funding is the big issue.

Larry Folks

- Attended and reported on the BKWAG meeting.

Henry Bliss

- Attended the BKWAG Meeting and helped with IT connections.

Staff Reports

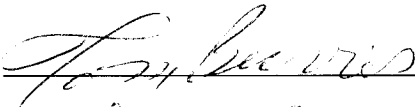
Karen Pecheny

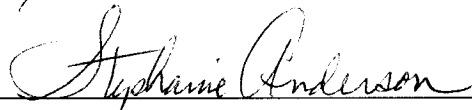
- Submitted the proposed state budget form for fiscal year 2025, due June 1st
- Reported on issues with Network Solutions email. Their server is not secure and staff is working with Jim Moore to provide us costs and pricing for an alternate email service.
- Attended the Ray Lovato “Trees for Recyclables Day” in Rock Springs, and handed out seedling trees.
- Attended the Green River Arbor Day event at Edgewater Park.
- The trees were delivered and staff worked on separating orders for customers and delivering trees. The District sold 1,630.00 trees. Reported on Trees sold - One Canopy 450 / Colorado State FS Nursery – 180 / Lincoln Oaks Nursery – 1,000.
- Attended the BKWAG meeting and took minutes.
- Met with Holly Kennedy, WACD Executive Director, at the SWCCD office.

Information and Education

- The Southwest Sage-grouse Local Work Group will be meeting on June 25 in Green River at the Game & Fish Office.
- Staff handed out information on the virtual fence project funding update from Sublette County CD.

A **motion** was made by Henry Bliss, to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m. The next meeting will be held on July 1, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. at the SWCCD Office, 550 Uinta Drive, Suite E, Green River, WY.

/s/  Chairman

/s/  Secretary

//Submitted by Karen Pecheny/