

HEREFORD NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 21, 2018

Sierra Vista County Complex—Small Conference Room—9:30 a.m.

Board Present: Jim Lindsey, Rachel Thomas, Lucinda Earven, John Ladd, David Greenberg

Others Present: Jack Ladd—Advisor, Jeri Ligon—Advisor, Don Decker—NRCS, Ivette Cunningham—Cooperator, Steve Bluemer—USFS, Donna Witschi—citizen, Bill Witschi—citizen, Tricia Gerrodette—citizen, Kathy Morris—Board Clerk

A. Call to Order

Jim Lindsey called the meeting to order at 9:39 a.m.

B. Introductions

Introductions were made around the room.

C. Call to the Public

Tricia Gerrodette announced that the Arizona NRCDs changing from Arizona State Land supervision to State Forestry supervision is its own specific bill in the State legislature but it is also a component of a much larger bill. Passage of the larger bill will be required to make the change.

D. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

1. Regular Meeting, January 17, 2018

Motion: John Ladd moved to accept the regular meeting minutes of January 17, 2018.

Second: Lucinda Earven seconded the motion.

Vote: Carried unanimously.

E. Committee and Other Reports

1. Upper San Pedro Partnership: The latest meeting was cancelled. The next meeting is May 9, 2018. No report.

2. NRCS: Don Decker reported on the Conservation Implementation Strategy (CIS) meeting he had with Jim Lindsey, John Ladd, and Fred Davis—Whitewater Draw NRCD. That meeting consensus was that there is no need to hold a local work group meeting this year for the HNRCD due to the short time frame and the uncertainty of how this year's EQIP allocations will be distributed.

A rough draft of the HNRCD CIS is in place.

As per the NRCS state office the following deadlines are in place: June 30, 2018—CIS due to the state office, July 1-August 31, 2018—CISs will be reviewed by the state leadership team and changes will be made.

By 2019 the CIS plan is the format the NRCS will use to determine the use of EQIP funds.

Don Decker will make the corrections and have the final for the March regular meeting.

3. USFS: Steve Bluemer reported that within the Forest Service there is new administration, new focal points, and new priorities. Region 3—Arizona and New Mexico—have three priorities: relationships, recreation, and restoration.

Some prescribed burn plans are already in the works. USFS is partnering with Game & Fish on restoration projects, especially near the international border.

The Travel Management Plan is "getting close." Steve thought the District should have received a letter for comments on the plan but no such letter was received. Steve said he'd make sure we're on their mailing list. Steve said there were only about 23 comment letters.

New Forest Plan was signed off by the regional office and it's in Washington's hands now. Should be finalized in February, 2018.

USFS is doing grazing consultation with the FWS to determine how grazing does or does not affect endangered species. Permittees have been given the opportunity to comment. During these consultations USFS is finding the yellow billed cuckoo is “pretty widespread”—not just in the riparian areas. They’ve discovered this from recorders in the field. The garter snakes are “pretty centralized”—mostly in the San Rafael Valley.

The meeting jumped ahead to *New Business, 5. USFS Brown Canyon Proposed Fees*. Steve had no input. He had emailed his associate working on this but had not heard back. Increased fees are supposed to help maintain recreation facilities.

4. BLM: No one present to report.

5. The Arizona Rangeland Conservation Partnership: John Ladd reported no HNRCD cooperators are making applications. Funding for the project is “in limbo.” The entire project seems to be a “catch 22.” Agencies won’t commit funding until environmental assessments (EAs) are completed and individuals won’t (or can’t) complete EAs unless funding is committed.

6. Cochise Conservation and Recharge Network (CCRN): John Ladd reported no new developments. The Coyote Wash feasibility study and design is supposed to start sometime in March. Karen Riggs retired from Cochise County, but is a consultant for the County and for the Nature Conservancy.

F. District Financial Reports

1. Payment Authorizations:

Motion: Lucinda Earven moved to approve payment for items 1-3.
Second: John Ladd seconded the motion.
Vote: Carried unanimously.

2. Monthly Financial Reports

Submitted to the Board.

3. Motion to File Financial Report for Audit

Motion: Rachel Thomas moved to file the financial report for audit.
Second: David Greenberg seconded the motion.
Vote: Carried unanimously.

Motion: Lucinda Earven moved to pay any supervisor’s travel expenses who attend Legislator Day in Phoenix.

Second: John Ladd seconded the motion.
Vote: Carried unanimously.

G. Old Business

1. Report on Cooperators’ Dues: To date 13 cooperators have not paid 2017 dues. A reminder letter will be sent to those members. For 2018 there is one new member, Evelyn Sylvester.

2. Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape Strategic Planning Session, Feb. 6, 2018: There are still outstanding questions of whether or not the available money can be used by anyone in the District. Don Decker suggested people within the HNRCD just try for the funding. He thought the District had potential applicants.

3. Bisbee Affluent/Ladd Ranch/CCNR: John Ladd reported the problem still exists. He had a meeting with the Bisbee City Manager that was not productive. State Senator Gail Griffin has contacted federal agencies to hopefully force the International Border Water Commission (IBWC) to “do something,” but so far nothing has been done. Naco, Sonora’s sewer system is outdated and obsolete. ADEQ and EPA are not making test results available or cooperating in any other manner.

4. Plaque for Horseshoe Draw Project: Jim Lindsey has contacted Pat Call but has not heard back from him as far as placing a plaque at the Melody Lane County Buildings. A plaque on site will never be seen by the public. John Ladd will speak with Pat Call.

5. HNRCDs to Change from AZ State Land Dept. to AZ State Forestry Dept.: All supervisors have received the emails to let the state legislators know the HNRCD supports the move.

6. SPRNCA RMP/EIS: There was an email from Amy Markstein—BLM stating they had the cooperating agency meeting, made their decisions, and it should be out to the public in August. Jim Lindsey spoke with Bill Dunn who contacted Ray Suazo—BLM Arizona State Director in regards to why the HNRCD does not want to enter into a cooperating agency status. Ray Suazo was unaware of the situation and he was going to examine the matter further. To date Jim had not heard anything back.

H. New Business

1. Board Elections: HNRCD Board elections will be this spring. Lucinda Earven's term is up. She will run again. Notices will be published in the Tombstone newspaper the week of February 26th and March 5th.

2. Draft Resolution re Effluent Water: Rachel Thomas has been trying to find documentation on effluent water and has been unable to find any. ADEQ is supposed to have regulations on effluent water but Rachel couldn't find any published regulations on their web site. Rachel suggested the District write a letter to ADEQ requesting such regulations.

3. Project Central: Dusty Glidewell—NRCS is part of this leadership group for people from agriculture backgrounds. The program is developed by the U of A.

Motion: John Ladd moved the District contribute \$100.00 to Project Central's graduation ceremony.

Second: David Greenberg seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion carried with one abstention.

Discussion: Money will come from the District education funds.

4. Discussion for 2018 New Projects: A discussion was held concerning ideas for new projects for the District to pursue. Ideas that were discussed include:

- ✚ Working with Arizona Game and Fish on range restoration. They do have some available funds.
- ✚ A Horseshoe Draw public awareness workshop to educate legislators and the public.
- ✚ Educate the public on how the HNRCD was involved in bringing back the Sonoita antelope.
- ✚ Augment the NRCS where their rules keep them from doing certain projects, such as boundary fences and cleaning out water tanks.
- ✚ Another recharge project.

5. USFS Brown Canyon Proposed Fees: Covered under *Committee and Other Reports, 3. USFS.*

6. FOIA Request: Kathy Morris will email Robin Silver today acknowledging the request. The information is being gathered. John Ladd suggested he be sent a Cooperator's Form in the event he'd like to join the HNRCD.

I. Education Programs

1. Tombstone High School Ag Program: The Tombstone High School FFA students did extremely well at the State FFA convention. Their team took 1st place in *Vet Tech*, in individual *Vet Tech* they took a 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 5th. *Horse Evaluation* they took 3rd for the team, individual was 2nd. In *Ag Business* the team took 2nd. In *Soils* the team took 5th, individual *Soils* was also 5th. In *Livestock Judging* the team took 8th and in *Ag Mechanics* the team took 7th place. This was out of 68 school teams! Several of the students will go on to the national FFA convention.

J. Correspondence

1. Introductory letter from Jacqueline Thomas, AZ State Land Department
2. Thank you letter from American Stewards of Liberty

K. Future Meetings / Agenda Items

HNRCD Regular Meeting

March 21, 2018
Cochise County Complex

Wednesday
Large conference room

9:30a.m.
Sierra Vista, AZ

L. Adjournment

Jim Lindsey adjourned the meeting at 11: 53 a.m.

Approved by the Board 3/21/18 _____
(Date)

Signed Jim Lindsey _____
(Jim Lindsey, Chairman)

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