

HEREFORD NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, March 20, 2019

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

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

Others Present: Jeri Ligon—Advisor, Jack Ladd—Advisor, Mike Hayhurst—Advisor, Steve Boice—Advisor, Donald Decker—NRCS, Scott Feldhausen—BLM, Brad Fulk—AZGFD, Ivette Cunningham—Cooperator, Chuck Cunningham—Cooperator, Joy Banks—Cooperator, Nancy Neumann—Cooperator, Kate Ladson—citizen, Tricia Gerrodette—citizen, Kathy Morris—Board Clerk

A. Call to Order

John Ladd called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

B. Introductions

Introductions were made around the room.

C. Call to the Public.

None

D. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

1. Regular Meeting, January 16, 2019

Motion: David Greenberg moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of January 16, 2019.

Second: Lucinda Earven seconded the motion.

Vote: Carried unanimously.

2. Drone Informative Meeting, February 25, 2019

Motion: David Greenberg moved to approve the drone meeting minutes of February 25, 2019.

Second: Lucinda Earven seconded the motion.

Vote: Carried unanimously.

E. Committee and Other Reports

1 USPP: The last meeting was February 13, 2019 but no District members were able to attend. The next meeting will be May 8, 2019 in the Sierra Vista Public Library or City Hall. The Executive Committee of the USPP has been abolished. The Technical Committee is still in operation.

2. NRCS: Don Decker reported March 29, 2019 is the due date for EQIP applicants to have their eligibility, ranking and cost estimation in place. The District has five applicants who will make this deadline and will be considered for potential funding in Cycle One for this year.

Soil Conservationist, Stefanie Krentz resigned, therefore they have a position to fill.

3. USFS: No one present to report.

4. BLM: Scott Feldhausen reported: 1) Most of their positions will be staffed this year. They will reduce the use of partnership agreements to get work accomplished. They will be bringing some technicians and lower grade individuals on to do a lot of the monitoring work. 2) He believed all of their fire fighters have been hired for the year. 3) The unplanned five week furlough really did make a hit on their workload for this year. 4) BLM had a good tour with AZFGD on the SPRNCA. 5) They are working toward getting the SPRNCA RMP finished. 6) There are several ongoing EIS projects in several areas other than the HNRCD. 7) BLM is doing a lot of mine related work. 8) Scott has an all new management team. Scott is pleased with the change and direction in his office.

5. AZGFD: Brad Fulk reported 1) The big game hunting seasons are over for the season. 2) AZGFD is involved in two EQIP funded projects that required piggy-back funding—a water project and a mesquite control project in the Bisbee area. 3) Leland “Bill” Brake is a “new” commissioner. Bill is a rancher and businessman—one of his main goals as a commissioner is wanting to see land owner relationships improved by the AZGFD personnel and by the sportsmen in general. He coordinated a video series in which John Ladd—HNRCD and Fred Davis—WWDNRCD were involved, from the land owners’ standpoint. This video is to educate sportsmen as to what land owners deal with concerning hunting and trespass issues as well as how much a rancher puts forth for conservation. This series is being incorporated into the AZGFD hunter education programs. This series will be posted on the District website, herefordnrcd.com ASAP. 4) John Ladd and Fred Davis were both awarded certificates from the AZGFD Commission for the good work they did on those videos. 5) 45ish pronghorns were captured in Prescott Valley that virtually were on an island habitat in among houses. These animals have radio collars and were dispersed in three different herds in southeastern Arizona. They will be used to mark movements. 6) The turkey trapping AZGFD had planned failed because of all the green-up recently. However, the birds are staying in the Mule Mountains.

6. CCRN: John Ladd reported the Bella Vista recharge project design study may be finalized by October. They do not have the funding for construction of the project, they only retained funding for the design study of the project. There are several designs in place.

7. SLRP: Scott Feldhausen reported SLRP just completed the Strategic Plan Document in coordination with NRCS. The document lays out the strategy for the next couple of years where SLRP will continue to focus on conservation easements and where there is the biggest bang for the buck for conservation values; targeting on-the-ground restoration work. SLRP is in the process of filling an actual coordinator position.

F. District Financial Reports

Motion: David Greenberg moved to approve the payment of items 1-6 on the Payment Schedule for 2/20/2019.

Second: Jim Lindsey seconded the motion.

Vote: Carried unanimously.

Discussion: Jim Lindsey pointed out that Item #3- 2/11/2019- for office supplies -\$19.52 was a debit card expense, not a check. Corrections will be made to the Payment Schedule.

Motion: David Greenberg moved to approve the payment of items 1-8 on the Payment Schedule for 3/20/19.

Second: Lucinda Earven seconded the motion.

Vote: Carried unanimously.

Discussion: Jim Lindsey pointed out that Item 8 was a debit charge. The payment schedule will be corrected.

The approved financial reports will be submitted for audit.

G. Old Business

1. Horseshoe Draw Plaque: There is \$2,500 remaining in the Horseshoe Draw account, however, that money came from the HNRCD general fund in the beginning as “seed money” to start the Horseshoe Draw account. Therefore, the District can spend the money as needed. There really is no good reason to put a plaque at the site; 1) no one goes to the site except on invited, guided tours, 2) the money could be spent in a more beneficial way. A new idea was to spend the money on the HNRCD annually delivering a wide spread news release of the data collected through monitoring the project of the benefits the project has generated.

Motion: Jim Lindsey made a motion to forego the plaque and the HNRCD make an annual news release to communities and legislators as to the benefits showing from the data collected on the Horseshoe Draw Project.

Second: Lucinda Earven seconded the motion.

Vote: Two ayes, one nay. Motion carried.
Discussion: There was still a small desire to have recognition on a plaque at the site.

John Ladd had to leave the meeting, Lucinda Earven resumed the meeting.

2. AACD Winter/Legislative Meeting, January 30, 31, 2019: John Ladd and Kathy Morris attended the winter meeting. Steve Barker stepped down as AACD president. The new president is Frank Krentz from the White Water Draw NRCD. John felt it was “remarkable” how little the state legislators know about conservation districts and what they do. Maybe HNRCD could have some work sessions with key legislators to educate them on what the conservation districts do under the State Land Department.

3. Drone Meeting with Whitewater Draw NRCD, February 25, 2019: Several members present attended the meeting and the overall consensus was very positive. There was some concern over privacy issues.

4. HNRCD “Officials” List: Kathy Morris will resubmit the list to Board members for comments.

H. New Business

1. Existing Grazing Permits on SPRNCA: Mike Hayhurst acknowledged he is proud of what he has accomplished on his 32 years on the Babacomari River. He’s been working hard to save his cattle allotment. He has fears his allotment will be canceled despite all he’s done for conservation. The land he spoke of is a pasture consisting of approximately 1,800 acres of BLM, 1,200 of private, and 1,000 acres of State land. If he’s deprived of the BLM allotment he understands the BLM will not fence off the State and private land so he will suffer the loss of the entire pasture. He foresees needing to sell his private land that’s inside the BLM allotment if he loses the allotment. He currently leases private land to go with the allotment and those private land owners will probably be in the same predicament as he—eventually forced to sell to developers. Mike feels if the property is developed it will be an environmental disaster. Along with the environmental impact of development will be the tremendous loss of open space.

Scott Feldhausen and Amy Markstein—BLM have walked the Hayhurst and Lindsey allotments and observed firsthand what conservation practices have been accomplished.

2. National Assoc. Conservation District 2019 Dues:

Motion: Jim Lindsey moved to pay the National Association of Conservation District dues.
Second: David Greenberg seconded the motion
Vote: Motion failed unanimously.
Discussion: HNRCD has never belonged to the NACD. HNRCD belongs to the Arizona Association of Conservation Districts (AACD) and they belong to the national association.

3. HNRCD Representative for CCRN: John Ladd felt his expertise in representing the HNRCD was the building of the Horseshoe Draw Project. He thought HNRCD should continue to have a CCRN representative but he doesn’t feel he should be the person now that Horseshoe Draw is completed. The selection of a new representative is tabled until Pat Call’s position is filled.

4. Discussion re. Responsibility of and Availability of HNRCD Supervisors: No HNRCD policy is needed for supervisors. Supervisors are expected to attend meetings. Board members need to be available as much as possible under the restriction they are all volunteers and need to make a living.

5. Discussion of Replacement HNRCD Supervisor Due to Vacated Position: Tabled. Pat Call is now a Justice of the Peace and being an HNRCD supervisor is considered a conflict of interest forcing him to resign as a supervisor.

6. Monitoring & Reporting Drought Workshop: Cooperator Nancy Neumann attended a workshop hosted by CoCoRaHS (Community Collaborative Rain, Hail & Snow Network). The only requirements to join the organization are an enthusiasm for watching and reporting weather conditions and a desire to learn more about how weather can affect and impact our lives. CoCoRaHS is a grassroots effort of

citizens measuring precipitation right in their own backyards. It's easy to join, takes only five minutes a day and is a fun way to learn about this natural resource that falls from the sky. Personal observations continue to give scientists an ever clearer picture of where and how much precipitation falls throughout various communities. There are over 20,000 active observers in the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Bahamas. Nancy exhibited the official CoCoRaHS rain, snow and hail gauge she is using. For detailed information go to cocorahs.org.

7. HNRCD Cooperator Dues/Bills Sent Out:

Motion: Lucinda Earven moved the HNRCD begin asking cooperators for annual dues per the calendar year rather than the fiscal year (July 1) as has been done in the past.

Second: David Greenberg seconded the motion.

Vote: Carried unanimously.

Discussion: The "bills" for 2019 will be sent out within the next month. "Bills" for 2020 will be sent out in January, 2020.

8. Status of BLM Water Law Suit: No one present knew any updates other than what's been reported in the news.

9. Status of BLM SPRNCA Resource Management Plan: Scott Feldhausen reported the plan is still on track time wise. They are currently proposing to release the final RMP EIS the last week of April, then there will be a thirty day protest period, then a record decision the end of July. Once the record decision is published BLM can start deciding how they're going to implement management of the ground. Scott said he would attend our May 15, 2019 regular meeting to give a presentation on the plan.

10. USDA (NRCS) Conservation Practice Standards, Comments Due April 25, 2019: Tabled until the April regular meeting.

11. WOTUS New Proposed Rule, Comments Due April 15, 2019: No comments from the District.

I. Education Programs

1. Tombstone High School Ag Program: Jim Lindsey is a member of the school's agriculture program evaluation team and they have a meeting coming up in the near future. Tombstone High School is the only school in the HNRCD that currently has an FFA program. Through the agriculture program the high school intends to introduce welding education.

2. Small Acreage Resource Concerns (SARC) Mass Mailing Postcard: David Greenberg thought it would be necessary for him to personally visit any inquiries from the post card that asked for a site visit. He does not have the time away from his business to do that. Points from the discussion: 1) not necessary for David or any other Board member to be responsible for personal site visits, 2) the only person really qualified to do site visits is Don Decker. He will be available as much as possible, 3) the post card is a gathering data process, 4) the District needs qualitative data to search for funding for non producing land owners, 5) David Greenberg will get with Kathy Morris to pay for the post card and get it in the mail.

J. Correspondence

1. *Forestry Notes*

K. Future Meetings / Agenda Items

HNRCD Regular Meeting

April 17, 2019

Cochise County Complex

Wednesday

Large conference room

9:30a.m.

Sierra Vista, AZ

L. Adjournment

Lucinda Earven adjourned the meeting at 12:15 a.m.

Approved by the Board _____
(Date)

Signed _____
(John Ladd, Chairman)

ACCRONYMS

AACD	Arizona Association of Conservation Districts
AZGFD	Arizona Game and Fish Department
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CCRN	Cochise Conservation and Recharge Network
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EQIP	Environmental Quality Incentives Program
HNRC	Hereford Natural Resource Conservation District
NRCS	National Resource Conservation Service
RMP	Resource Management Plan
SARC	Small Acreage Resource Concerns
SLRP	Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape Restoration Partnership
SPRNCA	San Pedro River National Conservation Area
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	United States Forest Service
USPP	Upper San Pedro Partnership
WOTUS	Waters of the United States

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