

HEREFORD NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT (HNRCD)

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, January 20, 2021

Palominas Fire District Training Center Facility

9222 S Kings Ranch Rd, Hereford, AZ 85615

A. Call to Order

Chairman John Ladd called the meeting to order at 9:38 a.m.

B. Introductions

Board Present: John Ladd, Chairman, Jim Lindsey, Supervisor and, Steve Boice Supervisor

Board Present by Telephone: Lucinda Earven, Vice-Chair (9:46 a.m. -11:23 a.m.)

Board Absent: Mike Hayhurst

Others Present: Joanne Roberts, HNRCD Board Clerk

Pat Call, HNRCD Cooperator and Board Advisor

Chuck Cunningham, HNRCD Cooperator and Board Advisor

Ivette Cunningham, HNRCD Cooperator and Board Advisor

Don Decker, NRCS Douglas Field Officer, District Conservationist

Mary Darling, Darling Geomatics

Tricia Gerrodette, Public (by telephone)

Matthew Jewell, AZ DFFM, Service Forrester (by telephone)

Mary Ann Capehart, UA Water Wise (by telephone)

Mark Apel, Cochise County (by telephone)

Holly Richter, CCRN, TNC, Arizona Water Projects Director (by telephone)

Josh Grace, AZ Land Department, Range Resource Area Mgr. (by telephone)

Cameron Becker, ALWT, Land Protection and Stewardship Mgr. (by telephone)

A quorum was met at 9:46 a.m.

Board action business was completed before the quorum was lost at 11:23 a.m.

C. Call to the Public

NO RESPONSE

D. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

1. Regular Meeting November 18, 2020

Motion: Supervisor Jim Lindsey moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of November 18, 2020.

Second: Supervisor Steve Boice seconded the motion.

Vote: Carried unanimously.

Discussion: None.

E. Agency and Committee Reports

1. Upper San Pedro Partnership (USPP)

Vice - Chair Lucinda Earven had no updates.

Ms. Holly Richter stated a Technical Committee scheduled for today had been postponed to a date to be determined.

2. National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Mr. Don Decker provided one handout and he proceeded to review the funding pools that are applicable to the EQIP applications within the District. The funds and number of eligible applicants are as follows; National Air Quality \$2,000,000 (1 applicant eligible); Joint Chiefs Fort Huachuca (projects within the imprint of Fort Huachuca's priority area) \$566,200 (9 applicants eligible); Working Lands for Wildlife \$500,000 Southwestern willow flycatcher focus- riparian (1 applicant eligible); Douglas range lands and irrigated lands allocations \$274,249 (10 applicants eligible and); Southeast Arizona Grassland Restoration RCCP \$29,758 (2 applicants eligible). There is a total of nine applicants from the Hereford District. Mr. Decker noted that not all projects can be funded as there are applicants from other Districts vying for the same source of funds.

Mr. Decker states Ms. Stephanie Krentz is now working in the Douglas Office. Her position is funded through a WWD-HNRD grant. Ms. Krentz is assigned all irrigated related applicants and Mr. Decker is focusing on range work. Ms. Krentz is currently conducting landowner visits. Mr. Decker also noted that as a consultant, she will not be able to use the government computers but she will work independently and pass on the documents and reports to him.

Mr. Decker reviewed Arizonas' drought situation. He stated the Ranchers have been adjusting operations in response to the drought by cutting herd numbers and not retaining the same number of heifers among other practices. Good spring precipitation carried some of the ranchers/farmers through the year even through the summer rains were lacking.

Mr. Cameron Becker stated he was working with the State office on aligning the ALWT application for EQIP funds under the RCCP FHSL program in which the Hereford and Santa Cruz NRCDs supported in 2016.

3. United States Forest Service (USFS) – No one present to report

4. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) – No one present to report

5. Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) – No one present to report

6. Cochise Conservation and Recharge Network (CCRN)

Ms. Holly Richter provided a quick review of the partnership. She noted this is a regional network to address land and water projects to achieve its efforts for a healthy watershed and vibrant local economy. She further stated the 2020 reports will be released in 4-6 weeks but wanted to share some of the monitoring lessons learned and information garnered from 2019.

There are 7 projects stretched over 25 miles along the river.

The 2019 monitoring results revealed interesting rainfall patterns that varied across the 25 miles reinforcing the importance of capturing rainfall data through a regional network employing different types of projects and designs such as recharge, effluent basins, operation practices as well as retiring land holdings. Additional information was shared comparing the amount of 2015 to 2019 recharge and the benefits of downstream recharge.

Chairman Ladd inquired about funding for other projects. Ms. Richter noted the Horseshoe Draw design is very important because of the slow release of flows downstream of the basin. Because it is successful, the Bella Vista Ranch design is utilizing the same concepts. There are 3 more projects and none are funded for construction at this time. The greatest focus right now is completing the Coyote Wash Engineering design with NRCS then getting the funds to construct it.

7. Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape Restoration Partnership (SLRP) – No one present to report
Ms. Joanne Roberts read an email update provided in advance of the meeting by Ms. Amber Morin. Her update is as follows,
 - A new Program Coordinator has been selected. Amber Morin has taken over for Alanna Riggs. Alanna was offered a job by Fort Huachuca.
 - Chair updates: Sarah Gandaría is the 2021 Chair for the Sentinel Landscape Restoration Partnership (SLRP). Cameron Becker (ALWT) and Dana Backer (USFS) are co-chairs of the Open Space and Working Lands Group (OWLs). Valentino Reyes (NRCS) has taken over as chair for the Communications Group. The new Steering Committee Chair for 2021 is Julie McIntyre with the FWS.
 - The Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape is participating in a training called Tools for Effective Landowner Engagement (TELE). The goal is to help the Landscape partners strategize and reach local landowners to encourage participation in activities that further the mission of the Fort and the needs of local landowners themselves. I reached out last week to see what the conservation priorities of the local Districts were, so that as the Partners attend this training, they can help find ways to encourage the success and implementation of your District's needs. Sharma is participating in this training and will also serve as a voice for the local Districts.
8. Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management (ADFFM)
Mr. Matthew Jewel stated the Agency received a healthy budget of \$23.8 million dollars for its healthy forest initiative, Department of Correction fire crews, and operational brush control and thinning teams. He further stated the Hereford NRCD is a priority area for the Agency's program and he is working with local landowners and producers to get forest plans in place in coordination with local fire districts. Plans include fuel reduction and habitat restoration treatments.

A brief discussion continued on what types of brush control methods and targeted species.
9. Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) – No one present to report
10. Arizona State Land Department (ASLD) –
Mr. Josh Grace introduced himself as he is returning to the area serving as the SE AZ Range Area Manager which covers the Hereford NRCD in its entirety. He works with range related issues on State Land and previously staffed this in area in 2016. He noted that he would be representing the Agency in most of these meetings. He is reviewing several applications for improvements in the District and is working with Mr. Decker to get permits for projects.
11. Arizona Association of Conservation Districts (AACD) - No one present to report

F. District Financial Reports

Ms. Roberts noted there was an error in the months noted on the Agenda for the Final Reports Files. Financials are for November and December 2020.

1. Payment Schedule December 2020

Motion: Supervisor Lindsey moved to authorize payment of items 1-3 on the Payment Schedule.

Second: Supervisor Boice seconded the motion.

Vote: Carried unanimously.

Discussion: None

2. Financial Reports—File for Audit December 2020

Motion: Supervisor Lindsey moved to file the financial reports for audit.

Second: Supervisor Boice seconded the motion.

Vote: Carried unanimously.

Discussion: None.

3. Payment Schedule January 2021

Motion: Supervisor Lindsey moved to authorize payment of items 1-6 on the Payment Schedule.

Second: Supervisor Boice seconded the motion.

Vote: Carried unanimously.

Discussion: None

4. Financial Reports—File for Audit November 2020

Motion: Supervisor Lindsey moved to file the financial reports for audit.

Second: Supervisor Boice seconded the motion.

Vote: Carried unanimously.

Discussion: None.

G. Old Business

1. Status and/or Nomination of New Advisors

a. Invitation/Acceptance of Pat Call as Water Advisor

Chairman Ladd noted the Board proposed Pat Call as a Water Advisor and Mr. Call had accepted.

2. Update on Mary Francis Clinton Property Evaluation and Further Action by Board

Mr. Decker stated Ms. Clinton seems happy with his advice and is implementing some of the recommendations such as no more land disturbance (i.e. diking). Overall, the property looks to have decent grass cover considering her concern about the amount of tumbleweed and lack of precipitation. Mowing will continue. No further action is required of the Board and item can be removed from future Agendas.

3. Update on the NACD Grant Technical Position

Mr. Decker spoke earlier on this topic in his Agency Report. Ms. Krentz is conducting landowner visits but hard products are forthcoming. He further states there is plenty of work between the two Districts to keep her busy.

A brief discussion on the benefits of using grant money for funding positions and two Range Conservationist and 1 Soil Conservationist positions are identified for the Douglas Office future staffing.

4. Local Working Group 2021 – Combined Session with WWD NRCD

Mr. Decker noted the WWD NRCD is still waiting to determine if their Work Group meeting will take place in person or virtually. If virtually, AACD will host the Zoom meeting.

Chairman Ladd recalled a previous conversation with Mr. Fred Davis about the convenience of having a conference call and they discussed having it at the Douglas NRCS Office.

Ms. Roberts reminded the Chairman the purpose of the Agenda Item is determine if there is a preference and desire by both NRCDS to have a joint meeting for efficiency in bringing together agency staff and because the two Districts have many resource issues in common.

There was further discussion on the benefits of a combined meeting and a preference for a virtual-zoom meeting.

Chairman Ladd will contact Mr. Davis to discuss and advise the Board. Ms. Roberts will work with Mr. Decker and Ms. Peggy Davis (WWD) to develop an invitation list, agenda items, and a set of questions to be distributed prior to a meeting regardless if it is combined with WWD.

H. New Business

1. Hereford NRCD Meeting Location and Start Time

Because of the continued restrictions due to Covid-19, Cochise County, and Cities of Sierra Vista and Huachuca City have indefinitely closed meeting rooms to the public.

Ms. Roberts will schedule the Palominas Fire District Training Center meeting room for the Regular Board Meeting on the third Wednesday of each month through June 2021 with the exception of April. Meeting time will remain 0930. Ms. Roberts will advise if there are any problems and will look for other accommodations if needed.

April meeting is planned to take place at Tombstone High School along with a tour of the facility. Ms. Roberts will coordinate with Ms. Amber Ford and Mr. David Thursby and advise.

2. U of A Cochise County Cooperative Extension Water Wise Request for Funds

Ms. Mary Ann Capehart is requesting funds for a design and build of a prototype wildlife drinker using a rain harvesting method to fill a drinker for drought related wildlife water needs. The initial materials budget is a little more than \$700.00 and labor would be through volunteers.

A long discussion ensued about the placement of the drinker, the land ownership, the need for a cultural survey, and a cattle exclusionary fence. The Board is interested in the proposed project but requires additional information.

a. The Board would like Ms. Capehart to re-work her costs to include a wildlife friendly - cattle exclusionary fence.

b. Chairman Ladd will contact a private consultant archaeologist he is working with on another project and inquire to see if a survey is needed and if the consultant will donate his time to conduct the survey.

c. Mary Darling of Darling Geomatics was in attendance. While discussing the need for an arch survey, she contacted her company's archaeologist. He stated that Pima County requires a survey for ground disturbance greater than 2-acres. He was unsure what the rule is for Cochise County. The Board asks Ms. Capehart to confirm the need for a survey if on state, federal, or county land.

d. The Board was interested in the idea of private land versus public land and would like to explore this option.

A brief discussion on how much land was needed, appropriate Hereford NRCD funds, and the expected lifespan of the project. The item will remain on the Agenda for February's meeting.

3. ASLD NRCD Supervisor Training

Ms. Jackie Thompson has developed training modules/videos that all Supervisors and Advisors need to watch and report the completion of the training before June 2021. The trainings are designed to educate the Supervisors and Advisors on their responsibilities and to reduce potential liabilities for the Districts and State Land Department.

In general, it is thought that it would be easiest to watch the videos individually rather than calling a special training meeting. Chairman Ladd prefers to send in one affidavit of completion for the District. There was also discussion of a virtual training session with all Supervisors and Advisors in attendance.

Ms. Roberts will advise the Board on venues after speaking with Ms. Thompson.

4. Huachuca Water Umbel (*Lilaeopsis schaffneriana* var. *recurva*) Down Listing Petition

Ms. Mary Darling has asked for the support of the Hereford NRCD in petitioning for the down listing of the endangered plant, the Huachuca water umbel. Ms. Darling believes there is an opportunity to develop plans and projects for delisting this species, and others, by working with NRCDs (Hereford, Santa Cruz, Pima). She believes that with a concerted effort by the NRCDs with professionals to act, progress can be made to reduce species listings and protect allotments.

Ms. Darling is recommending the NRCDs formulate a subcommittee to work on the processes to develop projects to acquire data and develop a plan to meet the down listing criteria in the water umbel Recovery Plan.

Discussion on restrictions or considerations, where the projects would take place, what agencies and entities to work with and Section D of the Endangered Species Act (experimental populations).

Motion: Supervisor Boice moved to create a subcommittee to work with Mary Darling to start the process to down-list, which includes projects, to look at the Huachuca water umbel.

Second: Supervisor Lindsey seconded the motion.

Vote: Carried unanimously.

Discussion: Supervisor Boice inquired about presence in Las Cienegas to which Ms. Darling responded positively and that is why she has approached Pima NRCD.

Chairman Ladd, Supervisor Boice and Advisor Call all volunteered for the subcommittee.

Mr. Decker inquired whether Ms. Roberts was aware of water umbel occurrence at Leslie Canyon Wildlife Area. Ms. Roberts responded negatively.

Chairman Ladd inquired about propagation, seed banks, and other sources for potential projects Ms. Darling replied that working with the USFWS to obtain access to these resources and to acquire permits is critical.

No changes were made to the motion. Motion stands as written.

Vice- Chair Earven inquired about additional Board Actions. Chairman Ladd moved to Agenda Item K3 for Board action and the Board motion is recorded under said Agenda Item in this document.

I. Education Program

1. Tombstone High School Ag Program

a. Follow Up from November Meeting Presentation

Ms. Roberts read an email update from Ms. Amber Ford for the Meeting Record.

“The Tombstone Agriculture Program is still running. We spent the last week of last semester and the first two weeks of last semester online, but are currently back in person as of today (Tuesday the 19th). This semester I am having every student currently in a class participate in the state level Career Development Event (CDEs, the competitions). We are spending each Friday preparing for them. In terms of current course content, we are starting to learn about different careers in agriculture and begin to plan our Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAEs, the ag projects). Please let me know if you would like additional information before the meeting tomorrow.”

Supervisor Lindsey stated there was no mention of the welding program. He believes this is another reason to have the meeting and tour at the school in April. He further states, that he does not believe additional Education funds should be provided to this program because the \$10,000.00 donation from last school year had not been spent. And further stated, the Board is then able to use the money in other ways.

Supervisor Boice inquired into the number of students enrolled. Ms. Roberts did not know but will send a follow up inquiry and report back.

Chairman Ladd asked about a project Supervisor Boice had previous discussed that would partner the 4-H program with the Ag. program. Further discussion on a trailer welding project, who would be involved with the welding, would it be street safe and any potential liability for the District, and whether it could be considered an SAE project.

Supervisors Lindsey and Boice will coordinate with Ms. Kim Fox and Amber Ford and report back to the Board.

2. San Pedro Spirits 4-H Group

a. Follow Up from November Meeting Presentation

Supervisor Boice had no updates.

Ms. Roberts advised the members that Jeannie and Supervisor Mike Hayhurst did complete the personal donation of a new animal tattoo kit to the Group just after the first of the year.

Chairman Ladd indicated they needed to tighten up their request and clearly state what they are asking for from the Board. He inquired if the District is still considering donating money whether

there is a time frame in which they needed to submit a proposal. Supervisor Lindsey replied negatively on a timeframe.

Ms. Roberts will work with Supervisor Boice on developing an outline to assist Ms. Fox with developing a proposal. The outline will be based on the MOU template adopted at a previous Board Meeting.

J. Board Clerk Updates Time Permitting

1. Telephone access for Board Meetings

Ms. Roberts indicated there are still equipment issues but continues to work on it.

2. Cooperator Dues/Donation Payment Options Update – Go Daddy thru AACD.

No update was made available from Ms. Deborah Smith before the meeting.

3. Notices to Cooperators for 2021 Membership Renewal

Ms. Roberts stated the first renewal notice was sent in December; a second was included in the winter Newsletter and another will be sent to unpaid members at end of this month.

4. Certified Board Supervisor Records Reminder

5. Zoom/virtual meetings, work sessions, outreach, printed materials, etc.

Discussion on the value of hardcopy materials, building webinars and associated costs and materials for Advisors Chuck and Ivette Cunningham to hand out when talking with landowners.

Supervisor Boice gave a successful example of what his Foundation developed. A bookmark with photographs that is inexpensive when purchased in bulk.

Supervisor Lindsey stated that an item like that could be combined with materials the Board has in their storage shed – trailer. He stated the materials were used extensively during workshops and fairs. Ms. Roberts inquired if the subject material was still relevant and accurate. Supervisor Lindsey replied positively.

Further discussion on sponsoring a virtual workshop and relevant topics that would tie into small land acreage owners while looking into products that may be available through the State Land Department and/or AACD.

Ms. Roberts appealed to the Board, Cooperators, and partners for project information with photos. She stated she would be appealing to all of the Cooperators via email solicitation in February. Ms. Roberts stated that Jackie Thomas and AACD are still asking for Hereford project information and photos. The information they have is limited and dated.

After further discussion, Chairman Ladd, Supervisor Lindsey, and Mr. Decker stated they would provide Ms. Roberts with photographs and project information.

6. Webpage Update

Ms. Roberts stated she has continued to review the nuances of updating the format and design without losing all the information that currently resides on the website. She further reports current Agendas, Notices of Meeting, and Meeting minutes are posted along with a few local events.

K. Correspondence

1. Cooperator 2021 Membership Renewal Payment: (Lisa Marra, Single Star Ranch, Jo Ann Gasper, Evelyn Sylvester, Keith Dinwiddie, Holly Richter).
2. NACD Forestry Notes
3. American Stewards Policy Coordination Guide Hardcopy Purchase Notification
Vice - Chair Earven believes we should have the Guide in some form and Supervisor Lindsey reflected that it is only \$25.00.

Motion: Supervisor Lindsey moved to purchase one hard copy of the American Stewards Policy Coordination Guide

Second: Supervisor Boice seconded the motion.

Vote: Carried unanimously.

Discussion: Prior to scanning the guide into a pdf and circulating copies, Ms. Roberts will check for potential copy right issues.

L. Supervisor Comments (no actions will be taken)

Chairman Ladd stated he is working with AGFD to monitor grassland restoration treatments that includes a mesquite spraying project on his land. AGFD is developing an assessment tool to determine efficacy of the treatment on mesquite. He is working with Ms. Lindsey Blake, AGFD who has already conducted monitoring on Mr. Fred Davis's ranch.

AGFD potentially can acquire a certification program for spraying. Ms. Blake returns in March to conduct transects and some visual assessments (live, dead) on Chairman Ladd's ranch. Ms. Roberts inquired about what vegetation monitoring protocol is being used? Chairman Ladd was unsure but asked if Mr. Decker had been contacted by Ms. Blake to which he replied negatively.

Chairman Ladd noted that right now the monitoring is being conducted only on his land in the District but could expand throughout the District.

Supervisor Lindsey reported MaryAnn Black lost her allotment but it was bought by Russell (paving company owner, last name unknown) the new owner before foreclosure. The purchase included Lucky Hills. Three Sisters also lost their allotment but has new owner. The new owner was not known to Supervisor Lindsey. He observed new fence work near Tombstone. Ms. Blacks' had some treatment (spike) about 3 years ago on the allotment and the treatment looks good. There is water directly from the Tombstone pipeline but the water is cut off right now. Supervisor Lindsey assesses the treatment was very successful after two growing seasons. Mr. Decker stated NRCS has an active contract with Ms. Black and the new owner wants to take over the contract.

M. Future Meetings / Agenda Items

2021 Regular Board Meetings Schedule:

February 17

March 17

April 21-Tombstone HS

May 19

June 16

July 21

August 18

September 15

October 20

November 17

December 15

Location: Ms. Roberts to Schedule the Fire Training Center through June with the exception of April 21,
Time: 9:30 a.m.

Wildlife Attractors Workshop- **Postponed until the University is Open/SARS – CoV-2 restrictions lifted**

Update on Local Working Group State Committee – **TBD (Deborrah Smith, AACD)**

Regional Conservation Program July 2021 – **TBD (Sharma Torrens, AACD)**

Tombstone High School Ag Program Quarterly Presentation Report – **April 21**

N. Adjournment:

Motion: Supervisor Boice moved to adjourn the meeting.

Second: Supervisor Lindsey seconded the motion.

Vote: Carried unanimously.

Discussion: None

Chair Ladd adjourned the meeting at 12:12 p.m.

Approved by the Board _____

(Date)

Signed _____

(John Ladd, Chairman)

ACRONYMS

AACD	Arizona Association of Conservation Districts
ADEQ	Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
Ag	Agriculture
AIM	Assessment, Inventory and Monitoring Strategy (BLM program)
ALWT	Arizona Land and Water Trust
ACGA	Arizona Cattle Growers Association
ASLD	Arizona State Land Department
AZGFD	Arizona Game and Fish Department
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CCRN	Cochise Conservation and Recharge Network
CIS	Conservation Implementation Strategy
CRM	Coordinated Resource Management
CSP	Conservation Stewardship Program
CTE	Career and Technical Education
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EQIP	Environmental Quality Incentives Program
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FFA	Future Farmers of America
FLPMA	Federal Land Planning and Management Act
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
FY	Fiscal Year
NC	Nature Conservancy
HPC	Habitat Partnership Committees
HNRCDD	Hereford Natural Resource Conservation District
LRP	Landowner Relations and Habitat Enhancement Program
Mitten	Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape Boundary
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NACD	National Association of Conservation Districts
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCWAY	Natural Resource Conservation Workshop for Arizona Youth
RCPP	Regional Conservation Partnership Program
RMP	Resource Management Plan
SARC	Small Acreage Resource Concerns
SHPO	State Historical Preservation Office
SLRP	Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape Restoration Partnership
SPRNCA	San Pedro River National Conservation Area
SRM	Society for Range Management
TBD	To Be Determined
THS	Tombstone High School
U of A	University of Arizona
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	United States Forest Service
USPP	Upper San Pedro Partnership
USPO	United States Post Office
VPA	Voluntary Public Access
WOTUS	Waters of the United States
WPF	Water Protection Fund

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