



STATE OF NEVADA
STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
901 South Stewart Street, Suite 1003
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MINUTES

STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING

Richard H. Bryan Building
Tahoe Hearing Room Video/Teleconference Meeting
901 S. Stewart Street, Carson City, NV 89701
November 17, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: Chairman Joe Sicking, Paradise-Sonoma CD; Leland Wallace, Esmeralda CD; Mark Damron, CD of Southern Nevada; Agee Smith, Northeast Elko CD; Paul Meiman, UNCE/CABNR, Elko and Doug Martin, Nevada Tahoe CD.

Board Members Absent: Vice-Chairman Eric Rieman, Carson Valley CD; Meghan Brown, NV Dept. of Agriculture and Jake Tibbitts, Eureka CD.

Others Present: Zachary Ormsby, Conservation Districts Program Manager; Sandy Quilici, NDCNR Director's Office; Lauren Williams, Ely Conservation Staff Specialist; Melany Aten, Winnemucca Conservation Staff Specialist; Connie Lee, Executive Director, NV Association of Conservation Districts; Dominique Etchegoyhen, Deputy Director, NDCNR; Leana Carey; Gerry Miller, Elko Conservation Staff Specialist; Naomi DeVore; Carl Clinger; Bret Tyler and Marlene Wallace.

I. CALL TO ORDER, DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

- A. Chairman Sicking called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.
A quorum was confirmed, and introductions were made. * **NO ACTION TAKEN***

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS There were no public comments.

III. REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF MINUTES - * FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

- A. Commissioner Wallace made a motion to approve the April 30, 2020, meeting minutes, Commissioner Martin seconded the motion, there was a vote and the motion passed unanimously. * **ACTION TAKEN***

IV. BRIEF UPDATE ON CONSERVATION DISTRICTS PROGRAM - * FOR DISCUSSION ONLY*

- A. Zachary Ormsby said the CDs Program was asked to reduce the program budget by 24% and then an additional 12% creating a reduction of 36%. The individual CD Grant stipends will be reduced from \$5000 to \$4000. There is available sage-grouse funding of \$60,000.

We have just completed the process of collectively signing the first joint Memorandum of Understanding with the NRCS to help with better alignment of the agencies. The SCC, NvACD and the Conservation Districts Program are collectively working on individual strategic plans that integrate responsibilities between the groups. Those will be coming in 2021.

We have been working with the Nevada Native Seed Partnership. A strategic plan was completed and added as an addendum to the Nevada agreement for shared stewardship that was signed by Executive Order in 2019 with the State of Nevada, the Fish and Wildlife Service, BLM and the Forest Service.

The Nevada Native Seed Partnership has been working on completing a business development plan. The annual Nevada Native Seed Forum should be in March of 2021. The business development plan will be complete by then. We will explain it at the Forum and look at strategies to help provide information to producers about creating a marketplace in Nevada.

I have been working with Dr. Kristen Averyt who is our Climate Science Coordinator on developing Nevada's Climate Initiative. It should be delivered to the Governor's Office in early December. I have worked on the Natural and Working Lands component of this strategy. Others helping are Mike Vollmer and Ryan Shane with NDF, Commission member Meghan Brown with the Department of Agriculture, Kristin Szabo with the Division of Natural Heritage, and Scott Carey with the Division of State Lands. We addressed some concerns such as forestry, native seeds, wetlands, fire management, and soils. I was able to integrate CD success stories and how they apply to renewable natural resources.

V. DISCUSSION OF AREA REPRESENTATIVES ON THE STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION AND BOUNDARY CHANGES - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

A. The changes to the boundaries of Mineral and Lyon county areas have been submitted for final approval and should be approved by the 2021 Legislature. ***NO ACTION TAKEN***

Commissioner Martin asked if the SCC Member List with the term dates could be updated on the DCNR website. *

*The update was made on November 20, 2020.

VI. REVIEW OF STATE-LEVEL NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) MEMORANDA OF AGREEMENT (MOA) FOR SHARING RESOURCES WITH CONSERVATION DISTRICTS - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

A. The MOA was signed by the SCC Chairman Joe Sicking and NvACD President Agee Smith in May of 2020. ***NO ACTION TAKEN***

VII. PROPOSAL OF CHANGES TO THE RANKING CRITERIA FOR SAGE-GROUSE COMPETITIVE GRANT FUNDING - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

A. Zachary said the ranking criteria is subjective and there is an opportunity for a better grading scale, we would want to draft this in conjunction with the SETT (Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team). Zachary will email the members for their input and create a draft for approval in January.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to have Zachary draft the changes, Commissioner Damron seconded the motion, there was a vote and the motion passed unanimously. ***ACTION TAKEN***

VIII. COMMISSIONER ITEMS - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

A. Review and approve annual work plans and budgets.

Zachary said there were 6 CDs that did not meet the deadline: CD of Southern Nevada, Southern Nye, Owyhee, Lamoille, Esmeralda, and Duck Valley.

Commissioner Damron said the CD of Southern Nevada had two of their appointed members appointments lapse so they were not able to form a quorum for about the last 6 months. One was appointed before the national election and the other one we are waiting for documents to make official. Then we can move forward with a quorum for meetings.

Marlene Wallace said Esmeralda CD did submit their last meeting in time and Zachary asked that she resend him the June meeting and they would meet the requirement.

Zachary said the Commission could vote on whether to waive the meeting requirements this year due to the COVID restrictions.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to say in light of the COVID restrictions we forgive the three meeting requirement for this year. Commissioner Wallace seconded the motion, there was a vote and the motion passed unanimously. – ***ACTION TAKEN***

- B. Review and approve 3 meeting requirements for CDs.

Zachary said some were submitted past the deadline. Commissioner Smith made a motion to accept the late submissions due to COVID, Commissioner Martin seconded the motion, there was a vote and the motion passed unanimously. ***ACTION TAKEN***

- C. Review and approve Strategic Plan Template for SCC.

Commissioner Smith said with help from Zachary said there is a template that NvACD will be using that is short and succinct. Zachary said the Commission could align with NvACD and use the template for CDs, the SCC and NvACD. The template would outline four goals for each group. The template would help CDs create their own plans.

He said the Climate Change Initiative is using this template. It states clear goals and objectives. Zachary will develop a couple of documents with goals and objectives for the next meeting. Commissioner Wallace moved to accept the template, Commissioner Smith seconded the motion, after a vote the motion passed unanimously. ***ACTION TAKEN***

- D. Review NvACD letter to new CD supervisors.

Commissioner Martin read the NvACD letter. Zachary would like the Commission to be part of a collective agreement with NvACD to welcome new CD supervisors. He would like to add the NRS concerning the Commission. Commissioner Smith moved to add the SCC to the letter and the NRS, Commissioner Martin seconded the motion, there was a vote and the motion passed unanimously. Zachary will let Connie Lee at NvACD know about the addition to the letter. ***ACTION TAKEN***

- E. Review letters regarding “Proposed orders for hydrologic basins”.

Chairman Sicking read his letter to the Nevada Division of Water Resources. Deputy Director, Dominique Etchegoyhen said the Division does want the comments, but please make it clear if the letter is from you or the Commission. Chairman Sicking said it is from him, but he would like to send the letter from the Commission as well. Chairman Sicking asked if there was a motion to support the letter from the Commission. Commissioner Smith made a motion to support the letter, Commissioner Martin seconded the motion, there was a vote and the motion passed unanimously. ***ACTION TAKEN***

IX. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Zachary said he would like to have a virtual meeting in January when there is a better idea of the Program’s budget so we can work on issuing funds to the CDs. The Strategic Plan Template drafts will be ready and a working draft of the grading criteria changes for the Sage-Grouse Competitive Grant.

We will plan on a virtual meeting again. *** NO ACTION TAKEN***

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Leana Carey said she supports the Commission's letter from Chairman Sicking.

XI. ADJOURNMENT - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Chairman Sicking adjourned the meeting at 2:25 p.m. *** NO ACTION TAKEN***