



STATE OF NEVADA
STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
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MINUTES
STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING

Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Richard H. Bryan Building 5th Floor, Ponderosa Room
901 S. Stewart Street, Carson City, Nevada
Thursday, September 17, 2015 10:00 a.m.
Available by teleconference

The Nevada State Conservation Commission considered and acted on the following items.

Board Members Present: Chairman Joe Sicking, Paradise/Sonoma CD; Vice Chairman Eric Rieman, Carson Valley CD; Jake Tibbitts, Eureka CD (by phone); Maggie Orr, Lincoln County CD (by phone); Leland Wallace, Esmeralda County CD (by phone); Agee Smith, Northeast Elko CD; Dr. Sherm Swanson, UNR/CABNR; and Kevin Roukey, Washoe-Storey CD (by phone).

Board Members Absent: Robert Little, Nevada Department of Agriculture.

Others Present: Tim Rubald, Conservation Districts Program Manager; Sandy Quilici, DCNR Director's Office; Nancy Sicking; Carl Clinger, Big Meadow CD; Ed Ryan, Mason Valley CD; and Jon Paul Kiel, NV Division of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Water Quality Planning.

CALL TO ORDER, DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Chairman Sicking called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. The participants introduced themselves. A quorum was confirmed.

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS There were no public comments.

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

A. Commissioner Tibbitts said in the June 8, 2015, minutes it says there were 3 CD's present and in the June 15, 2015 minutes, it says there were 4 CD's present, it needs to be changed in the June 15th minutes to say there were 3 not 4. In the June 25, 2015, minutes on page 5 under Item B. NvACD was incorrectly capitalized.

Commissioner Rieman made a motion to approve all 4 sets of minutes with the amendments, Commissioner Orr seconded the motion, there was a vote and the motion passed unanimously. *The amendments to the minutes were completed on September 18, 2015.* *** ACTION TAKEN ***

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

Mr. Rubald said the Winnemucca Conservation Staff Specialist position is still vacant and he is working on filling it. There were 9 applications, but only 2 cleared the personnel requirements. When there are 3 or 4 that make the list the interviews will be scheduled.

Mr. Rubald reported that an employee had two truck accidents; one on the 19th and one on the 21st of August. The accidents totaled two different trucks. The individual is having numerous medical tests to see why they might be blacking out and will need to be cleared before he can drive again. Currently others are driving them and they have been able to continue with a project in Lincoln County. Mr. Rubald said he will be traveling with the individual when he goes to Lincoln County next week.

Commissioner Orr asked if Steve Weaver could work for a short time. Mr. Rubald said Steve is not available at this time.

The parcel fee issue with the bill that was passed has created discussions. Some CD's are interested. Because of the aspect of levying a fee and voting, one thing that has become important in the process is accurate and legally defensible legal descriptions of the Conservation Districts. Some CD's do not have these requirements. There would need to be section line references developed for an adequate legal description. Right now there are geographic descriptions. There is the option of going with the geographic boundary as best we can and drawing section lines as close to that boundary as possible. This would take action by the Commission and the CD's involved to approve.

The lines could be surveyed, but it is more than likely too expensive. Are there ideas on this?

Commissioner Swanson asked if a subcommittee of the NvACD could meet before or after the State Meeting with maps of the descriptions and have the subcommittee propose something that the CDs could individually ratify and then the Commission.

Commissioner Tibbitts said the Nevada-Tahoe CD has some staff to do it, but are they willing? Mr. Rubald said they have been asking him for the description.

Commissioner Tibbitts said there could be a subcommittee through the State Association. In Eureka we found a file that Brandi Ré had provided with Eureka historic documents (copies). Maybe some of the CDs that can't find the information, the CD Program may have on file. Mr. Rubald said he will talk to Brandi and he believes they have retained the originals. Some records may be archived.

Mr. Rubald said if there is a UNR History student who would want a project; they could gather this information in one book. It would be about the history of the Conservation Districts in Nevada. Commissioner Swanson stated there would need to be funding for the project. Commissioner Tibbitts said there are GIS tools to help.

Mr. Rubald said we were not invited to do a full application for the RCPP grant that we submitted a pre-application.

There was a grant application to do work on the Little Humboldt River that Paradise-Sonoma and Owyhee CDs submitted with NRCS. They were invited for a final application which was submitted, but they did not receive the grant.

Mr. Rubald said to accomplish some CRMP work he is checking with NDF who receives some funding from the USFS for planning projects.

Commissioner Orr said NRCS could assist with these applications since they are cumbersome. NRCS will have a southwest willow flycatcher initiative that perhaps the southern CDs could apply.

Mr. Rubald said the last two year's district reports are on the website and this year's will be added shortly. He is working on creating new financial reporting forms. The Legislature will need to see more information and the forms will be more important.

Mr. Rubald said the Strategic Plan needs to be completed and he hopes to have a draft by the November meeting.

IV. ELECTION OF A NEW CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR FOR THE COMMISSION - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Chairman Sicking asked for nominations for chairman. Commissioner Rieman nominated Joe Sicking; Commissioner Orr seconded the motion. There was a vote and Joe Sicking was re-elected chairman.

Chairman Sicking asked for nominations for vice-chairman. Commissioner Smith nominated Eric Rieman; Chairman Sicking seconded the motion. There was a vote and Eric Rieman was re-elected vice-chairman. *** ACTION TAKEN***

VI. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE DETERMINATION OF DIRECTION TO STAFF REGARDING A RESPONSE TO THE BLM REGARDING WILD HORSE BROCHURES – * FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Commissioner Orr said she would like the Commission to respond to BLM's response to the Lincoln County CD. She asked that the letter come from the Commission and not her as she has sent two letters. Commissioner Tibbitts made a motion to have the Commission respond to the BLM response to the wild horse brochures and he will draft language for the letter. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. There was a vote and the motion passed unanimously. *** ACTION TAKEN***

VII. LETTER COMMEMORATING KEVIN BENSON'S SERVICE AS THE COMMISSION'S DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Chairman Sicking asked for a motion to send the letter (*See Attachment I*). Commissioner Smith made a motion to send; Commissioner Swanson seconded the motion. There was a vote and the motion passed unanimously to send the thank you to Kevin Benson. Mr. Rubald said Kevin is working in private practice in Carson City now. *** ACTION TAKEN***

VIII. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL ALLOWING A BOUNDARY CHANGE BETWEEN THE VYA CONSERVATION DISTRICT AND THE WASHOE-STOREY CONSERVATION DISTRICT - * FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Mr. Rubald showed a map of Washoe County with the proposed new boundary which is approximately the NRCS boundary. The area north of the proposed east/west line through Washoe County is managed by the NRCS office in Alturas CA. The Vya CD will now include Gerlach and Empire and it will give Vya a public facility to hold their meetings. Both CDs have approved the boundary change. Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the change; Commissioner Rieman seconded the motion. There was a vote and the motion passed unanimously. *** ACTION TAKEN***

IX. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE PREVIOUS RESOURCE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (RCPP) GRANT APPLICATION AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES IN THIS NRCS PROGRAM - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Commissioner Tibbitts said he would like to know the reasons why the RCPP application was declined. It would help to know the strengths and weaknesses; they promised to provide feedback to help with future applications. NRCS has said there are CRMP's to apply for and Ray Dotson and Bill Elder would help.

Commissioner Swanson said having a commitment from BLM and USFS was helpful. Commissioner Tibbitts said there were several partners.

Chairman Sicking thanked Commissioner Tibbitts for his work on the application. Commissioner Orr asked if we would do this again in the future. The Commissioners agreed they would. Commissioner Orr made a motion that the State Conservation Commission continue to support the idea of pursuing CRM planning in each district and

encouraging the continued support garnered through this process to make that happen and to get projects on the ground. Commissioner Tibbitts seconded the motion. There was a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

ACTION TAKEN

X. AGENCY UPDATES - *FOR DISCUSSION ONLY*

- A. Nevada Department of Agriculture – Robert Little, Plant Industry Division – no report today.
- B. UNR-College of Agriculture Biotechnology and Natural Resources – Dr. Sherm Swanson
Commissioner Swanson said he sent an email to Bill Payne, Dean of CABNR, and Mark Walker, Dean of UNCE, asking what they would like to report and they responded with emails (*See Attachment II*). Commissioner Swanson read the email reports to the Commission.
There was also an email from the Provost, Kevin R. Carman, (*See Attachment II*) which talked about plans to merge UNCE and CABNR which includes the Nevada Agricultural Experiment Station. There will be facilitated discussions and working groups to talk about ideas and concerns.
- C. Natural Resources Conservation Service – Ray Dotson, State Conservationist – no report today.
- D. Farm Services Administration – Clint Koble, State Executive Director – no report today.
- E. Nevada Department of Wildlife – Connie Lee, Landowner Incentive Programs – no report today.
- F. Nevada Association of Conservation Districts – Jake Tibbitts, President
Commissioner Tibbitts said NvACD is preparing for the annual meeting November 2 – 4, 2015. Monday the 2nd will be leadership training that was developed with UNR and Fred Steinmann with the Nevada Leadership Institute. Tuesday the 3rd and Wednesday the 4th will be the main meeting.

Commissioner Tibbitts asked the Commission about a tour as part of the meeting. One idea is to ride the steam train in Ely or to charter a bus and go to Great Basin National Park. There is meeting space at the Park and there would also be a tour of Lehman Caves. It would be part business meeting and part tour. The Commissioners agreed to the idea of going to Great Basin Park. The weather will be a deciding factor.

Commissioner Tibbitts said there will be a workshop session on Coordinated Resource Management Planning. There are policy statements that say NvACD will take the lead to help the districts with CRMP and we are.

The National Association Meeting will be in Reno and the registration is open. The State Association will host a rangeland tour in the Pine Nut Range where there is a wild horse herd management area, greater sage grouse, NRCS projects, pinyon/juniper work, and other resource related projects. The meeting is January 30 through February 3, 2016. The meeting falls the same time as the SRM National meeting.

The tour as part of the NvACD meeting will be Wednesday, November 4th. Money raised from the tour goes back to the Association. The cost should be around \$60.00. There will be talk about wild horse issues.

Mr. Rubald said there will be a Commission meeting on Monday, November 2nd, in the evening. An agenda item should be the adoption of the regulation for the grant.

Commissioner Tibbitts said there is a room at Great Basin Park for the November 4th Commission meeting.

G. Others – no other reports today.

XI. COMMISSIONER ITEMS - * FOR DISCUSSION ONLY*

There were no Commissioner items.

XII. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Commissioner Orr asked to meet on October 5th in Reno. Mr. Rubald said the meeting would be to review the CD reports and determine the CDs in good standing and release the funding.

Chairman Sicking said the next meeting will be October 5th in Reno with the location to be determined.

*** NO ACTION TAKEN***

XIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Carl Clinger asked if the Commission was aware of the BLM Winnemucca District Programmatic Normal Year Fire Rehabilitation District Light Vegetation Management Plan. It shows BLM's grazing management ideas regarding managing fires. Mr. Clinger said it would be good for the Commission to review.

Mr. Clinger asked what the Commission's plans are for the Humboldt River and work on coalition building. Chairman Sicking said we were not accepted for the grants which would have been helpful.

Commissioner Swanson said if any of the river CDs would like him to provide information with talks or classes he would. When we talk to NRCS about the follow-up to the RCPP application, we can ask what their interest is in the river and if they can help with projects.

Mr. Clinger said there needs to be some evaluation. He thanked the Commission for the meetings that were held in Winnemucca and Elko and encouraged having more talks.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Chairman Sicking adjourned the meeting at 12:10 p.m. * **NO ACTION TAKEN***