



NOTICE OF BOARD MEETING AND AGENDA STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION



& Notice of Public Hearing to solicit comments on proposed regulation R176-24

Date: Tuesday January 21st, 2025

Time: 1:00pm – 3:00pm

Virtual Meeting Draft Minutes

Public Comment*

If you wish to make a public comment, you may do so verbally in person or virtually. Public comment may be submitted via email to maten@dcnr.nv.gov or by written mail to the CD Program 3275 Fountain Way, Winnemucca, NV 89445. Public comment is for all matters, both on or off the agenda as designated on the agenda, and will be limited to three minutes per person. Public comment will also be heard during individual action items on the agenda prior to action taken. The Commissioners may prohibit or limit comment of the content if the comments are a topic not relevant to, or within the authority of the SCC, or if they are irrational or amounting to personal attacks or interfering with the rights of other speakers but will not restrict comments based on viewpoint only. The SCC reserves the right to reduce the time or limit in writing on the agenda items and/or attend and make comments on that item at the meeting.

Agenda

1. Call to order & Determination of Quorum.

***Chairman Tibbitts called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM.
A quorum was confirmed.***

Commission Members Present:

Chair Commissioner Jake Tibbitts, Area 1

Vice Chairman Commissioner Eric Rieman, Area 2

Commissioner Doug Martin, Area 2

Commissioner Maggie Orr, Area 3

Commissioner Jerry Annis, Area 1

Commissioner Agee Smith, member at large.

Commissioner Dr. Paul Meiman, University of Nevada, Reno College of Agriculture,
Biotechnology & Natural Resources and Cooperative Extension (CABNR/UNCE), Elko.

Commission Members Absent:

Commissioner Mark Damron, Area 3

Commissioner Meghan Brown, Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA).

Guests:

Cathy Erskine, DCNR
Doug Busselman, Nevada Farm Bureau
Casey Adkins, SETT Representative
Malanie Sagi, Smith and Mason CD
Kevin Piper, NvACD
Christian Fritsen, NDEP
Rick Orr, Lincoln County
Denise Houston. Lincoln CD
Kaelie Pena, Pheasants Forever Partners Program
Chris Rose, NRCS
Dominique Etchegoyhen, DCNR
Marlee Jenkins, DCNR

2. Public Comment:

None

3. Approve today's agenda, January 21st, 2025 with the inclusion of any emergency items and deletion of any items. (For Possible Action)

Ms. Aten was not able to go through all the CD board vacancies before the meeting and has requested the removal of Item 8 from today's agenda.

Commissioner Reiman made a motion to approve the agenda with removal of Item 8, Commissioner Smith second the motion. Motion passed unanimously. ACTION TAKEN.

4. Approve the SCC November 21st, 2024 meeting minutes. (For Possible Action).

Chairman Tibbitts noted there is clarification needed on lines 132, and 141 names misspelled. Chairman Tibbitts noted a few titles and last names were missing in dialogue of minutes, those corrections were made to lines: 180, 184, 192, 195, 223, no other changes in content presented in the minutes.

Commissioner Meiman made a motion to accept the minutes as corrected, Commissioner Annis second. Motion passed unanimously. ACTION TAKEN

5. Notice of intent to act upon a regulation public hearing for the adoption of proposed regulation R176-24 pertaining to added language to NAC 548 for the purpose of awarding grant money to qualifying conservation districts for projects that enhance, protect or conserve renewable natural resources. (For Possible Action).

Cathy Erskin with DCNR gave an overview of the agenda item for today. Ms. Erskin stated this action is to adopt the permanent regulations as presented. The workshop was completed, and this will be the final review of language before final submission. The next steps from here

83 should the Commission choose to adopt today, would be to submit a packet for consideration
84 to the Legislative Commission for their next scheduled meeting. After taken under
85 consideration the NAC can be approved and it would become adopted as a permanent
86 regulation.

87
88 Chairman Tibbitts called for any public comment on the language, none was received at the
89 meeting or prior.

90
91 Chairman Tibbitts asked for review of section 4 subsection 2(b). Under this section Chairman
92 Tibbitts suggested a change to language to clarify the purpose and intent of the technical
93 committee reviewing applications. The current language reads:

- 94
95 **1. "Submit each application to the technical committee, if appointed pursuant to**
96 **2. subsection 1, or to another entity with expertise in matters pertaining to**
97 **3. renewable natural resources selected by the Commission to review the**
98 **4. application and determine whether the project will enhance, protect or conserve**
99 **5. natural resources in the conservation district."**

100
101 The suggested change line 4 above change the word "determine" to "advise".

102
103 The second suggested change to stay consistent in the proposed language change above is
104 in the following section C (1). The current language reads:

- 105
106 **1. "Consider only applications for projects that:**
107 **2. Have been determined pursuant to paragraph (b) to enhance, protect or conserve**
108 **3. natural resources in the conservation district; and"**

109
110 The suggested is to line 2 above to change "...pursuant to paragraph (b)..."
111 change to "by the Commission"

112
113 Commissioner Martin asked if changes today would cause a delay in the adoption process.
114 Chairman Tibbitts said given previous experience on other boards, the DAG advised those
115 boards that as long as the intent is not changed substantially, the changes should not cause
116 delays.

117
118 Chairman Tibbitts asked once more for public comments on the language and proposed
119 changes. None were received.

Commissioner Smith moved to accept the language with the noted edits. The motion was second by Commissioner Reiman. Motion passed unanimously. ACTION TAKEN

6. Presentation by Doug Busselman with the Nevada Farm Bureau Federation (NFB). (For Possible Action).

Mr. Busselman gave an overview of policy, content in the program, and related issues for both Conservation districts and the SCC. His speaking notes are attached to the minutes.

Brief take away:

NFB is guided by our member development and member adopted policy. Policy development process evaluates issues facing farmer and rancher members starting at the County FB level through the NFB up to the national level where advocacy can take place on the members behalf. On January 28th NFB voting delegates will finalize national policies for the up coming year.

Policy 104 on Agricultural sustainability

Policy 106 on Conservation practices

Policy 111 on Agricultural research and UNR

Policy 117 language about Nevada's Ag industry and production

Policy 141 Urban Ag language within Nevada

Policy 230 on NRCS EQIP

Policy 314 on NV water conservation programs

Policy 316 on Snow surveys and accurate reporting

Regarding NV legislation taking place this year, NFB supports AB80 and the healthy soil initiative. And the NFB is paying close attention to the water bills moving through which could impact members, SB 36 and AB 104 both impact water rights and the NFB see addressing the over-appropriated basins in NV as an important issue to follow.

Interested parties can view and download the policy book at this link:

<https://www.nvfb.org/take-action/nevada-farm-bureau-policy-book/>

Commissioner Martin mentioned in relation with the Nv introduced AB80 that Utah will be hosting the Western Soil Health program in Saint George. More information about the Soil Health Program in Utah can be found on their website.

7. Presentation by Cathy Erskine on bill tracking form and review of legislative

proposed bills and language which may impact conservation districts and or the SCC. (For Possible Action). Meeting Materials provided.

Ms Erskine gave an overview of the DCNR legislative tracking form created by Ms Erskine for the department. This list includes all possible impacts to DCNR. The top of the list has 6 bills which are being introduced by DCNR, each division or program introducing the bill is named after the bill number.

The spreadsheet also includes which divisions or programs might be impacted and which house they are assigned to and a general overview of the language in the bill.

Commissioner Martin asked what is the best way to bring forward comments.

Ms Erskine can be the first point of contact for any submissions.

Commissioner Annis mentioned there is another bill being introduced which would be important to watch regarding geothermal and dissolved mineral resources. 48212 Sponsored by the Great Basin Water Network.

Ms Erskin clarified it was not included on this list since it had not been introduced yet, but will be added to the tracker once its added.

Chairman Tibbitts also noted that the NvACD can be good resource for legislative updates as well.

Mr Piper with NvACD said the CD Legislative day will be on February 27th, 2025 in the foyer, there will be tables for displays and posters showing CD projects. There will also be information and resources to learn more about AB80. Please reach out to Mr Piper to become involved.

Discussion only. No action

8. Discussion and review of CD board vacancies throughout the State. (For Possible Action).

Item was tabled. No Action

9. Updates from Agencies and Partners. (For Discussion Only).

a) Nevada Department of Agriculture

None

b) University of Nevada Reno/ University Cooperative Extension

Commissioner Meiman provided an update: In the college they filled a staff position in range management, and have hired Dr. Lucas Phipps who has been working with UNR. A

second position still needs to be filled.

Mrs. Tracy Shane has accepted a position as the state extension livestock specialist with UNCE.

The UNCE and Cattlemen's updated was concluded last week and were well attended this year across the State.

NDA also brought on a new State Veterinarian Dr. Pete Rolfe.

Dr Barry Perryman will be retiring from UNR in June 2025, and Mr. Brad Shultz with UNCE in Winnemucca will also be retiring in June 2025.

c) **Natural Resources Conservation Service**

Mr. Chris Rose provided some slides for NRCS. *added to the minutes.

Brief overview:

- FY25 priority practices
- FY25 allocations of funds
- Urban Ag Fund pool has started to meet and define terms, hired two Urban Ag specialists for NV, one in Reno and one in Las Vegas
- CIG grants, NV will have their own CIG funds \$602,000 and the areas being funded are Vegetation management, and urban ag.
- Timelines for NRCS April 25 national deadlines, May 19th STAC meeting.
- New for FY 25 virtual fence is now an authorized practice and the combustion system improvement program.

d) **Nevada Farm Service Agency**

None

e) **Department of Conservation and Natural Resources**

Mr. Etchegoyhen gave a brief update about DCNR: The directors' office budget hearing will be Tuesday February 11th. There are not any massive changes, but the CD Program will receive an increase in \$500 per CD, and the CD Program will receive 2 new vehicles.

Conservation and Natural resource bonds are being reviewed and if they are approved it will provide natural resources funds (\$63 million) under the Conserve Nevada Program which CDs are now eligible for.

f) **Nevada Conservation District Program**

Ms. Aten gave an update about staffing, Gerry Miller in Elko region retired and the position in Southern Nevada is also still vacant. The position descriptions are being reviewed and they will be opened in the next few months to hire new staff.

g) **Sagebrush Ecosystem Program & Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team**

Mr. Skyler Monagham provided an update for the SETT. The newest version 2.0 for GIS and user manual is updated and ready. Verifier training starts next week, it's a longer version due to the new updates and changes. There is a hearing on temporary regulations on decertification of verifiers. A SEC meeting is scheduled for February 7th, 2025.

NDEP: *Mr Chris Fritsen gave an update about the NDEP watershed plan funding available which requires no match at this time. There is another grant open for water quality improvements which can include things like virtual fencing. That funding is open until February 4th, 2025.*

They are working on looking at funding new innovative practices and conservation measures which have not traditionally been asked for under NDEP grants. An example is the Gold Ranch fire restoration project which stopped erosion into the Truckee River after the fire impacted private lands. These were funded under the non-point source program.

h) **Nevada Association of Conservation Districts**

Mr. Piper – there is information coming out under the Soil Carbon Monitoring network program. This program is in partnership with NACD and NRCS, under this program they are able to offer grant funding to CDs interested in helping NRCS staff monitor soil carbon across the State. This funding will be open to CDs to help provide assistance on the sites selected.

UNCE is putting on several small farm conferences this year. They can be found on the UNCE website.

i) **All Other Partners and participating agencies**

None

10. Commissioner Items. (For Discussion Only)

Chairman Tibbitts – NACD has opened their urban and community grant opportunity. They have offered a building capacity grant, up to \$10,000 for planning, deadline in April 1st, 2025.

11. Public Comments:

None

12. Next Commission Meeting. (For Discussion Only)

a) Possible future Agenda items for consideration.

i. SCC Strategic Plan Review

- 268 ii. Legislative Updates
- 269 b) Date, time and location of next meeting.
- 270 i. April-May 2025 in person meeting

271

272 **13. Adjournment**

273 **2:27pm**

ACOE – Army Corp of Engineers

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act

ADAA: Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act

AMS: Agricultural Marketing Service

ANPR: Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

AO: Administrative Office

APHIS: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

ARRA: American Recovery and Investment Act

ARS: Agricultural Research Service

ATRA: The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012

BMP – Best Management Practice

BWQP – Bureau of Water Quality Planning

CABNR- College of Agriculture, Biotechnology & Natural Resources

CCC: Commodity Credit Corporation

CD – Conservation District

CDSN – Conservation District of Southern Nevada

CFR: Code of Federal Regulations

CODEX: U.S. Codex Office

CR: Civil Rights

CSP – Conservation Stewardship Program (a program within NRCS)

CVCD – Carson Valley Conservation District

DAG – District Attorney General

DCNR – Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

DOC – Department of Corrections

eCFR: Electronic Code of Federal Regulations

EEO: Equal Employment Opportunity

EO: Executive Order

ERS: Economic Research Service

FAS: Foreign Agricultural Service

FFAS: Farm and Foreign Agricultural Service

FLSA: Fair Labor Standards Act

FMLA: Family and Medical Leave Act

FNCS: Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services

FNS: Food and Nutrition Service

FOIA: Freedom of Information Act

FPAC Business Center: Farm Production and Conservation Business Center

FS – Forest Service

FS: Forest Service

FSA: Farm Service Agency

FSIS: Food Safety and Inspection Service

FY: Fiscal Year

GS: General Schedule

IG: Inspector General

MOA: Memorandum of Agreement

MOI: Memorandum of Interview

MOU: Memorandum of Understanding

MRP: Marketing and Regulatory Programs

NACD – National Association of Conservation Districts

NACO - Nevada Association of Counties

NAL: National Agricultural Library

NARA: National Archives and Records Administration

NASS: National Agricultural Statistics Service

NCDP – Nevada Conservation Districts Program

NDCNR – Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

NDEP-Nevada Division of Environmental Protection

NDOR-Nevada Division of Outdoor Recreation

NDOT-Nevada Department of Transportation

NDOW – Nevada Department of Wildlife

NE Elko – northeast Elko Conservation District

NFC: National Finance Center

NHPA: National Historic Preservation Act

NIFA: National Institute of Food and Agriculture

NRCS: Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS-Natural Resource Conservation Service

NRE: Natural Resources and the Environment

NTCD- Nevada Tahoe Conservation District

NV - Nevada

NvACD – Nevada Association of Conservation Districts

OA: Office of the Administrator

OAA: Office of the Associate Administrator

OAE: Office of Advocacy and Enterprise

OALJ: Office of Administrative Law Judges

OAQ: Office of Advocacy and Outreach

OASA: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration

OASCR: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights.

OBPA: Office of Budget and Program Analysis

OC: Office of Communications

OCA: Office of the Consumer Advisor

OCE: Office of Community Engagement; Office of the Chief Economist

OCFO: Office of the Chief Financial Officer

OCHRO: Office of the Chief Human Resources Director

OCIO: Office of the Chief Information Officer

OCR: Office of Congressional Relations

OCS: Office of the Chief Scientist

OES: Office of the Executive Secretariat

OGC: Office of the General Counsel

OGE: Office of Government Ethics

OHR: Office of Human Resources

OHSE: Office of Homeland Security and Emergency

OHV – Off-Highway Vehicles

OIE: World Organization for Animal Health

OIG: Office of Inspector General

OMB: Office of Management and Budget

OPPE: Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement

OSDBU: Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization

OSEC: Office of the Secretary

OTR: Office of Tribal Relations

PIO – Public information officer

RBCS: Rural Business Cooperative Service

RCPP – regional conservation partnership program

RD: Rural Development

REE: Research, Education and Economics

RFP – Request for Proposal

RHS: Rural Housing Service

RMA: Risk Management Agency

RUS: Rural Utilities Service

SCC-State Conservation Commission

SEC – State Environmental Commission

SEP – Sagebrush Ecosystem Program

SETT-Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team

SNOTEL-snow telemetry

SOP: Standard Operating Procedure

STAC – State Technical Advisory Committee (NRCS)

TAC - Technical Advisory committee

TFAA: Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs

U.S.C.: United States Code

UNCE – University Nevada Cooperative Extension

USDA: United States Department of Agriculture

USFS – United State Forest Service

VC – Vice Chairman

VCD – Carson Valley Conservation District