

COMMISSIONERS  
Steve Glass, Region I  
Ross Garcia, Jr., Region II  
Vacant, Region III  
Boe Lopez, Region IV  
Clint Harden, Region V  
Eddie Vigil, Region VI  
Cyle Sharp, At-Large

Upper Hondo *Soil and Water Conservation Commission*  
*MSC APR*  
*P. O. Box 30005*  
*Las Cruces NM 88003-8005*  
*Telephone (575) 646-2642*  
*Fax (575) 646-1540*



---

**New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC) Meeting**  
**Via teleconference**  
**October 13, 2022**  
**9:00 am**  
**Minutes**

All items for discussion and possible action

1. Call to Order and Roll Call: Commissioners Lopez and Sharp were absent; all other commissioners present-see roll call vote.
2. Approval of Agenda: Commissioner Glass moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Harden seconded and the motion passed-see roll call vote.
3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (8/2/2022): Commissioner Harden moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Glass seconded and the motion passed-see roll call vote.

**New Business**

4. Public Comment (*2 minutes per person*): none
5. Santa Fe-Pojoaque request to become 7-member board
  - Appointed Supervisors position 6 and 7: Gary Dellapa, Lorenzo Dominguez, Matthew Encinias, Shawn Stringer, Amara SzormChampe Green (Santa Fe-Pojoaque) reported Michelle Holland, who was appointed to the board in June, resigned, and was replaced by Ned Flanagan. The board requests to go to a 7-member board and recommends Shawn Stringer and Amara Szorm to positions 6 and 7. Commissioner Glass moved to approve the board having seven members. Commissioner Garcia seconded and the motion passed-see roll call vote. Commissioner Glass moved to approve the appointed supervisors. Commissioner Garcia seconded and the motion passed-see roll call vote.
6. Valencia: 2 supervisor vacancies:
  - Pricilla Abieta (6)

Katie Mechenbier (NMDA) reported per the Conservation District Act, two simultaneous vacancies require appointment by the SWCC. Abel Camarena (Valencia) recommended Priscilla Abitea to position 6. They don't have a candidate for position 3 at this time and ask for time to find one. Gail Goodman (Valencia) questioned the process of Ms. Abieta's recommendation since the Valencia board didn't vote to recommend her to the board. Mr. Camarena replied since Ms. Abieta submitted her application directly to the SWCC, the Valencia board doesn't have to approve her application. Commissioner Glass said if the SWCC can appoint Ms. Abieta to the board, that would leave only one vacancy, so Valencia should be able to appoint that position without the SWCC. Chair Vigil agreed with Commissioner Glass. Commissioner Glass moved to appoint Ms. Abieta to position 6. Commissioner Garcia seconded and the motion passed-see roll call vote.

7. Water Quality & Conservation (WQ&C) FY24 RFP: Ms. Mechenbier presented the FY24 WQ&C request for proposal (RFP); NMDA has no recommended changes. Commissioner Glass thought no changes to the RFP are needed. Chair Vigil agreed.

### **Old Business**

8. Three Million Dollar (\$3,000,000) SWCD Legislative Appropriation:
  - Review committee recommendations
  - Funding allocation

Ms. Mechenbier presented the review committee recommendations for the SWCC \$3 million appropriation. Ms. Mechenbier pointed out two grants that were recommended to split the remaining funds totaling \$39,516 for each, which is less than half of what was requested on those grants. Commissioner Glass asked if that amount of money would be enough to do actual work on the projects, or would it be just for mobilization.

Commissioner Garcia stated East Rio Arriba could do a scaled down version of the project, but wasn't sure about Upper Hondo. Commissioner Glass said the funding allocation could be made per the recommendations, and the SWCDs can let NMDA know if they can do the work with the limited funding. Commissioner Glass said a correction needed to be made on the funding memo; Valencia SWCD submitted the soil assessment on the Whitfield Wildlife Center, not Grant SWCD. Patricia Depner (NMDA) will make the corrections. Commissioner Garcia moved to allocate the funding per the

recommendations. Commissioner Glass seconded and the motion passed-see roll call vote.

9. Healthy Soil Program (HSP) update (NMDA):

- SWCC support and SWCC advice

Dean Bruce (NMDA) and Katie Goetz (NMDA) presented a recap of the HSP program and funding update. Ms. Goetz asked the SWCC for feedback on the HSP program. Commissioner Glass reported he hasn't heard any negative things, but outreach should be done since the SWCC doesn't necessarily hear positive feedback. He has a sense of positive reaction to HSP. Chair Vigil concurred with Commissioner Glass, and offered any help the SWCC is able to give. It was suggested a questionnaire be distributed to the stakeholders for feedback.

Ms. Goetz asked what NMDA can do better with the HSP. Commissioner Glass reported the money for conservation plans is good, but he didn't see too many applications for it.

More outreach should be done to publicize this funding opportunity is available.

Ms. Goetz asked if the SWCC would be willing to serve as reviewers including meaningful written feedback to applicants. Chair Vigil thanked Commissioners Glass and Harden for being involved in the reviewing process and hoped they would continue. All commissioners present reported they would be willing to review HSP applications.

Ms. Goetz asked if the SWCC would help host and coordinate healthy soil field days in conjunction with SWCDs in their regions. All commissioners present agreed to help.

**Reports/Verbal Highlights (5 min. each; written reports required 72 hours in advance)**

10. Commissioners: Commissioner Glass thanked the SWCC for the funding allocation on behalf of his region. Commissioner Harden mentioned the 30x30 program; he received the questionnaire from NMDA. Commissioner Garcia and Chair Vigil had no report at this time.
11. Governor's Office; none
12. New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA): Max Henkels (NMDA) reported the New Mexico Energy Minerals and Natural Resources Department released a second 30x30 program request for information (RFI). This RFI is more focused than the first one released in late July. That RFI had over 200 responses, and it would be good to have even more responses for the current RFI. Mr. Henkels posted the link to the RFI in the

Zoom chat. Ms. Mechenbier reported the Agricultural Workforce Development program (AWD) is still seeking applications for internships.

13. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS): none
14. Forest Service: none
15. Farm Service Agency: none
16. New Mexico Environment Department (NMED): none
17. Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC): Chair Glass reported the WQCC met this past Tuesday.
18. National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD): Brent Van Dyke (NACD) had no report at this time.
19. New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts (NMACD): Debbie Hughes (NMACD) reported tomorrow is the deadline for getting the governmental rate at the host hotel for the NMACD annual meeting. There is a full agenda and there will be good information. Ms. Hughes testified before the Water and Natural Resource committee last week regarding a potential fund to be set up for natural resources, including noxious weeds, the SWCDs, and the HSP.
20. New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts (NMCCD): none
21. NMSU College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES): none
22. New Mexico Conservation District Employees (NMCDE): none
23. Next Meeting: TBA
24. Adjourn: Commissioner Garcia moved to adjourn. Commissioner Glass seconded and the motion passed-see roll call vote.