

**New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC) Meeting**  
**111 Sierra Blanca Dr.**  
**Ruidoso, NM**  
**June 11, 2018 10:00-12:00**  
**Final Minutes**

All items for discussion and possible action

1. Call to Order and Roll Call: Commissioners Norris and Estrada were absent; all other commissioners were present.
2. Chair Hunt introduced Commissioner Tom Sidwell. Chair Hunt also announced the new Attorney General's liaison to the SWCC is Gideon Elliot.
3. Approval of Agenda: Commissioner Glass moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Varela López seconded and the motion was passed unanimously by all commissioners present.
4. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (3-13-2018): Commissioner Varela López had a correction on his report. Commissioner Varela López moved to approve the minutes as amended. Commissioner Glass seconded and the motion was passed unanimously by all commissioners present.

**New Business**

5. Public Comment Policy: Chair Hunt presented Valencia Soil and Water Conservation's (SWCD) public policy options for possible use by the SWCC. Commissioner Glass liked Valencia's public comment policy, and the suggestion that there be a sign-up sheet to speak during the public comment portion of the SWCC meeting. He also liked the public having an opportunity to submit written comments. The option that allows public comment related to specific items on the agenda after each agenda item as discussed was rejected. The SWCC agreed to use the provided public comment policy options, incorporating the suggested changes.
6. Public Comment (2 minutes per person): none
7. Mil Levy resolutions:
  - Chaves \$1.00
  - Upper Hondo \$0.50
  - Taos \$1.00
  - Sierra \$1.00
  - Carrizozo \$1.00

- Upper Chama \$1.00
- Socorro \$1.00
- Tierra y Montes \$1.00
- Guadalupe \$1.00
- East Torrance \$1.00
- Caballo \$1.00
- Hagerman Dexter \$1.00
- Edgewood \$1.00
- Mesa \$1.00
- Ute Creek \$1.00
- Claunch-Pinto \$1.00
- Carlsbad \$0.70
- East Rio Arriba \$1.00
- Lava \$1.00
- Penasco \$1.00
- Central Valley \$0.50
- Mora Wagon Mound \$1.00
- Cuba \$1.00
- Valencia \$0.50
- Taos \$1.00

Commissioner Glass moved to approve the mil levy resolutions. Commissioner Varela López seconded and the motion passed unanimously by all commissioners present.

8. Appointed Supervisors approval

- Central Curry: Rachel Armstrong (6), Aaron Scott (7)
- Sierra: Steve Janos (6), Willard Hall (7)
- Caballo: Slim Whitlock (6), Harvey Morrow (7)
- Deming: Will Shafer (6), Don Hartman (7)
- Otero: Thomas Mendez(6), James Evrage (7)
- Edgewood: Juan Sanchez (6), Arthur Swenka (7)
- Upper Hondo: Lela Wright(6), David Cox (7)
- Carlsbad: Fred Beard (6), Henry Vasquez (7)
- Claunch Pinto: Richard Shovelin (6), Daniel Williams (7)

- San Juan: Emma Lee Deyo (6), Cash Carruth (7)
- Taos: George Long (6), Mary Lane Leslie(7)
- Colfax: Amanda Benton (6), Kimberly Barmann (7)
- Grant: Johnny Reed (6), Ellen Soles (7)
- Santa Fe-Pojoaque: Champe Green (6)
- Roosevelt: Sharon Davis (6), Quentin Carnes (7)
- Chaves: Joe Barraza (6), Aubrey Dunn, Jr. (7)
- Penasco: Camille Graham (6), Bernard Cleve(7)
- Central Valley: Darrell Brown (6), Lance Conlkin (7)
- Hidalgo: Meira Gualt (6), Walt Anderson (7)
- Dona Ana: Steve Wilmeth (6), Dudley Williams(7)
- Carrizozo: Lee Sultemeier (6), Kendal Wilson(7)

Commissioner Glass moved to approve the appointed supervisors. Commissioner Varela López seconded and the motion was passed unanimously by all commissioners present.

9. Water Quality & Conservation Grant recommendations and approval-Katie Mechenbier (NMDA): Ms. Mechenbier presented the grant review committee recommendations for FY19 funding. The review committee also had 3 runner up projects in case an SWCD is unable to spend all the grant award. Commissioner Varela López moved to approve the review committee's funding recommendations. Commissioner Glass seconded and the motion passed unanimously by all commissioners present. Patricia Depner (NMDA) will provide the SWCC with the runner up projects. Ms. Mechenbier also requested the Commissioners provide review committee nominees every year.
  
10. FY19 Point System Worksheet changes and approval-Jim Wanstall (NMDA): Mr. Wanstall presented the proposed changes to the point system worksheet, such as including each project phase in the point calculations. Currently, points are only allowed for project completion. A change allowing more flexibility in awarding points in each category was also suggested. Mr. Wanstall also asked the SWCC for flexibility this year in awarding points since many SWCDs are unsure which activities to put in the new point system categories. Chairman Glass was in favor of allowing leeway this year. Chairman Sharp was in favor of a tiered system for the phases of the project. Leeway for awarding points will be allowed this year and a revised worksheet including the suggested changes will be presented at the next SWCC meeting for approval.

11. DFA/SWCC reporting requirements: Jim Wanstall informed the SWCC about the state Department of Finance (DFA) changes in the reporting requirements for SWCDs that receive under \$50,000 in general operations funding. These SWCDs don't have to report to DFA, but the SWCC still needs the reports to review and approve. NMDA will facilitate these budget reviews. Chair Hunt will write a letter to the SWCDs outlining the changes.
12. Property Tax Valuation on Unimproved Land-2018 HB 163-Lesli Allison (Western Landowners Association): Ms. Allison presented concerns laws regarding taxation on agricultural and undeveloped land being taxed at the non-agricultural rate. The Western Landowners Alliance is soliciting cooperation and assistance in changing laws to address landowners potentially being taxed out of their agricultural land.

### **Old Business**

13. Edgewood Boundary Modifications: Juan Sanchez (Edgewood SWCD) presented a resolution requesting a mapping correction to reflect that 2 landowners in the Chilili Land Grant, in Bernalillo County, continue to be part of the Edgewood SWCD. Letters from the landowners in question maintain that they've always been in the Edgewood SWCD, and NMDA incorrectly mapped the area. Cheri Lujan (East Torrance SWCD) said Edgewood's resolution and letters won't be presented to the East Torrance board until the next meeting on July 20<sup>th</sup>. A map of the area showing where the Chilili land grant extends into Torrance County was presented. Ms. Lujan said the portion of the Chilili land in Torrance County that's claimed by both SWCDs isn't where the petitioning landowners live and is already shown on the map as belonging to Edgewood SWCD. Edgewood isn't opposed to disannexing the Part of the Chilili land grant in East Torrance's boundary to Edgewood, but the proper procedures must be followed. Mr. Sanchez said the disputed land has always been in Edgewood, and the landowners verify that. Edgewood isn't trying to modify the boundaries, it wants to correct the map created by NMDA. Ms. Lujan stated the map was made using the certified legal descriptions, and is accurate. Ms. Lujan also said both SWCDs and the assessors of Bernalillo and Torrance County need to meet to establish which landowners are in the disputed area. Commissioner Sharp said the protocol is clear and needs to be followed. Chair Hunt said the SWCC can't act until the SWCDa and the respective Counties meet to determine how many landowners are in the disputed area. Julie Maitland (NMDA) said a meeting with all parties is a good idea, but reminded the SWCC that per the SWCD Act, a SWCD's boundary is solely determined by the legal description that has been approved by the SWCC and certified by the Secretary of State's office. The protocol for modifying boundaries is outlined in the SWCD Act. The boundary modification process must follow the law. Ms. Maitland suggested there be a facilitated meeting to resolve this issue. Mr. Sanchez maintained the map was

incorrect and all of the Chilili land grant was in Edgewood's boundary, and has supporting documents proving it. Chair Hunt asked Mr. Sanchez if he would be willing to participate in a facilitated meeting, and he agreed for the Chilili land grant, but Edgewood's chair would have to agree.

Isleta Pueblo annexation into Edgewood from Valencia; Mark Dixon (Isleta Pueblo) explained the Pueblo's resolution to move to Edgewood from Valencia. Abel Camarena (Valencia SWCD) said the SWCD fully supports this modification, but was surprised that Isleta's resolution was known to Edgewood but not Valencia, and would like to have better dialogue between the SWCDs so no one is blindsided. Brenda Smythe (Edgewood) said their SWCD was approached by Isleta and therefore didn't feel responsibility or right to inform Valencia; it was the pueblo's responsibility. Commissioner Varela López recommended the approval for the boundary modification. Commissioner Glass seconded. After discussion, the motion was passed unanimously by all commissioners present. Patricia Depner (NMDA) reminded the SWCC a written legal description must accompany the resolutions and map when sent to the SWCC/SOS for certification.

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

14. Commissioners:

Commissioner Glass- Lava is preparing for Cibola County Ag. Day, and is working with the city of Grant for salt cedar retreatments. San Juan has a Clean Water 319 grant for erosion control and pasture fencing. Ciudad and San Juan have Urban Ag. Conservation grants through National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD), and both are making good progress; San Juan should be able to hire a community Ag. Group Cultural Vista Volunteer, a year round position that starts in August. San Juan also posted an interactive map on their website of an invasive weed inventory. San Juan is also dealing with the 416 fire in Durango, CO, which is northeast of the SWCD. Coronado is still running Chipper Days because it's so dry; trying to avoid a Durango-like situation. Ciudad is still participating with the Rio Puerco Watershed-Based Plan, and is providing input for the Sandoval County Biomass Plan. Ciudad has a new supervisor, Kathleen Rudy, and she's a great addition to the board. Ciudad continues to work on thinning on the East Mountain in Placitas as it's very dry. The SWCD is also working with Bernalillo County on a big clearing project and is wrapping up the in-school watershed program, and may hire another consultant to help the scheduling of 60 schools for watershed education. Ciudad is working on a Watershed Stewardship Seniors program in Rio Rancho to help seniors understand groundwater, watershed, and flood control to protect and preserve habitat and protect against flooding. Just finished a yearlong study funded by the EPA and through the EBID aimed at E.coli occurrences and possible regrowth in sediment of the Rio Grande. Valencia is very busy.

Commissioner Varela López-All of region II is very busy applying for and receiving grants from various programs. Putting dollars on the ground makes the SWCDs better.

Chair Hunt-Grant finished a program to eradicate Russian olive in the upper Gila watershed. Sierra received a large grant from the Water Trust Board for San Marcial.

15. Governor's Office
16. New Mexico Department of Agriculture: Ms. Maitland-There will be information regarding the Local Election Act, HB98, as soon as it's available, including repealing rules and amending the SWCD Act. The new NMSU leadership may also bring changes.
17. Natural Resources Conservation Service: Steve Kadas-Xavier Montoya is serving as the SE regional conservationist for the USA and is currently in Washington, D.C. Blake Glover is acting for Xavier in New Mexico. The federal department has approved a staffing plan that authorizes 1,100 new positions nationwide. NRCS is hiring 8 employee in New Mexico. The FY19 RCPP hasn't been announced yet; 2 NM projects were selected in FY18.
18. Farm Service Agency
19. New Mexico Environment Department
20. Water Quality Control Commission: see reports
21. National Association of Conservation Districts: Brent Van Dyke presented the NACD report. There's no Farm Bill yet. Qualified people aren't applying for Farm Bill vacancies. Locals are more likely to stay in communities when hired as Farm Bill employees. Mr. Van Dyke asked everyone to encourage qualified locals to apply.
22. New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts: Mr. Van Dyke presented the report.
23. New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts: Commissioner Varela López presented the report.
24. NMSU College of Agriculture: Bruce Hinrichs-the college of Agriculture is available if help is needed.
25. New Mexico Conservation District Employees-see report. The NMCDE is there to help anyway it can.
26. Public Comment-none
27. Next Meeting: TBA
28. Adjourn