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Steve Glass, Region I
Ross Garcia, Jr., Region II
Vacant, Region III
Boe Lopez, Region IV
Clint Harden, Region V
Eddie Vigil, Region VI
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New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC) Meeting
Via teleconference
June 20, 2023
9:00 am
Minutes

1. Call to order and roll call: Commissioners Lopez and Harden were absent. All other commissioners were present-see roll call.
2. Approval of agenda: Commissioner Glass moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Garcia seconded and the motion passed-see roll call vote.
3. Approval of previous meeting minutes (10/13/2022): Commissioner Garcia moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Glass seconded and the motion passed-see roll call vote.
4. Open meetings resolution: Commissioner asked if the resolution was the same as last year. Patricia Depner (NMDA) replied the only change was the addition of virtual meetings. Commissioner Glass moved to approve the open meetings resolution. Commissioner Garcia seconded and the motion passed-see roll call vote.

New Business

5. Public comment (*2 minutes per person*): none
6. New NMDA specialist introduction: Julie Maitland (NMDA) introduced Michael Purdy as the new specialist replacing Jim Wanstall. Mr. Purdy has a master's degree in agricultural economics and business and 6 years of experience working with East Rio Arriba SWCD.
7. Caballo Soil and Water Conservation District (Caballo SWCD): Watershed district-no landowners for board: Susie Downs (Caballo SWCD) reported the recent changes to the watershed district act and requirements per the local election act make it difficult to fill the watershed district board. The watershed district in Caballo SWCD's boundary has 12

residents, but the majority of the land is owned by only 3 people who reside in the district. When the board elections come up, no one is qualified to serve.

A recent flood control structure issue in the watershed district highlighted the problem as the board was vacant. Caballo SWCD stepped up to resolve the flood control structure issue, but they don't want to be responsible for another dam. Caballo SWCD is allowed to appoint the board members, but is unsure of the appropriateness of doing so and is seeking advice how to proceed.

Chair Vigil said without changing the election law, Caballo SWCD needs to appoint the board and continue to do so after elections. He appreciates the burden this has caused, and commends the efforts of Caballo SWCD. Commissioner Garcia stated that's the only option available to Caballo SWCD. Ms. Downs thanked the SWCC and Katie Kruthaupt (NMDA) for their support and input.

8. Ciudad SWCD's request to become 7-member board

- Joshua O'Halloran position 6, Sara Hurteau position 7

Commissioner Glass reported Ciudad SWCD has grown and taken on many projects.

The proposed appointed supervisors have been associate supervisors. Commissioner Glass moved to approve Ciudad SWCD becoming a 7-member board and the appointed supervisors. Commissioner Garcia seconded and the motion passed-see roll call vote.

9. Appointed SWCD supervisor appointments:

- Deming SWCD: Russell Johnson (6), Jamie Viramontes (7)
- San Juan SWCD: Leo Pacheco (6), Penny Sterling (7)
- Lava SWCD: Anthony Martinez (6), Raymond Salazar (7)
- Roosevelt SWCD: Sharon Davis (6), Kendall Buzard (7)
- Carrizozo SWCD: Lee Sultemier (6), Bryan Hightower (7)
- Upper Hondo SWCD: Lela Wright (6), David Cox (7)
- Sierra SWCD: Randy Coil (6), Willard Hall (7)
- Hidalgo SWCD: Miera Gault (6), Walt Anderson (7)
- Central Curry SWCD: Rachel Armstrong (6), K.C. Schooly (7)
- Valencia SWCD: Priscilla Abeita (6), Richard Bonine (7)
- Chaves SWCD: John Sisk (6), Cody Munson (7)

- Guadalupe SWCD: Earl Sena (6), Mary Baca (7)
- Southwest Quay SWCD: Sean Reagan (6), Kandy Hutchens (7)
- Otero SWCD: Richard Baish (6), James Everage (7)
- Dona Ana SWCD: Joshua Smith (6), Joshua Sanchez (7)
- Edgewood SWCD: Juan Sanchez (6), Jim Frost (7)
- Claunch-Pinto SWCD: Jack Lockridge (6), Susan Dale Rose (7)
- Carlsbad SWCD: Fred Beard (6), Henry Vasquez (7)
- Taos SWCD: George long (6), Mary Lane Leslie (6)
- Santa Fe-Pojoaque SWCD: Shann Stringer (7)

Commissioner Sharp moved to approve the appointed supervisors for the above SWCDs.

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

10. SWCD Mil levy resolutions:

- Socorro SWCD \$1.00
- Upper Chama SWCD \$1.00
- Tierra y Montes SWCD \$1.00
- Mesa SWCD \$1.00
- Ute Creek SWCD \$1.00
- East Torraine SWCD \$1.00
- Mora Wagon Mound SWCD \$1.00
- Taos SWCD \$1.00
- Western Mora SWCD \$1.00
- Chaves SWCD \$1.00
- Carrizozo SWCD \$1.00
- Lava SWCD \$1.00
- Guadalupe SWCD \$1.00
- Sierra SWCD \$1.00
- Claunch-Pinto SWCD \$1.00
- Hagerman-Dexter SWCD \$1.00
- Valencia SWCD \$0.25
- Upper Hondo SWCD \$0.75

- East Rio Arriba SWCD \$1.00
- Central Valley SWCD \$0.50
- Penasco SWCD \$1.00
- Caballo SWCD \$1.00
- Carlsbad SWCD \$0.70
- Edgewood SWCD \$1.00
- Cuba SWCD \$1.00

Commissioner Glass moved to approve the above mentioned SWCD mil levy resolutions. Commissioner Garcia seconded and the motion passed-see roll call vote.

Old Business

11. \$3 million SWCD legislative appropriation update: Ms. Depner reported 5 SWCDs have invoiced for approximately \$103,000 of the \$3 million allocated-see attached report. Ms. Maitland suggested the SWCC have the funding recipients give a short project status report (2-3 minutes) at the next SWCC meeting. Chair Vigil said the SWCC will send a letter to the grantees instructing them to report at the next meeting. Commissioner Glass said the New Mexico legislature will need an update so this would be good start. Commissioner Garcia agreed and said the projects need visibility.
12. Healthy Soil Program (HSP) update: Katie Goetz and Dean Bruce (NMDA) updated the SWCC on the HSP-see attached presentation. In FY23, grants were awarded to 13 eligible entities and 37 individuals for a total of \$1.1 million. This increase in funding was from the Food Hunger Initiative. Promotion and outreach included newspaper inserts distributed across the state, videos with HSP grant recipients, and field days and trainings in conjunction with SWCDs and other state and federal agencies. Research activities include cover crops and organic amendments to improve soil health, best practices for avoiding negative soil health consequences when land is out of production for lack of water, and how irrigating cropland with treated municipal wastewater affect soil microbes.

For FY24, 12 applications were received from eligible entities and 53 from individuals for a total request of \$1.2 million.

It was requested the SWCC offer support and input to help improve the HSP.

The SWCC commended Ms. Goetz and Mr. Bruce for their work on the HSP.

13. Agriculture Workforce Development (AWD) update: Ms. Depner reported the FY23 AWD program funded 23 interns for approximately \$154,000. The FY24 funding availability will be approximately \$119,000. Ms. Maitland stated the FY24 AWD application period opened June 19th and will run through March 29, 2024, or until funding is completely allocated.

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

14. SWCC Commissioners: Commissioner Sharp commended Tierra y Montes SWCD and Western Mora SWCD for promoting and providing guidance for NRCS's (Natural Resource Conservation Service) EWP (Emergency Watershed Protection) program for the burn scar area of the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon fire. Currently, NRCS has seeded and partially mulched 31 thousand acres of private land. The burn scar area is 347 thousand acres (200 acres are private lands). It is an unstable watershed after losing the vegetation and from major flooding. The goal is to try to stabilize it. NRCS is also providing flood protection around structures to secure life and property. Several agencies have come together to address this issue.

Commissioner Sharp left the meeting at this point.

Commissioner Glass reported San Juan SWCD has a new building and a new website and have several education and conservation programs; Ciudad SWCD is now a 7-member board and has a \$825 thousand river stewards grant for Tijeras Creek and a 5 year inter-government agreement with Bernalillo County for 7 different programs; Valencia SWCD had an Earth day fair and summer conservation camp and planning/designing workshops the restoration of the Whitfield Wildlife area after a the Hole fire destroyed 70% of the property. Ciudad SWCD and Coronado SWCD are working with the Sandia Collaborative in the middle Rio Grande-east mountains area; Cuba SWCD is providing recovery assistance on the Cerra Pelado fire and also noxious weed control; McKinley SWCD has an equipment loan program; Lava SWCD has a land conservation program.

Commissioner Garcia: East Rio Arriba SWCD is working the SWCC funding riparian restoration project in collaboration with Santa Fe-Pojoaque SWCD and Taos SWCD to help spraying of weeds and held a soil health workshop at Ghost Ranch as well as having an ongoing weed management program with Upper Chama SWCD.

Chair Vigil: Region 6 is looking for a region chair and vice chair (NMACD). Otero SWCD received \$300 thousand from the state to update their dams and will go out for RPF in July and has active weed management and weed sprayer cost share programs.

15. Governor's Office: none
16. New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA): Ms. Maitland had nothing further to report than what had already been presented.
17. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS): none
18. Forest Service: none
19. Farm Service Agency: none
20. New Mexico Environment Department (NMED): none
21. Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC): none
22. National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD): none
23. New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts (NMACD): none
24. New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts (NMCCD): none
25. NMSU College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES): none
26. New Mexico Conservation District Employees (NMCDE): none
27. Next meeting: TBD
28. Adjourn: Chair Vigil adjourned the meeting as there was no quorum for a vote.