

NORTHERN PANHANDLE CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING  
**December 14, 2023**  
**10:00 a.m.**

**Supervisors Present**

Chuck Glenn, Hancock County – Treasurer  
Eric Freeland, Brooke County  
Steve Paull, Brooke County  
Amy Wade, Ohio County – Secretary – via teleconference  
Robert Luchetti, Jr., Ohio County  
David McCardle, Marshall County  
Mark Fitzsimmons, Marshall County, Chairman

**Supervisor Absent**

Jim Anderson, Hancock County – Vice-Chairman

**Others Present**

Veronica Gibson, Administrative Specialist, WVCA  
Jennifer Kile, Conservation Specialist, WVCA  
Kim Fisher, District Operations Manager-West, WVCA  
Davin White, Communications Specialist, WVCA – via teleconference  
Don Whetzel, Watershed Manger-East, WVCA  
Dylan Johnson, Conservation Specialist, WVCA – via teleconference  
Katie Fitzsimmons, District Conservationist, NRCS  
David Shipman, Soil Technician, NRCS  
Kevin Paul, NRCS  
Brent Lyons, Forester, WVDOF  
Bob Straub, CPA, Hartley & Straub

Chairman Mark Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order on Thursday, December 14, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. at the USDA Service Center in McMechen, WV.

**Pledge of Allegiance** – The pledge of allegiance was recited.

**Minutes**

- **David McCardle made a motion to approve the November 2023 board meeting minutes and the November 7, 2023, special meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Amy Wade. Motion passed.**

**Financial Report**

- Bob Straub reviewed the NPCD financials for October and November 2023. He also provided a detailed supervisor per diem report. It was decided that moving forward, just the total spent monthly and remaining balance for supervisor per diem will be needed.
- Chuck Glenn reviewed the November 2023 co-administered funds. A letter was received that the Soil Survey account is dormant. Chuck will contact the bank and take care of it.

- Chuck Glenn requested that more detail is included on the supervisor travel and per diem forms. The activity for the day claimed should be included on the monthly per diem and travel form.
  - Kim Fisher stated that per Chris Casto, districts can use left over budgeted CDO funds for supervisor travel and per diem.
- Amy Wade made a motion to file the October and November 2023 financials for audit. Seconded by Steve Paull. Motion passed.**

### **Reports**

- District Crew (NPCD)
  - Harry Aston is attending chainsaw safety class today.
- Farm Service Agency (FSA) - No Report
- WV Division of Forestry (WVDOP) – Brent Lyons reviewed a written report.  
West Virginia Division of Forestry Activities  
Brooke, Hancock, Marshall and Ohio Counties  
December 14, 2023  
This Report Covers Activities from 11/03/2023 - 12/12/23

### **BROOKE COUNTY**

Contacted the 911 Center. Distributed VFA Grant Applications. Inspected a logging job.

### **HANCOCK COUNTY**

Contacted the 911 Center. Investigated a fire and completed a fire report. Distributed VFA Grant Applications.

### **MARSHALL COUNTY**

Conducted timber recons. Suppressed/investigated fires and completed fire reports. Contacted the 911 Center and Magistrate Court. Distributed VFA Grant Applications. Assisted w/Smokey Bear program at Cameron Elementary. Assisted WVDA w/spotted lanternfly surveys. Inspected logging jobs.

### **OHIO COUNTY**

Contacted the 911 Center. Distributed VFA Grant Applications. Assisted WVDA w/spotted lanternfly survey. Issued a burning permit. Attended NPCD Awards Banquet.

### **OTHER**

Assisted w/a Smokey Bear program at New Martinsville Elementary. Assisted w/Hundred Christmas Parade. Attended training on new handheld data collectors. Attended online stewardship training. Attended a Regional meeting.

There was a discussion regarding the spotted lantern fly in the northern panhandle. Amy Wade asked if there is something the district should send out.

- WV Conservation Agency (WVCA) – Kim Fisher reviewed a written report.  
**December 2023 WVCA Report**

### **Agreed Procedures Engagement (Audit)**

Conservation Districts are asked to begin the Agreed Procedures Engagement (APE) (audit) soon after the close of the fiscal year on June 30<sup>th</sup>. It is important that each district read their audit, and then take steps to correct any findings noted by the auditors. If your APE (audit) appointment has not been made, please do so ASAP. If you have questions, ask Kim, Jeremy or Devon.

### **Request to Conservation Districts**

The WVCA is encouraging Conservation Districts to review and update your **District Policy Manuals**. In addition to your policy manual, you are encouraged to review your CD Employee Manual (if you have one) and your CD Plan of Work. If you are already doing the reviews, please disregard this request. However, please let us know with a written response that you are already reviewing or will be reviewing the documents.

The **district personnel plan is due to SCC in March**, so please add to your February agenda for review and approval.

Conservation Districts are asked to begin the **Agreed Procedures Engagement (APE) audit** if you haven't already. Please check your current agreement to make sure it is valid.

### **Agricultural Enhancement Program (AgEP) Administrative Review**

Each District's Administrative Specialist will conduct a review of 10% or a minimum of 3 files with applications that fiscal year and submit the Administrative Review Form to their District Operations Manager by January 31st. By completing this review halfway through a fiscal year, staff will have time to find possible procedural errors and take steps to prevent them from happening in the future.

The Administrative Review process will allow WVCA to ensure that all proper documentation is physically accessible in the district cooperator file, and that the districts' online database records system is in agreement with WVCA financial records system.

### **Ag Enhancement Program Timeline FY24\**timeline may be adjusted***

- December 18 10:00 - State AgEP committee meeting to finalize upcoming FY program.
- January - Presentation of upcoming FY AgEP to SCC
- May/June/July – CDs to finalize upcoming FY program, update AgEP agreement addendums, take action to approve LORs June 15 – Deadline for CDs submit final practice list to WVCA (CDs can submit final list any time after SCC approval of practice list)
  
- WV Association of Conservation Districts (WVACD) – No report

- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) – Katie Fitzsimmons reviewed a written report.

## **December 2023**

### **NRCS Report:**

#### **Trainings/Upcoming Events/Outreach**

- **Hancock County Office Hours** – since starting on July, we have picked up 10 new applications for our Farm Bill Programs. We have had people stop in the office each time we are there. We will not hold office hours in December due to the holidays but will start back up in January.
- February 15, 2024 – there will be a Spotted Lantern Fly focused outreach event at the New Manchester Vol. Fire Dept. following office hours.

#### **Programs**

- Currently working on farm visits and assessments for current applications.
  - Applications – EQIP, AMA, CSP
    - Round 1– 39
    - Round 2 - 4
- FY2024 Sign Ups
  - Round 2 sign up ends March 15, 2024

#### **Field Visits/Conservation Planning**

- Staff completed field visits for conservation planning, technical assistance, and practice certifications.
- Completed new producer visits which turned into new applications.

#### **Office Staffing for December**

- **December 18 – January 1 – Katie will be on leave**
- **December 18 - 22 – David and Kevin will have the office open**
- **December 25 – Closed for Christmas Day observance**
- **December 26 – Closed – Staff on leave**
- **December 27 – David leave, Kevin in office**
- **December 28 – 29 – David and Kevin in office**
- **January 1 – Closed for New Year’s Day observance**

NRCS will hold an outreach event on February 15, 2024, focusing on the spotted lantern fly. Attendees will be from Brooke and Hancock counties that have 5 to 10 acres of woodland. Amy Wade asked if there would be a meeting for Marshall and Ohio counties. Katie said it would be decided after the February 15 meeting.

Katie announced that David Shipman will be promoted to a Soil Conservationist effective December 31.

Mark Fitzsimmons asked Katie how many birdboxes are needed. Katie said hundreds. There was a discussion to purchase the birdboxes from local high school carpentry classes. Mark suggested having a painting contest at the schools.

- Wheeling Creek Watershed Commission (WCWC)
  - The next WCWC meeting should be January 18.
  - One of the PA dams is mowed, and trees will be cut down when Harry Aston returns from chainsaw safety training.
- Administrative Specialist (WVCA) – Veronica Gibson
  - Veronica will be on leave beginning December 26 and will return January 2.
  - The newsletter will be mailed no later than the second week of January. Veronica requested articles and ideas for the newsletter no later than January 2. Some topics given were the spotted lantern fly, farm and contest winners, Appalachian Grazing Conference, and the WVU Extension winter dinner meetings.
- Visitors - None
- Committee Reports
  - Equipment Committee
    - An equipment rental report was provided.
  - O&M Committee
    - Chuck Glenn can have a remote-controlled mower demonstrated if the board would like to see it.

### **Old Business**

- Repairs to Red Building
  - One bid was received for repairs to the red building. **David McCardle made a motion to table the repairs to the red building until additional bids are received. Seconded by Steve Paull. Motion passed.**
- O&M Work Crew
  - Amy Wade received a report from Veronica with amounts for work crew expenses. A copy will be provided to all supervisors.
- NPCD District Administrator
  - Interviews for a District Administrator have been completed. There was a discussion to continue looking for a suitable candidate.
- Parking Lot Curb Stops
  - **David McCardle made a motion to approve a proposal for six curb stops. The total cost is \$780.00 which includes labor. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.**

### **New Business**

- Safety Committee Meeting
  - A safety committee meeting will be held today.

- WVU Extension Winter Dinner Meeting Sponsorship
  - **Chuck Glenn made a motion to support the WVU Extension winter dinners meetings as a gold level sponsor in the amount of \$300.00. Seconded by Amy Wade. Motion passed.**
  
- Participation in SMART Farms WV Grant
  - Dylan Johnson presented a grant that the WVCA was awarded from NASDA. This grant is in the early stages. More information will be provided.
  
- Invoice Approvals 2023-10-05 OMR NPCD Wheeling Crk debris & T-racks
  - Robey Excavating
    - An invoice from Robey Excavating for \$10,766.46 for completed work at Wheeling Creek #7 and approved by Don Whetzel was presented for payment. **David McCardle made a motion to pay the invoice from Robey Excavating for \$10,766.46 for completed work at Wheeling Creek #7 as approved by Don Whetzel. Seconded by Steve Paull. Motion passed. Amy Wade abstained.**
  - Vincent Excavating
    - An invoice from Vincent Excavating for \$42,584.46 for completed work at Wheeling Creek #3 and approved by Don Whetzel was presented for payment. There was a discussion regarding the condition the area was left in due to wet weather. Chuck Glenn said bids should be sent to get it repaired before spring 2024. Mark Fitzsimmons asked if silt fence or erosion control could be put in place now. Don Whetzel said that could be done. **Amy Wade made a motion for the WVCA to present a written plan for the repairs to Wheeling Creek #3 at the January district board meeting. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.**  
**Robert Luchetti, Jr. made a motion to pay the invoice from Vincent Excavating for \$42,584.46 for completed work at Wheeling Creek #3 as approved by Don Whetzel. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
  
- Dam Monitor Visits
  - Gift cards were purchased for dam monitors. It was decided to hand deliver the gift cards to the Harmon Creek and Wheeling Creek dam monitors. The gift cards for the Upper Grave Creek monitors will be mailed.
  
- Ventrac
  - There was a discussion regarding issues with the Ventrac mower. The Ventrac seems to be working now.
  
- Forage Sampler Tip and Case
  - **David McCardle made a motion to purchase a forage sampler tip and case up to \$480.00. Seconded by Eric Freeland. Motion passed.**
  - **David McCardle made a motion to purchase a replacement tip. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.**

- Constant Contact Program
  - A program was presented that would enable the district to send out mass emails. The district is interested in the program, but an email database will need to be created first. It was decided to add a line for an email to the cooperator agreement.
- Conservation Agreements
  - Jeremiah Trinone/Hancock County
  - William G. Stewart/Hancock County

**Chuck Glenn made a motion to approve the conservation agreements for J. Trinone and W. Stewart. Seconded by Amy Wade. Motion passed.**
- Ag EP
  - The state AgEP Committee will be held on December 18 at the Elk CD office and by teleconference.
  - Payments

Name	Practice	Amount	Cost Share
Barry Stahl	Water System	1 system	\$2,000.00
Joseph Klug	Lime	38.12 Tons	\$857.70
	Total payments		\$2,857.70

**David McCardle made a motion to approve the completed AgEP practice for B. Stahl as presented. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.** All paperwork for J. Klug was not received.

- Cancellation

Name	Practice	Cost Share
Meredith Kinder Moore-Krupinski	Pollination	\$200.00
	Total	\$200.00

**All in favor to cancel the contract for M. Moore-Krupinski.**

**Correspondence** – None

**Supervisor Reports**

- Chuck Glenn received an email from Hancock County Commissioner Eron Chek inviting the Hancock County farm to a Hancock County Commission meeting.
- Eric Freeland has an interview today regarding how dry weather impacted farmers.

**NEXT MEETING** – The next board meeting will be held on Thursday, January 11, 2024, at the USDA Service Center, McMechen at 10:00 a.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

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**Mark Fitzsimmons, Chairman**

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**Amy Wade, Secretary**

**Minutes submitted by Veronica Gibson**