

NORTHERN PANHANDLE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
April 11, 2024
10:00 a.m.

Supervisors Present

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

Others Present

Veronica Gibson, Administrative Specialist, WVCA
Jennifer Kile, Conservation Specialist, WVCA
Don Whetzel, Watershed Manger-East, WVCA
Katie Fitzsimmons, District Conservationist, NRCS
Rafael Mendez, Area Conservationist, NRCS – via teleconference

Chairman Mark Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order on Thursday, April 11, 2024, 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 March 2024 board meeting minutes, and the April 4, 2024, special meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Robert Luchetti, Jr. Motion passed.**

Financial Report

- Bob Straub was unable to attend the meeting.
- Chuck Glenn reviewed the January, February, and March co-administered funds.

Reports

- District Crew (NPCD)
 - Mark Fitzsimmons and Robert Luchetti, Jr. each have been approached by someone interested in the posted work crew position. Robert's person is only interested in the O&M position and Mark's person is interested in the O&M and soil tester position and is available June 3. It was discussed and that could be a possibility.
 - Jim Anderson suggested having an employee also to cut grass at the building. Jim also suggested that the person that Robert knows could go with Harry Aston to the PA dams to be the second person with Harry to cut trees.

- The board asked Brent Lyons if he could do chainsaw safety training. He can't. The WVDOF offers quarterly chainsaw safety training. Robert Luchetti, Jr. said there is an online OSHA course available.
- Jim Anderson will ask the WCWC what they want done with the trees that will be cut down at the PA dams.

- Farm Service Agency (FSA) – A written report was provided.

April 2024

Farm Service Agency Update

If you know or hear of anyone with agricultural damage from the recent flooding in the Northern Panhandle; please ask them to call the FSA office to report the damage incase we would have a program on down the line.

CRP Grasslands sign up will be from April 29, 2024 – May 24, 2024. To be eligible for grassland CRP, land must have an established cover containing forbs or shrubs, be located in an area historically dominated by grassland, provides habitat for animal and plant populations of significant ecological value, or is expiring CRP. Offered Land with more than 5% tree canopy is ineligible for grassland CRP.

Acreage reporting is just around the corner as well; please be watching your mailboxes for the coming months. As a reminder this helps qualify for potential future programs as well good record keeping for the land.

- WV Division of Forestry (WVDOF) – Brent Lyons provided a written report.

West Virginia Division of Forestry Activities
Brooke, Hancock, Marshall and Ohio Counties
April 11, 2024

This Report Covers Activities from 02/06/24 - 04/08/24

BROOKE COUNTY

Fire Season preparation - 911 Center. Issued a burning permit. Inspected a logging job.

HANCOCK COUNTY

Fire Season preparation - 911 Center. Issued a burning permit. Investigated a fire. Inspected logging jobs. Contacted schools and libraries for Smokey programs. Sick tree request. CSP request w/NRCS.

MARSHALL COUNTY

Fire Season preparation - 911 Center. Issued burning permits. Suppressed and investigated fires. Attended Women in Ag. Day planning meetings. Inspected logging jobs.

OHIO COUNTY

Completed an EQIP determination. Fire Season preparation - 911 Center. Contacted library for Smokey program. Issued a burning permits.

OTHER

Shaun Kuhn promoted to Assistant Regional Forester. Attended Tree Farm Inspector's training. Attended FSNRPO training. Attended stewardship training. Attended Regional FC meeting. Assisted w/Hunting and Fishing Show in Morgantown.

- WV Conservation Agency (WVCA) – A written report was provided.

April 2024 WVCA Report

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 these reviews, please disregard this request.

District Personnel Plan

District Personnel Plans are due to Guthrie **March 22**. Failure to meet the deadline may cause a delay in approving the District's personnel plan and the release of state funds for those positions.

Conservation District Operation (CDO) Grant Funds

Districts are asked to prepare your CDO budget report. The budget is to be submitted to Fiscal Services and your Area Director by **March 22**, so it can be presented to SCC in April.

Annual Work Plan

Reminder - District annual work plans are due **June 30** to Guthrie.

Conservation Farm Tour

It is time for districts to be thinking about the conservation farm families to be awarded. CDs should have their district farm selection to their Area Directors by **May 31**.

Timelines:

- **May 31** - County and District judging.
- **July** - Area judging.
- **August** - Statewide judging.
- **October** – Presentation of Area and State awards at WV Conservation Partnership Annual Conference

O&M Agreements:

CD's are encouraged to continue to work with local sponsors for O&M funding. The change will be that these agreements will not be matched dollar for dollar as they were in the past. The WVCA will be allocating funds on a watershed basis moving forward to help with O&M costs.

Ag Enhancement Program Timeline

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 State Fair Sign Ups

The schedule for state fair volunteers is now available under the WVCA admin webpage. If you would like to schedule a time frame to work at the fair, please contact your Administrative Specialist.

- Don Whetzel reported the following: He has been in contact with a resident from Maxwell Acres regarding flooding concerns. This is the area of the Middle Grave Creek Channel. The WVCA has been working on a plan to remove woody debris. Don presented the agreements he has on file for the Middle Grave Creek Channel with the Marshall County Commission. The latest agreement he has is from 2003. Don asked if the board agrees for him to contact the Marshall County Commission regarding their responsibility. All present board members agreed to allow Don to contact the Marshall County Commission.
- **WV Association of Conservation Districts (WVACD) – A written report was provided.**
April 2024 Board Report from Heather Duncan, WVACD Executive Director
July Quarterly Meeting

Please send speaker and topic ideas to hduncan@wvca.us as you think of them.

The dates for the July quarterly meeting are July 14-16 at the Clarion Harpers Ferry (Jefferson County). There will be meetings Sunday evening, meetings on Monday with a tour of Devil's Due Distillery and dinner sponsored by Eastern Panhandle CD, and a projected half day of meetings on Tuesday.

The room rate is \$107 per night plus any applicable taxes and fees with check in available Sunday, July 14-checkout Tuesday, July 16. To receive the discounted room rate, reservations should be made by June 14, 2024.

NACD Annual Meeting & Other NACD News

The NE regional meeting and NACD summer meeting will be held August 10-14 in Boston, MA. There will be a capacity building workshop on August 14 just for NE region states that will be a separate ticketed event and sounds like a fantastic opportunity to bring ideas back to WV. More information will be coming soon on the meeting and how to register.

WVACD Directors

The July quarterly meeting will start the new year and a new year for officers and directors. After your new supervisors are elected in the primary, please select and send in your new directors prior to the July quarterly meeting. These should be decided in the May-June board meetings.

WVACD Grant Reporting Period Ending

For those with a WVACD outreach grant, the reporting quarter of Jan-March will end soon. Please have your reports to hduncan@wvca.us AND wvacd@wvca.us by April 5th if possible. Many grants will have a lot to spend in the next quarter.

WV Conservation Farm Contest

Please do not forget about the upcoming farm contest that is due to WVCA preferably the end of May. Also, please remember there are two categories: traditional and non-traditional. As a reminder, you can enter one farm in the traditional category and one in the non-traditional category.

WVACD Communication and Outreach Employees

WVACD is very happy to announce that Julie Simmons and Vanta Coda III have been hired for a one-year position with the NACD Technical Assistance and Outreach grant. Julie will Cover the western half of the state and Vanta will cover the eastern half of the state. They will assist districts with outreach, promotion, and CSP. They will also assist WVACD with similar projects. Contact Heather if you need their assistance with a project (hduncan@wvca.us). They will be joining your district board meetings virtually over the next few months to introduce themselves.

WVCA Annual Report Template

The WVACD outreach employees are currently working with WVCA on a template that will be available to districts to use for their annual reports. If your district wishes, they can work directly with you and input the information provided to them into the template. More information will be coming once the template is approved.

Other

State Fair signups are available. Please check with your AS for available time slots. You can also check with Clyde Bailey for more information.

Please send any district events and announcements to me (hduncan@wvca.us) so that I can place them in our online calendar and also include on the Facebook page and other outreach avenues.

Do not forget about the www.wvacd.org website as it contains a lot of information and answers to commonly asked questions.

Upcoming Dates

Central Area Meeting: June 28, 2024 at ECD Office, 10 am

Western Area Meeting: July 11, 2024 at LKCD Office, 10 am

July Quarterly Meeting: Evening of July 14-afternoon of July 16, 2024 at Clarion Inn, Harpers Ferry (Jefferson County)

WV State Fair: August 8-17, 2024

- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
 - Rafael Mendez reported that Jon Bourdon is back to WV from Washington DC.
 - Katie Fitzsimmons reviewed the following written report:

April 2024

NRCS Report: Monongahela & Northern Panhandle Conservation Districts

Trainings/Upcoming Events/Outreach

- Local Work Group Meetings need to be scheduled and completed by June 15th.
- JED trainings starting in May – staff will attend monthly

Programs

- Round 1 – Obligations as of 4/3/2024
 - Monongahela CD
 - Obligated - \$376,197.00
 - Northern Panhandle CD

- Obligated - \$168,610
 - Round 2
 - Assessment and Ranking dues during April
- Field Visits/Conservation Planning**
 - Staff completed field visits for conservation planning, technical assistance, and practice certifications.
 - Field staff has been reaching out to participants for completion of contract reviews.
- Staffing**
 - NRCS is working to hire soil conservation technicians in Middlebourne and Kingwood.
 - Monongahela CD DC starts 4/21/24
- Wheeling Creek Watershed Commission (WCWC)
 - The next meeting will be held on Thursday, April 18.
- Administrative Specialist (WVCA) – Veronica Gibson
 - The FY25 O&M agreements and invoices have been mailed to sponsors.
 - The quarterly newsletter was completed and mailed.
 - Waiting for the draft report for the FY23 AUP from the auditor.
 - There was a discussion regarding a work crew ad. It was decided to not advertise for the position at this time.
- Visitors – None
- Committee Reports
 - Equipment – A new subsoiler was delivered to the district from the cooperators that damaged it. The new subsoiler will be rented and instructions for use will be included.
 - O&M – There was a discussion regarding the request for funding for UGC from the SCC.
 - Grassland – The Grasslands contest is tomorrow. The next meeting is April 19.
 - Education - Chuck Glenn said that three elementary schools in Hancock County want the soil trailer. The projected date is the week of September 23. Mark Fitzsimmons reported that he received a phone message from the WVU Soils team thanking the district for their sponsorship. The photo contest needs to be put on the district Facebook page. The WVACD awarded their scholarships. None of the applicants were from the NPCD.
 - High Tunnel – Chuck Glenn will pick up the new beds that were purchased. April 22 was the date set for the supervisors to come to the district and take care of removing the old, raised beds and prepping the new ones. Fourteen cubic yards of soil is needed. Half soil and half manure. **Jim Anderson made a motion to invite schools to plant in the raised beds the end of April or the beginning of May and provide lunch. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**

Old Business

- Updated Compost Bin
 - **Jim Anderson made a motion to table the updated compost bin. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
- Conservation Farms – Due June 15 to WVCA
 - The supervisors will tour the county farms on May 3. The tour will begin in Hancock County at 9:00 am.
- State Fair Committee Support
 - There was a discussion to purchase additional promotional items.
- Parking Lot/Driveway Asphalt Repair
 - Robert Luchetti, Jr. met with A1Blacktop to look at the work that needs completed in the parking lot and the cost of curb stops. He will receive an estimate by the end of the week.
- FAC Request for Building – Painting and Carpet Cleaning
 - Carpet cleaning will be scheduled after the painting is completed. Bids for painting are to include moving furniture.

New Business

- District Administrator
 - **David McCardle made a motion to enter an executive session at 12:19 pm.** The board returned to the meeting at 12:25 pm. **Robert Luchetti, Jr. made a motion to hire Victoria White for the District Administrator position. Her start date will be April 15. She will be paid \$18.00 per hour for a minimum of 24 hours per week and a 60-day probation period. Seconded by Eric Freeland. Motion passed.**
- NP RC&D MOU
 - **Amy Wade made a motion to approve the NP RC&D MOU as presented. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
- Marshall County 4-H Ag Safety Day – SWAG Items
 - **Chuck Glenn made a motion to spend \$1,500 to purchase promotional items to use for the WV State Fair and the Marshall County Extension 4H Ag Safety Day. Seconded by Jim Anderson. Motion passed.**
- Brooke County Hands on Ag Day Support
 - **Jim Anderson made a motion to support the Brooke County Hands on Ag Day with a \$1,400 donation to aid in educational needs as provided in request. The funds will be paid from the CDO account. Seconded by Robert Luchetti, Jr. Motion passed.**

- Weather Station
 - **Jim Anderson made a motion to buy parts that are needed for the weather station. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
- O&M Work Trailer
 - A new trailer is needed to haul the Ventrac. Specs are needed for the current trailer. Prices will be investigated.
- Farm Family Insurance
 - David McCardle will meet with John Billie to get the insurance coverage for the building and equipment changed.
- NPCD Poster Contest Judging
 - Supervisors will judge posters after the meeting.
- Conservation Agreement
 - Ian James Mayhew/Brooke County/75 acres
Jim Anderson made a motion to approve the conservation agreement for I. Mayhew. Seconded by Amy Wade. Motion passed.
- Ag EP
 - Payments

Name	Practice	Amount	Cost Share
Ed Link	Pasture Division Fence	865ft	\$2,000.00
Keith Hieronimus	Lime	41.2 tons	\$927.00
	Total Payments		\$2,927.00

Jim Anderson made a motion to approve the completed AgEP practices for E. Link and K. Hieronimus as presented. Seconded by Amy Wade. Motion passed.

Jennifer Kile reported that interviews were held for a summer intern conservation specialist.

Correspondence – Secretary, Amy Wade, reviewed the following correspondence:

- 1) A thank you card was received from Andy Deichert for the card sent to him from the NPCD.

Supervisor Reports - None

NEXT MEETING – The next board meeting will be held on **Thursday, May 9, 2024, 3:00 p.m., at the New Cumberland VFD.**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Mark Fitzsimmons, Chairman
Minutes submitted by Veronica Gibson

Amy Wade, Secretary