

NORTHERN PANHANDLE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
November 14, 2024
10:00 a.m.

Supervisors Present

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

Supervisor Absent

Amy Wade, Ohio County – Secretary

Others Present

Veronica Gibson, Administrative Specialist, WVCA
Kim Fisher, District Operations Manager, West, WVCA
Davin White, Communications Specialist, WVCA
Katie Fitzsimmons, District Conservationist, NRCS
Victoria White, District Administrator, NPCD
Brent Lyons, Forester, WVDOF
Bob Straub, CPA, Hartley & Straub
Kate Fotos, Program Coordinator, WVU Extension – via Teams

Chairman Mark Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order on Thursday, November 14, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. at the USDA Service Center, McMechen.

Pledge of Allegiance – The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Minutes

- **David McCardle made a motion to approve the October 10, 2024, board meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Steve Paull. Motion passed.**

Financial Report

- Bob Straub reviewed the October 2024 NPCD funds.
David McCardle made a motion to file the October NPCD financials for audit. Seconded by Steve Paull. Motion passed.
- Chuck Glenn reviewed the October 2024 co-administered funds. Chuck suggested researching how to spend soil survey funds.
Jim Anderson made a motion to file the October co-administered financials for audit. Seconded by Robert Luchetti, Jr. Motion passed.

Reports

- District Crew (NPCD)
 - Harry Aston is working at the PA dams.
 - There was a discussion regarding how to have mowing completed next year.
- Farm Service Agency (FSA) – No Report
- WV Division of Forestry (WVDOF) – Brent Lyons reviewed a written report.
West Virginia Division of Forestry Activities Brooke, Hancock,
Marshall and Ohio Counties

November 14, 2024

This Report Covers Activities from 09/11/24 - 11/13/24

BROOKE COUNTY

Conducted a Smokey Bear program at the Wellsburg Library - 38 contacts. Investigated fires. Inspected logging jobs. Contacted 911 Center re: Governor's burning ban.

HANCOCK COUNTY

Investigated fires. Contacted 911 Center re: burning ban. Worked on the Hillcrest RAWS. Inspected logging jobs.

MARSHALL COUNTY

Assisted w/Hands On Ag Days. Suppressed/investigated fires. Conducted a VFD training at Sherrard VFD. Conducted Smokey Bear programs at Glen Dale Elementary - 124 contacts. Conducted a tree ID program w/Extension Service. Issued a burning permit. Contacted 911 Center re: Governor's burning ban. Inspected logging jobs.

OHIO COUNTY

Manned display at Oglebayfest. Suppressed/investigated fires. Contacted 911 Center re: Governor's burning ban. Issued a burning permit. Inspected logging jobs.

OTHER

Assisted with BMP/Recert. training in Farmington. Attended pesticide license training in Morgantown. Attended online stewardship training. Submitted Fall Foliage Reports. Assisted w/prescribed burning at WVU Forest.

- WV Conservation Agency (WVCA) – Kim Fisher reviewed a written report.

November 2024 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 30th. 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. Please email your audit reports to District Fiscal at Guthrie and your manager as soon as received. If you have questions, ask Kim, Jeremy or Don.

Request to Conservation Districts

The WVCA is encouraging Conservation Districts to review and update their District Policy Manuals. Districts are also encouraged to review their CD Employee Manual (if you have one).

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

- November - Comments reviewed and forms revised.
- **December 16** - 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)

2024 Drought Assistance Program

- The Department of Agriculture is still working out the details of how the program will work.
- This is Not part of WVCA's Exigency or Governor's Grant programs.
- More information will be given as it becomes available.

Davon Kokoska asked Veronica to report on the status of the Wheeling Creek debris removal as follows: The contractor is at Wheeling Creek #7 today and is setting up to burn. They will move to Wheeling Creek #23 next.

- WV Association of Conservation Districts (WVACD) – A written report was provided.

November 2024 Board Report from Heather Duncan, WVACD Executive Director Fall Quarterly Meeting

Thank you to everyone who attended the fall quarterly meeting and awards luncheon! I think we had a good meeting and an enjoyable luncheon and awards ceremony. Congratulations to all award winners!

Winter Quarterly Meeting

Our next meeting will be a one-day meeting held at WV State University on January 6th. Hotel reservations will be on your own. Committees will need to meet prior to the quarterly meeting. Thank you to Capitol CD for hosting this meeting!

WVACD Communication and Outreach Employees

Please do not forget to contact Julie Simmons (wvacdoutreach2@wvacd.onmicrosoft.com) and Vanta Coda (wvacdoutreach@wvacd.onmicrosoft.com) for your outreach needs. Rather it's developing printed or online materials, creating diversity plans, or coming up with ideas to reach new producers or CSP outreach, they are here to help!

Community Development Grants

A new grant opportunity was announced at the Quarterly Meeting. The goal is to award 5 \$10,000 grants to conservation districts and conservation district partners. The deadline to apply is December 31st and will be announced at the January 6th quarterly meeting. More information can be found here: <https://www.wvacd.org/supervisor-information>

New Emails and Updated Website!

Heather Duncan and Kelley Wayne have new email addresses. Kelley can now be reached at kwayne@wvacd.us and Heather can be reached at hduncan@wvacd.us If you use the 'old' email addresses (wvacd@wvca.us/ hduncan@wvca.us) they will still be forwarded for a short time to the new address. However, please be sure to update your address book.

Please be sure to check the website for updated information and for forms that may be needed. www.wvacd.org

Legislative Committee Update

An e-mail was sent to the AS' with the Legislative Committee contact list. Please review and update if needed. Please place this on your monthly agenda for approval if needed.

Upcoming Dates

Eastern Area Meeting: December 2, 2024 at Tygarts Valley CD
Western Area Meeting: December 9, 2024 at Little Kanawha CD
Central Area Meeting: January 3, 2025 at Guyan CD
Winter Quarterly Meeting: January 6, 2024 at WV State University
WV SCC Meeting: January 7, 2025
Ag & Conservation Day at the Capitol: February 20, 2025

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

November 2024

NRCS Report: Northern Panhandle Conservation District

Trainings/Upcoming Events/Outreach Programs

- Assessing our existing CSP applications, deadline 11/13/24
 - Assessments completed, awaiting release of ranking pools to complete.
- EQIP assessments due 2/12/25

Field Visits/Conservation Planning

- Staff completed field visits for conservation planning, technical assistance, and practice certifications.
- Staff are reviewing contracts to ensure designs are completed.

Staffing

- McMechen/Middlebourne Forester position to be readvertised

- Wheeling Creek Watershed Commission (WCWC)
 - Jim Anderson reported on the last WCWC meeting.

- Administrative Specialist (WVCA)
 - Veronica Gibson reported that the date for the FY24 audit of agreed upon procedures will be November 21.
- District Coordinator (NPCD) – Victoria White reviewed a written report.

NPCD District Administrator October/November

Updates

General:

Facebook posts/website updates. **If there are items that need added to Facebook or website please email District Administrator the information.**

November/December schedule available to all supervisors

Grants:

NPCD awarded \$8,166 from WVACD Community Outreach Grant

Five \$10,000 grants are available from WVACD for Community Development

Pending approval for \$2,500 from The Bee Cause

NACD has \$2,500 mini grants available for districts

High Tunnel/Garden:

Over 850 pounds of produce for 2024 was harvested and donated

Ongoing Projects:

Waiting for Schoolhouse repairs to be completed before working on utilizing space for programming/events

Waiting on RD furniture updates for Nail City to complete painting

Upcoming Events:

N/A

Victoria White will get the measurements for the printer that the Farmers Market Association will keep at the NPCD office.

- Visitors
 - Kate Fotos was introduced. She will report on the GRASS grant later in the meeting.
- Committee Reports
 - Building – The outlet in the conference room next to the sink is not working and a light is out on the porch. Mark Fitzsimmons will contact an electrician to complete repairs. Jim Anderson reported that repairs to the red building will be completed this week.
 - Equipment – The no-till drill is out of service. Knight’s Farm Supply will look at it to estimate what needs repaired.
 - High Tunnel – There are still white flies present.
 - Safety – Robert Luchetti, Jr. will complete the BRIM Loss Control Questionnaire. There will be an annual safety briefing before a work crew starts next year.
 - Grassland - Jim Anderson went to a teacher training. He is going to the national meeting in December.

Old Business

- Wheeling Creek 25 O&M Agreement
 - Robert Luchetti, Jr. continues to work on the Wheeling Creek 25 O&M agreement. He is waiting for a response from DNR. The goal is to have the agreement completed by January.
- WVCA Cooperative Agreement for Employee
 - Mark Fitzsimmons has not heard back from NRCS regarding funding for a shared employee. **Jim Anderson made a motion to table the WVCA Cooperative agreement. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
- Upper Grave Creek #7, #8, & #9 – ACNR Mining
 - Mark Fitzsimmons updated the board on the status of the mining at Upper Grave Creek #9.
- Insurance Policies
 - Amy Wade continues to work on the NPCD insurance policies. There is no update currently.
- Letter To WVCA Regarding PA Dam Funds
 - Robert Luchetti, Jr. will write a letter to Judith Lyons requesting the PA dams O&M funds.

New Business

- Upper Grave Creek #7, #8, & #9 EAPs
 - The supplemental monitoring and emergency action plans were received from ACNR. They are available for review.
- WVACD Legislative Committee
 - Robert Luchetti, Jr. was appointed to represent the NPCD for the WVACD legislative committee.
- 2024 Drought Assistance Program
 - Kim Fisher said the Commissioner of Agriculture has secured ten million dollars for a drought assistance program. More information will be coming.
- GRASS Grant
 - Kate Fotos presented the GRASS program (Grazing for Appalachian Sustainability). The program will support grazing practices across West Virginia. This link details the program extension.wvu.edu/GRASS.

- 2024 Highlights for WVCA Annual Report
 - Davin White asked the board what they would like to have displayed on their page in the WVCA annual report. Some suggestions included the Dague Farm, Hands on Ag Day, and education district of the year.
- WPHS FFA – Dairy Judging Sponsorship
 - A letter was received from the Wheeling Park High School FFA requesting sponsorship for the national dairy judging contest. **Jim Anderson made a motion to donate \$1,000.00 to the WPHS FFA for sponsorship to the national dairy judging. The funds would come from the NPCD general fund. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.**
- Equipment Repairs/Services
 - A plan will be made with Harry Aston to service all equipment. Bearings will be ordered for the lime spreaders in Brooke and Hancock counties.
- Organizational Shelf for NPCD Office
 - **Jim Anderson made a motion to budget up to \$200.00 to purchase shelves for the NPCD to store promotional items and supplies. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
- Events/Programming
 - This was discussed in an education committee meeting prior to the board meeting.
- USDA Service Center Shrubs
 - **Jim Anderson made a motion to remove the shrubs around the building and to replace with rock. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motin passed.**
- NPCD Christmas Luncheon
 - The NPCD Christmas luncheon will be held December 12 at 12:30. Perkins in Moundsville will be called to check availability.
- Annual Dam Monitor Visit
 - **Jim Anderson made a motion to mail each dam monitor a \$25.00 gift card. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
- Ag Enhancement Program
 - Agriculture Enhancement Payments
 - Matthew Dille – 80 tons Lime – \$1,700.80
Jim Anderson made a motion to pay M. Dille for his completed AgEP contract as presented. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.

- AgEP Exigency Application Approval
 - Audra Conkle – Water Hauling – 50% up to \$500.00
 - Kenneth James Anderson – Water Hauling – 50% up to \$500.00
 - Ralph Church II- Water Hauling – 50% up to \$500.00

David McCardle made a motion to approve the AgEP Exigency applications as presented for A. Conkle, K. Anderson, and R. Church. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.

- AgEP Exigency Payment Approvals
 - Audra Conkle – Stock tank, portable water hose – \$207.48
 - Kenneth James Anderson – Stock tank, portable water hose, fittings- \$153.92
 - Ralph Church II – Portable water hose, tanks - \$232.11

Steve Paull made a motion to pay the completed AgEP Exigency contracts as presented for A. Conkle, K. Anderson, and R. Church as presented. Seconded by Eric Freeland. Motion passed.

Correspondence

- The following correspondence was reviewed: (1) A CTE newsletter from Marshall County schools (2) A thank you from NRCS for the NPCD participation in the local work group meetings.

Supervisor Reports - None

NEXT MEETING

The next board meeting will be held on Thursday, December 12, 2024, 10:00 a.m., at the USDA Service Center in McMechen.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Mark Fitzsimmons, Chairman

Amy Wade, Secretary

Minutes submitted by Veronica Gibson