

# ***Southern Conservation District***

Special Board/Committee Meeting Minutes

September 30, 2025

10:00 AM

The Southern Conservation District Board of Supervisors met on Tuesday, September 30, 2025, at 10:00 AM in the conference room of the district office located at **263 Ragland Rd. Beckley, WV 25801**

## **Those in Attendance:**

### Supervisors:

Randall Patton, Chairman (Teleconference)

Bill Harris, Vice-Chair

Edgar Hendrick, Secretary

Randy Prince (Teleconference)

Rachel Prince (Teleconference)

Steven Johnston

Curtis Murphy

John Farrell

Ron Testerman

### Others:

Jesus Nandi Roman, WVCA

Brain Fry, WVCA

Morgan Dial, WVCA

Open & Welcome

Bill Harris, Vice-Chairman

- Ron Testerman led in the Pledge of Allegiance; Steven Johnston led in the opening prayer.

### **Southern Conservation District Operations and Business**

#### **State AgEP Drought Exigency Program:**

Bill Harris initiated discussion regarding an amended document provided by the West Virginia Conservation Agency (WVCA). The memorandum informed districts of an amendment to the WVDA Pasture Renovation Agreement. Remaining funds from the original \$10 million legislative appropriation are being reallocated to the Agricultural Enhancement Program (AgEP) Drought Exigency Program in response to D3 drought conditions in ten counties. The funds are restricted to previously approved drought exigency practices, excluding High Tunnel and Greenhouse projects. Districts are required to sign and return the Amendment and Letter of Request (LOR), specifying “WVDA AgEP Drought Exigency.” A special meeting is not required since districts already hold an agreement and base funds in the AgEP Exigency program.

For the Southern Conservation District, an additional **\$26,205** will be available, in addition to approximately **\$10,000** remaining in the AgEP Extension C account. The board discussed the requirements of the amended agreement and noted that the practices mirror those funded under last year’s drought exigency program.

***Following the discussion, John Farell made a motion to approve and sign the agreement as documented, Ron Testerman seconded, motion carried.***

Brian Fry clarified that the amended AgEP Drought Exigency Program funds are limited to livestock water supply practices, including portable troughs, water hauling tanks, pumps, pipes, fittings, and city water hookups. The program excludes seeding, fencing, and other practices, with reimbursement set at **50% cost share up to \$500**.

The board discussed program limitations, noting that drought-related soil impacts such as compaction are not covered under the approved practices. It was agreed that outreach should be made to cooperating agencies (NRCS, FSA, etc.) to inform producers in need of livestock water assistance. To expedite approvals, it was voted upon that **Curtis Murphy and Edgar Hendricks** be authorized to approve and sign AgEP drought applications as they are received.

***Following discussion, Steven Johnston made a motion to appoint Curtis Murphy and Edgar Hendrick to sign off on the AgEP Exigency applications as needed. Steven Johnston seconded, motion carried.***

LORS:

LOR ID: 16456

Purpose: WVDA AgEP Drought Exigency

Amount: \$26,205.00

AGR: 1502-01-X

(New Program 7006-00 30007-X To Accompany Signed Agreement Sent on 09.18.2025)

***Steven Johnston made a motion to approve LOR ID: 16456, Curtis Murphy seconded, motion carried.***

The board discussed implementation of the 2025 Drought Exigency Program. It was noted that payments will continue to be approved at regular board meetings unless demand requires a change. Advertising will include notices on the district website and sign, outreach to cooperating agencies, and coordination with local media.

***Steven Johnnnston made a motion for the sign-up period for the 2025 Drought Exigency Program to begin as soon as 09/30/2025, which will run through as soon as counties are lifted from D0-D3 levels. Ron Testerman seconded. Motion carried.***

AgEP Approvals:

Brian Fry, WVCA

The board reviewed the Agricultural Enhancement Program (AgEP) Cost-Share Report as of September 30, 2025. A total of \$3,661.68 has been approved and paid for completed lime applications to three landowners. An additional \$2,559.90 is owed for two lime projects (pending verification forms) and a completed Heavy Use Area project for John Bowling. To date, 30 landowner agreements have been received. Annual inspections for Raleigh County channels, Brush Creek, and DFCF dams and channels are scheduled for October 1–3. The report also documented completed Watering System contracts across Fayette, Summers, Mercer, and Raleigh counties. Payments of up to \$1,500.00 per project were issued for portable troughs, water hauling tanks, pumps, and fittings, providing direct drought-related assistance to producers. The board then discussed implementation of the 2025 Drought Exigency Program. Any county within the district is eligible if at least one county is under a D1 drought designation. Approved practices include portable troughs, water hauling tanks, portable pumps, pipe/fittings, and connections to city water. The program provides a 50% cost share, capped at \$500, and excludes used materials or retroactive payments.

***(Motions: It was moved and seconded to authorize Curtis (AgEP Committee Chair) and Ed Hendricks to approve and sign AgEP Extension C applications as they are received. Motion carried. Steven Johnston moved, seconded by Ron Testerman, that the sign-up period for the 2025 Drought Exigency Program begin September 30, 2025, and remain open until counties are lifted from drought levels D0–D3. Motion carried.)*** (Side Note: These motions were also recorded elsewhere in the minutes. They are included in this section for clarity and to keep AgEP matters consolidated in one place.)

The board discussed scheduling for the annual dam and channel inspections, which are required to include invitations to dam safety officials, the Raleigh County Commission, the Sanitary Board, and the City of Beckley. Supervisors were reminded that attendance is encouraged, particularly for projects located within their respective counties. After reviewing available dates, the board agreed to conduct inspections on **October 6–8, 2025**. The schedule will follow the standard format: Raleigh County checks on Day 1, Princeton-area structures and channels on Day 2, and remaining sites on Day 3. Notices will be sent to all required agencies and local sponsors, with invitations extended to supervisors.

District Funds Travel Approval:

The board discussed travel arrangements for the WACD Fall Awards Banquet, scheduled for October 23, 2025, in Flatwoods, WV. Ron Testerman and Bill Harris confirmed attendance as association/board representatives. Jason Tartt, the district's Non-Typical Farm candidate, will attend, along with additional supervisors as available.

***Edgar Hendrick made a motion to approve travel for Jason Tartt, Ron Testerman and Bill Harris of up to \$1,000.00, to cover banquet, lodging and mileage. Steven Johnston Seconded, motion carried.***

Supervisor Travel Per Diem Letter:

Staff noted that the per diem correspondence was circulated in advance. The board reviewed replies indicating the prior inquiry was directed to the wrong body; the appropriate authority is the **State Conservation Committee (SCC)**, which sets/approves supervisor per diem rates. The board summarized the district's history and objection: the board previously increased the per diem from **\$80** → **\$120**, then, at state direction, to **\$150**. The SCC subsequently reduced the rate back to **\$80** mid-term, adversely affecting several supervisors elected in 2024. The board reaffirmed that it had objected to the reduction at the time.

**Direction (consensus): John Wooten** is to pursue remedy with the SCC rather than the Department of Agriculture/WVCA. Dave Parkulo will coordinate contact and provide any needed documentation. No motion taken (authority previously granted).

Pax/Paint Creek:

The board was briefed on a meeting held September 5, 2025, regarding flooding issues along Paint Creek near Pax. The meeting, organized by Carolyn Hefner on behalf of two state legislators, included representatives from the Army Corps of Engineers, NRCS, and the State Conservation Agency. The focus was on identifying both short-term and long-term solutions following previous flood events. It was noted with concern that several supervisors from the Southern Conservation District were not notified of the meeting despite prior requests to be included. Board members emphasized the need for full district representation at any future discussions. Reports indicated that site assessments identified more than 20 problem areas, with

GPS mapping and photographs compiled for review. Short-term efforts will focus on debris removal and stream blockages, while long-term solutions may require engineering design, permitting, and potential sub-agreements with county or private entities. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for the first two weeks of December to review cost estimates and proposed actions.

### **Special Board Meeting Adjournment**

*Edgar Hendrick made a motion to adjourn the special board meeting, John Farell seconded. Motion carried, meeting was adjourned at 11:09:37 AM EST*

### **Southern Conservation District Committee Meeting**

#### **Fruits of Labor/Sprouting Farms:**

Tammy Jordan

Tammy Jordan, representing Fruits of Labor, provided an overview of the organization's programs and initiatives. She explained that Fruits of Labor is a 24-year-old social enterprise with agricultural, culinary, and recovery-based training programs. The organization currently operates a 218-acre farm in Fayette County and an 80-acre farm in Summers County, where they have recently planted over 3,000 trees and shrubs and are rehabilitating nearly two acres of high tunnels. Tammy Jordan noted that their primary mission is to provide career pathways for adults in recovery from substance use disorder, supported by nationally recognized culinary programs accredited through the American Culinary Federation. She further highlighted an articulation agreement with WVU/Potomac State that allows students to earn credits toward an associate degree. She described recent projects, including landscaping and orchard development, and emphasized the broader community impact of the programs, which serve individuals reentering the workforce, aging out of foster care, or transitioning from the justice system. She also discussed plans for horticultural therapy, agrotourism, and mobile culinary training, projecting benefits across 12 West Virginia counties and distressed counties in Kentucky.

Tammy Jordan requested a **letter of support** from the board to accompany a grant application to the Appalachian Regional Commission (due October 22, with letters requested by October 15). She clarified that this was not a request for funding, but rather technical support and collaboration opportunities. She will work alongside Jesus Nandi Roman to make sure the letter is signed and delivered. Board members expressed appreciation for the presentation and discussed the potential of providing a letter of support. It was agreed that the request would be placed on the agenda for the next board meeting. Tammy Jordan will provide a template for board consideration.

Building:

Bill Harris, Vice-Chairman

A special meeting of the Local Food and Agriculture Council was called to order on September 22, 2025, at the Beckley Service Center. Attending were Danielle Dickerson (RD), Cristy Jones (FSA), Carolyn Gaylor (FSA), Katy McBride (NRCS), Steven Dorsey (OCIO-CEC), and Bill Harris (SCD), who attended via phone. The FSA reported that training for the Emergency Livestock Relief Program (ELRP) was scheduled for the following day, noting that drought relief eligibility required a D3 status. OCIO-CEC reported ongoing local telephone service issues related to the Lumen update from AT&T, with a resolution deadline of September . Regarding outreach, the SCD announced plans for an Open House on Friday, October 3rd, with additional details to follow. Furthermore, it was noted that NRCS would be represented by Beth at a WVSU Job Fair on the 23rd and 25th.

Finance:

Curtis Murphy provided updates on finance. He stated several changes of interest increases with MNCB banking.

Education & Marketing:

Supervisors reported on recent outreach at Farm Bureau meetings. Announcements of the upcoming Field Day at the Summers and Mercer County Farm Bureau meetings generated strong interest, with several producers expressing that they were previously unaware of district programs. The importance of continued outreach and education was noted. The board was reminded of the upcoming WACD Central Area Meeting on Friday, October 10, 2025, at 10:00 AM, with options for Teams or in-person attendance at the district office.

Discussion followed regarding banquet invitations. It was agreed to invite local photo contest winners, Bicentennial farm families, county commissioners, state delegates and senators, the governor's office, and city representatives (including Beckley's city manager and the Sanitary Board). Staff will coordinate distribution of invitations. Supervisors further discussed the need for increased outreach and educational programming. The board agreed that while extension agents play a role, the district should consider organizing future field days and demonstrations directly.

Dates To Remember:

SCD Board Meeting: October 09, 2025 at 10:00 AM @ 463 Ragland Rd, Beckley WV, 25801

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Respectfully Submitted:

**Bill Harris, SCD Vice-Chairman**

X William Harris

**Edgar Hendrick, SCD Secretary**

X Edgar Hendrick

BH/EH/as

Recorded By: Jesus Nandi Roman, Administrative Specialist

## **Motions, Quick Summary**

### **AgEP Drought Exigency Agreement**

*Motion:* Approve and sign the amended WVDA AgEP Drought Exigency Agreement as documented.

*Made by:* John Farrell

*Seconded by:* Ron Testerman

*Outcome:* Motion carried.

*Reference:* Page 2

### **Authorization for Application Approvals**

*Motion:* Appoint Curtis Murphy and Edgar Hendrick to approve and sign AgEP Drought Exigency applications as they are received.

*Made by:* Steven Johnston

*Seconded by:* Steven Johnston (noted in draft; clarify if correction needed)

*Outcome:* Motion carried.

*Reference:* Page 2

### **Letter of Request (LOR)**

*Motion:* Approve **LOR ID: 16456** (Purpose: WVDA AgEP Drought Exigency) in the amount of **\$26,205.00**.

*Made by:* Steven Johnston

*Seconded by:* Curtis Murphy

*Outcome:* Motion carried.

*Reference:* Page 3

### **Drought Exigency Program Sign-Up Period**

*Motion:* Open sign-up for the 2025 Drought Exigency Program beginning **September 30, 2025**, continuing until counties are lifted from drought levels **D0–D3**.

*Made by:* Steven Johnston

*Seconded by:* Ron Testerman

*Outcome:* Motion carried.

*Reference:* Page 3

### **Travel for WACD Fall Awards Banquet**

*Motion:* Approve up to **\$1,000** for travel expenses for Jason Tartt (Non-Typical Farm candidate), Ron Testerman, and Bill Harris to attend the WACD Fall Banquet in Flatwoods, WV.



*Made by:* Edgar Hendrick  
*Seconded by:* Steven Johnston  
*Outcome:* Motion carried.  
*Reference:* Page 4

**Adjournment**

*Motion:* Adjourn the **special board** meeting at **11:09 AM EST.**

*Made by:* Edgar Hendrick  
*Seconded by:* John Farrell  
*Outcome:* Motion carried.  
*Reference:* Page 5

# **SCD September 30 2025 AgEP CS Report**

## **1. Completed lime that have paid and need approved**

- Roy Dale Fox approved for 25.82-ton, cost share of \$710.05.
- Joe Blair approved for 65.54-ton, cost share of \$1,802.35.
- Kattie Carter approved for 62.8-ton, cost share of \$1,149.28

**Total to date \$3,661.68**

## **2. Completed lime but have not paid yet.**

- Connie Bailey approved for 16.96 ton - need verification form
- Edith Jarrett approved for 3.4 ton

**Total Owed \$ 559.90**

## **3. Heavy Use Area completed but has not paid yet.**

- **John Bowling Total owed \$2,000.00**

## **4. To date I have received 30 landowner agreements.**

## **5. Raleigh County channels, Brush Creek , DFCE dams and channel annual inspections are scheduled for October 1-3. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.**

- **Wednesday Oct 1st at (9:00 at the SCD office.)**
- **Thursday Oct 2nd at (9:00am at the Princeton Walmart.)**
- **Friday Oct 3rd at (9:00am at the Princeton Walmart.)**

## **Meeting Notes for the Drought Exigency**

***The board must decide to approve the drought exigency.***

***The board must choose the application time, 30 days, or to keep it open.***

***The timeline for practice completion can be situationally dependent, or the board may choose a date.***

***If one county within the district is in D1 any county within the district is also eligible.***

### **Allowed practices**

- **Portable plastic troughs**
- **Water hauling tanks**
- **Portable pumps**
- **Pipe/fittings**
- **May hook up to city water**
- **No used materials will be accepted, and no retroactive payments shall be made**

***Cost share is 50% up to \$500.00***

***The board shall approve contracts and payments or payments can be made through delegated authority if the board chooses. The board must select a member to do this.***

**Map released: Thurs. September 25, 2021**

Data valid: September 23, 2025 at 8 a.m. EDT

**Intensity**



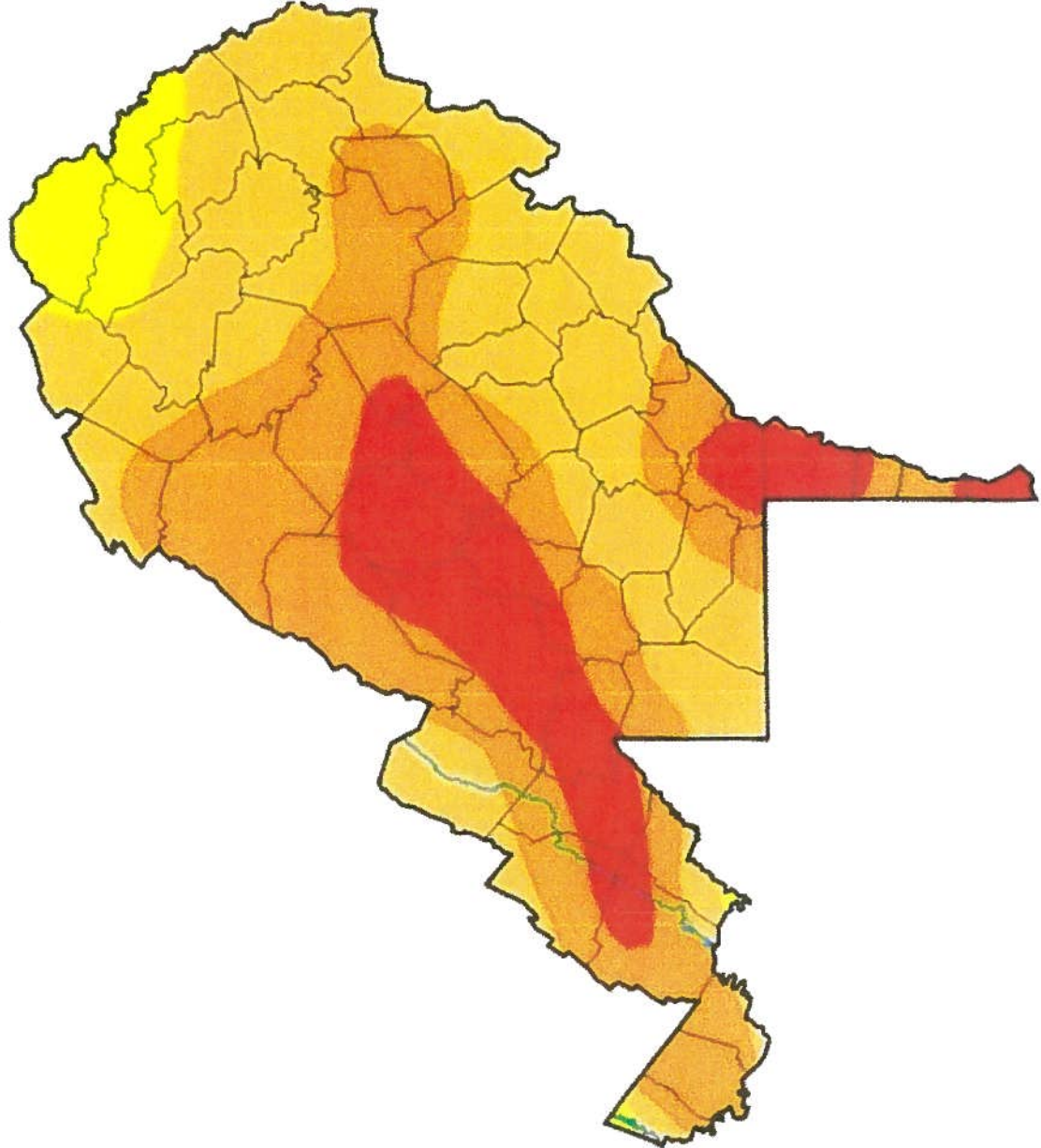
**Authors**

United States and Puerto Rico Author(s):

Brad Rippey, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Pacific Islands and Virgin Islands Author(s):

Tsegaye Tadesse, National Drought Mitigation



| Name                  | County  | Practice(s)     | Components Purchased | Cost Share Approved | Cost Share Paid | Components Purchased                                |
|-----------------------|---------|-----------------|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Lindsey Gwinn         | Fayette | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$109.99        | 2 portable water troughs                            |
| Travis Redden         | Summers | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$176.82        | Pump and water trough                               |
| Derek Johnson         | Summers | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$848           | 8 water hauling tanks                               |
| Curtis Murphy         | Mercer  | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$238.16        | 1 pump and associated fittings and hoses            |
| Debra Cadle           | Raleigh | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$327.68        | 4 portable troughs                                  |
| Ed Hendrick           | Raleigh | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$89.99         | 2 portable water troughs                            |
| Shannon Daniel        | Raleigh | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$944.92        | 1 pump, 17 porable troughs                          |
| Dean Bailey           | Raleigh | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$152.99        | 2 portable water troughs                            |
| Charles Oxley Jr      | Summers | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$624.99        | Pump and fittings                                   |
| Dale Shnewsbury       | Summers | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$497.50        | 1 hauling tank and 1 pump                           |
| Teresa/Alan Butts     | Summers | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$399.99        |                                                     |
| Michael Acord         | Raleigh | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$285.98        | 3 Hoses, 2 portable water troughs                   |
| John/Josette Richmond | Summers | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$246.24        | 2 water hauling tanks, and a portable trough        |
| Billy Johnson         | Summers | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$649.95        | 3 Portable Water Troughs                            |
| Pam Bailey            | Fayette | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             |                 | Cancelled                                           |
| George Ford           | Fayette | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$157.49        | 1 portable water trough                             |
| Marty Walker Owen     | Fayette | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$67.49         | 2 portable water troughs                            |
| William J Redden      | Raleigh | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$249.99        | 2 portable water troughs                            |
| Chase McLaughlin      | Summers | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$711.99        | 1 pump and associated hoses, and water hauling tank |
| Jeffery McLaughlin    | Summers | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$1,500         | 7 portable water troughs                            |
| Matt Thomas           | Summers | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$499.98        | 4 portable water troughs                            |
| Ricky Moye            | Raleigh | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500             | \$494.48        | 1 hauling tank, 1 pump, and 1 portable trough       |
| Benjamin Dickinson    |         | Watering System | Watering System      | \$1,500.00          | \$297.85        | 1 hauling tank                                      |