

**LINCOLN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING  
NRCS / FSA MEETING ROOM-DAVENPORT WA  
Wednesday, February 10, 2016**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:**

Meeting called to order at 8:30 AM by Chairman, Mike Carstensen. Those attending the meeting were as follows: Eddie Johnson, Jim Baye and Jeff Schibel - LCCD Supervisors; Mark Stedman, Lincoln County Commissioner; Ann Swannack, NRCS; Elsa Bowen, Kathy McQuade, Lea Shields, and Dean White - LCCD staff.

**A. MINUTES: Additions / Corrections:**

- *1. Jim moved to approve the January 15 minutes as presented. Eddie seconded. Discussion was held. Motion passed.*

**B. TREASURER'S REPORT / TRANSACTIONS REPORT:**

- *2. Eddie moved to pay and approve vouchers #9666 to #9687, with 5 EFT's, totaling \$29,075.44. Jeff seconded. Discussion was held. Elsa noted that 3 online tree sale orders had already been received. Motion passed.*
- *3. Eddie moved to submit voucher #12 for the NFWF Award: Weed Mapping Education grant in the amount of \$500.00 to NFWF. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.*
- *4. Eddie moved to submit voucher #13 for the Fort Spokane Fuels Reduction grant in the amount of \$3,332.92 to CWPP – Forest Service. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.*
- *5. Eddie moved to submit voucher #2 for the LC Sage Grouse Mitigation & Education grant in the amount of \$707.54 to BLM. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.*
- *6. Eddie moved to submit voucher #5 for the RCCP (WRIA 34) grant in the amount of \$1,008.98 to Palouse CD. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.*
- *7. Eddie moved to submit voucher #5 for the Creating Firewise Networking grant in the amount of \$759.60 to BLM. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.*
- *8. Eddie moved to submit voucher #2 for the ALEA grant in the amount of \$65.33 to WDFW. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.*

- **9. Eddie moved to submit voucher #1 for the Artesian & Black Lakes Rehydration grant in the amount of \$707.54 to WDFW. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.**
- **10. Eddie moved to submit voucher #1 for the VSP grant in the amount of \$459.99 to Lincoln County Land Services. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.**
- **11. Eddie moved to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Visa statement for December 25, 2015 – January 25, 2016. The total amount owed was \$1,710.71. Jeff seconded. Discussion was held. Motion passed.**
- **12. Eddie moved to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Cenex credit card statement with a closing date of January 10, 2016. The total amount owed was \$35.35. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.**

After review, the board initialed each page of the bank statements for the checking and money market accounts. The second statement from US Bank was for the online PayPal account for the tree sale. The separate bank account is required by law for the District for the PayPal account.

The board reviewed the report of the current annual leave/sick leave balances for the District employees.

Elsa noted that Kathy is in the process of opening an account for the District at Washington Federal Bank in Odessa. Washington Federal Bank is the only local bank that has agreed to accept new deposits of public money from the District. About \$150,000 will be transferred out of US Bank and into Washington Federal Bank.

**13. Eddie moved to approve the Treasurer's report and the Grant's report as presented. Jim seconded. Motion passed.**

## **C. AGENDA**

### **Cash Receipting Policy**

The proposed cash receipting policy was distributed. Lea incorporated the requirements from the state auditor into the policy. These requirements are part of the BARS manual policy.

**14. Jeff moved to adopt the cash receipting policy as presented. Jim seconded. Motion passed.** Lea passed around a policy manual signature page for the board members to sign.

### **Voluntary Stewardship Program**

The primary topic for VSP was signing the contract with Anchor QEA to develop the VSP plan for Lincoln County. Copies of the proposed Scope of Work from Anchor

QEA with a budget for the tasks was distributed. The county has 24 months to develop and deliver the VSP plan to the state to review. Anchor QEA has agreed to develop the VSP plan for several other counties, and has suggested that if the process moves along well in Lincoln County, the process could be fast tracked and therefore be completed before 24 months. One advantage of fast tracking is that fewer meetings would be required, that this would help address meeting participant fatigue and subsequent drop-out issues. Anchor QEA would only be under contract with the District to develop the VSP plan until it was completed and presented to the state for review and approval. Elsa reported that the requested language for the developed VSP plan to be state compliant and approved by the state review committee had been inserted into the contract. Courtney Thompson, Lincoln County Planner, notified the District that she does not have any maps developed for the 5 types of critical areas for VSP, and that the critical area maps will need to be developed as a part of the VSP planning process.

Ben Floyd with Anchor QEA has agreed to develop an agenda for each meeting. As with the recently completed Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) for Lincoln County, Ben will track the progress of VSP with a planning schedule that he will project on screen at each meeting. Commissioner Stedman commented that the county was satisfied with the work that Anchor QEA did on the SMP plan, and noted that Ben went to work for the county to get some controversial issues recognized and approved by Ecology for the benefit of the county and its citizens. The SMP plan only needed to be approved by Ecology, but the VSP plan will have to be approved by the state review committee, which includes Ecology, WDFW, the WA State Department of Agriculture, and the Conservation Commission. Commissioner Stedman also commented that the commissioners intend to have the county planning department working back and forth with VSP well beyond the completion of the plan to help implement county planning requirements. Eddie requested that Ben attend a future board meeting and give a presentation on how the VSP planning process will be implemented.

A conference call was established with Ben. Ben commented that Anchor QEA will work as much as possible to make the VSP plan state compliant and be approved by the state review committee, but he could not make any absolute guarantees that the VSP plan will be approved by the state, due to some issues beyond his control. For example, the VSP planning group could have some irreconcilable issues with one or more of the 4 state agencies on the review committee.

Ben was asked what he learned from the taking on Chelan County VSP plan partway through the process and finishing the plan. Ben reported that he would be more specific with the work plan. Ben noted that Anchor QEA had already generated a lot of GIS maps for the SMP plan for Lincoln County, and would now be able to focus more on specific issues in specific drainages to meet the objectives for the VSP plan.

The board members had the following additional questions for Ben:

- 1) If some map shows a wetland, does it have to be included on the critical area map for wetlands? Ben reported that there is a national wetland inventory available to the public that could be used as a starting point. However, local knowledge will be used as much as possible to fix errors and refine the wetland delineations from the national map as much as possible. Most anybody can get on the Internet and use Google Earth to see in pretty good detail what wet areas occur across the county. The important thing to remember about

wetlands in the county is that their functioning as of July 2011 needs to be maintained.

- 2) There is now quite a bit of BLM and WDFW land, along with DNR land in the county. How will this affect VSP planning? Ben noted that VSP planning is only done on private land, but that the public land in the county could be used as a baseline to start.
- 3) Is no-till/direct seeding considered a benefit to the land for VSP? Ben noted that 1 or 2 pass systems should provide water quality benefits. He is not an expert but is aware of some of the challenges with direct seeding.
- 4) Will Anchor QEA have to hire new employees to develop VSP plans? No. Anchor QEA will only work on up to 5 counties for VSP in order to not overextend itself. Anchor QEA already has 15 – 20 employees that will be available to work on VSP.
- 5) What's the difference between fast tracking and regular speed for VSP? If the regular speed process is perceived to be too slow and not enough progress is being made, then participants can start dropping out. Fast tracking can help avoid this. Ben commented that 1.5 to 2 years should be plenty of time to complete VSP, but that he would be looking to the District for feedback on the speed.
- 6) If the VSP plan is rejected by the state review committee, what happens next? Ben commented that he will be working with the 4 state agencies well in advance of submitting the VSP plan, and so he does not expect having any surprises with any of the agencies rejecting the VSP plan. For SMP, Ben went to work for the town of Odessa, reviewed the science and the FEMA map, and showed that for 99% of the time, the town of Odessa would not flood and that the FEMA flood map as drawn did not apply. This saved the town of Odessa a substantial amount of money by having the FEMA flood map status removed.
- 7) Would subsoiling to reduce runoff on frozen ground be included in the plan? Yes. Would dryland cropping be separated from irrigated cropping? Yes, within a given drainage/watershed.

Elsa noted that Bill Eller with Conservation Commission had been selected as the liaison for VSP for the conservation districts.

**15.** *Jim moved to proceed forward with signing the contract with Anchor QEA to develop the VSP plan for Lincoln County. Eddie seconded. Motion passed.*

### **Commissioners Report**

Commissioner Stedman reported that WDFW has requested that a line item be placed in the state budget to purchase the 5500 acre Allington Ranch that is located north of Odessa in the Pacific Lake area. The Lincoln County Commissioners are opposed to the sale due to the loss of private land and resulting loss of taxes for the county, which are not adequately compensated for by the PILT (payment in lieu of taxes) payments. The County Commissioners further declare that if WDFW wants to have any fish on the ranch, which currently has none due to the dried up reach of Lake Creek and Pacific Lake, then WDFW needs to provide and pay for the water needed to rehydrate the lake and the creek.

Because of budget issues, 13 employees who have left employment with the county, mostly to retirement, will not be replaced. Many of the county departments are not able to get all of their work done now due to the loss of these employees. The

county courthouse, including the Commissioner's office, but not including Superior Court and the adjacent District Court, will be closing 1 hour early each afternoon, and will only be open from 9 AM – 3 PM Monday through Friday starting March 1. The state Department of Revenue has called the county and have asked why revenue from the county to the state is down \$100,000, and the Commissioners have responded that if the state wants more revenue from the county, the state can fill in the \$1.3 million budget cut this year to hire more county employees to help collect more revenue for the state.

The Commissioners are still working to get a 3/10 of 1% sales tax proposal passed to fund a drug enforcement officer for the county. The county will only place this proposal on the election ballot if all of the cities in the county agree to the proposal. The proposal would only generate \$2,000 for drug enforcement for most of the cities in the county. If a retail marijuana store were to open up in one of the cities in Lincoln County, that city would receive 37% of the retail sale cost for drug avoidance education.

### **Elections**

Mike as the incumbent has been re-elected to the currently open seat by reason of being the only person filing for the position by the filing deadline. Therefore, no poll site, absentee balloting or mail balloting was performed pursuant to WAC 135-110-370. Lea posted signs on the front door of the office with the above information, and is working on completing the other required forms for this election. The advertisement for the appointed position currently held by Alan is online. Alan must complete and send this form to the Conservation Commission by the end of March if he wishes to be reappointed.

### **Schedule 22 and Internal Audit**

The Schedule 22 form and the internal audit will be conducted in the conference room immediately following the end of the board meeting.

### **Annual Work Plan**

The 2016 Annual Work Plan was distributed along with a flyer developed by Val for the new internship program. Anything that Lincoln County CD works on during the year needs to be included in the Annual Plan. The plan is a working document and can be updated throughout the year as needed. A few changes have been made to the 2016 plan to accommodate the addition of more soil education tours, helping to facilitate the VSP program, more Firewise planning, and the internship program. The District has received some 100% cost share grant money from DNR to implement more Firewise projects. Cayuse Cove has been suggested by local fire districts as the next highest priority area to implement Firewise projects. For the xeriscape gardening project, the District has cut ties with the initial landscaper and moved on to a new landscaper to keep the demonstration gardens with the cities across the county moving forward.

**16.** *Jeff moved to submit the 2016 Annual Working Plan as presented to the Conservation Commission. Jim seconded. Motion passed.*

### **5-Year Plan**

The same new items added to the Annual Work Plan were added to the 5-Year Plan. The 5-Year Plan is also a working document and can be updated throughout the 5 year period as needed.

*17. Jeff moved to submit the 5-Year Plan as presented to the Conservation Commission. Jim seconded. Motion passed.*

### **Black Lake – Artesian Lake Rehydration Project**

The monitoring well at Black Lake, MW-1, was drilled on February 1. Groundwater was encountered at 27 feet and drilling was stopped at 34 foot depth in basalt bedrock. The monitoring well at Artesian Lake, MW-2, was drilled on February 2. Groundwater was encountered at 32 feet and drilling was stopped at 48 feet in basalt bedrock. Two inch diameter PVC pipes were installed to allow monitoring of the groundwater level.

A smaller well drilling rig mounted on a trackhoe was used to drill these shallow wells due to the muddy road conditions encountered when accessing the site. Photos of the well drilling along with maps of the site and copies of the well drilling log book were distributed to the board members. Black Lake and Artesian Lake are located in Black Rock Coulee in Grant County northeast of Moses Lake and are within about 1.5 miles of the East Low Canal, the source of water for this passive rehydration test project.

### **Direct Seed Grant**

Copies of a county map with the locations of the 6 direct seed grant cooperator fields were distributed to the board members. The cooperators have signed up for direct seed grant funding from the Palouse-Rock Lake CD grant on up to 200 acres of cropland each. The contracts are for 3 years. An additional cooperator, Weston Sellars, needed to be approved for direct seed grant funding.

*18. Jim moved to approve the application from Weston Sellars for direct seed grant funding. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.*

### **Burn Permits**

Jeff attended the recent Adams CD annual meeting in Ritzville and spoke with Kary Peterson, who is in charge of burn permits for the Department of Ecology. Kary asked if Lincoln CD might consider issuing burn permits again. Neighboring Grant CD and Adams CD issue burn permits. Kary volunteered to give a presentation at a future board meeting.

Lincoln County CD would receive \$1.25 per acre out of the total \$3.75 per acre charged to growers for agricultural burning and might bring an estimated \$1,000 to \$2,000 per year to the District. The growers would still have to call the sheriff, their local fire district, and Ecology for burn day status.

Elsa asked if the board was interested in pursuing the issuing of burn permits again. The previous history of the District issuing burn permits was discussed. About 15 years ago, a burn permit was back dated to help out a grower. The District ended up being taken to court, but the case was thrown out, and in the end, the grower was not fined. Eddie asked if the liability was really worth it for only several thousand

dollars. It was noted that it would be more convenient for local growers to come to the office to obtain burn permits instead of having to mail them to Olympia. It was also noted that NRCS programs don't allow burning.

The general consensus of the Board was to invite Kary Peterson to attend the next board meeting in March and give a presentation on ag burning and issuing permits. A decision on whether or not to start issuing Ag Burn permits would be made sometime afterward.

### **Verle Kaiser Grant Trial Run**

Elsa, Kathy, Lea and Val gave a soil runoff demonstration to 15 Wilbur Cub Scouts, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders, aged 9 – 10 years old, with funding from the Verle Kaiser soils education grant. Barley seed donated by Jim was grown in plastic bottles cut in half and laid on their sides and filled with potting soil. Three treatments were used: 1) barley seeded into the potting soil; 2) potting soil with stubble residue on top; and 3) potting soil only. Water was poured into all three bottles, and the amount of sediment and color of the runoff water from each bottle was observed by the Cub Scouts. Barley was also planted in plastic cups with a photo of each student taped onto the front of each cup. The barley served as "hair" growing above the top of each student's head on the plastic cup. In addition, small samples of hard red wheat (untreated) were tied in bags and given to the Cub Scouts to grow their own plants and conduct their own runoff tests. Photos of this soils education project will be placed in the annual report, on Facebook, and on the LCCD website. The next demonstration will be given at Reardan.

### **1980's BMP's**

Copies of the Lincoln County Best Management Practices from the early 1980's were obtained from the archives at WSU with the help of Ray Ledgerwood and were distributed to the board members. The BMP's divided the county into 6-9" (Shano soils), 9-12" (Ritzville, Renslow soils), 12-15" (Bagdad soils) and 15-18" (Broadax, Hanning soils) precip and soil zones. Summer fallow fields were advised to be seeded by varying dates in September, have a minimum of 20% crop residues on the surface, and have clods greater than 1" in diameter covering at least 10% of the soil surface. In addition, 17 optional support practices such as divided slopes, chiseling, grass waterways, etc... were listed. By general consensus, the Board requested that a copy of the BMP's be placed in the minutes and that the BMP's be kept in consideration for the upcoming VSP process.

### **Cover Crop Letter to Okanogan CD**

19. *Eddie moved to send a letter to Leslie Michel, Okanogan CD, and ask that buckwheat NOT be planted in any cover crop mixtures for the proposed dryland cover crop grant, due to the adverse effect of the potential for any buckwheat to be a contaminant in wheat sold to Japan. In addition, it was requested that a reminder be made requesting that all brassica seed used for cover crops be certified blackleg free. Jim seconded. Discussion was held. Buckwheat is known to cause significant allergic reactions in some people. An article on buckwheat contamination in wheat can be obtained from Glen Squire, Grain Commission office, at 509 456-2481. Motion passed.*

### **New NE Area Representative**

It was announced that John Floyd, a supervisor with Pend Oreille CD, was selected as the new Area Representative to the Conservation Commission from the NE Area.

### **Lincoln County Wheat Growers**

The Lincoln County Wheat Growers will be providing funding for the lunch at the Wilke Field Day which will be held on Thursday, June 23 at the Wilke Farm just outside of Davenport. The Wilke Farm needs support from local growers in order to help guarantee the continued operation of the farm. Lincoln County CD could provide support to the Wilke Farm. The Lincoln County Wheat Growers also donated \$3,000 to a grant fund to provide agricultural education to local schools across the county.

### **Legislative Days**

The annual WACD Legislative Days will be held in Olympia on February 22 & 23. This year's legislative session is the short 60 day session. Jim, Eddie and Alan will be attending Legislative Days. Elsa will print out business cards for the board members attending.

### **Conservation Commission Report**

Mike Baden noted that this was a busy time of year for him working on Annual Plans, Schedule 22's and internal audits. The Conservation Commission is advertising for the South Central Regional Manager / Technical Development and Training position. Bill Eller transferred over to the VSP liaison position. The Conservation Commission is working on CRP and CSP task orders with NRCS. The Commission will be providing 40% of the funding and is waiting for responses back from the DC's and from AC Doug Allen.

Mike noted that the Conservation Commission is encouraging producers and other agricultural organizations to contact their legislators and tell them the importance of continued funding to conservation districts. The Legislature wants to hear back from other people besides the Conservation Commission.

A question was raised about the status of the Executive Director position for WACD. The job description for the new WACD Executive Director has apparently not yet been finished.

### **FSA Report**

There was no news to report from FSA.

### **NRCS Report**

Ann reported on personnel updates with the West Palouse Team. Jeff Jones, Soil Conservationist in the Davenport office, has accepted a new position with BLM and will be starting in Winnemucca on March 7. Ann has signed the soil conservationist position description to replace Jeff's position. Two new job announcements have closed after the standard one week listing on USA Jobs, but the panels have not yet been developed. The program support specialist will be located in Ritzville, and the soil technician will be located in Davenport. Gary Cook, soil technician in Ritzville will be retiring on June 26. Andrea Burton and Kelly Petitjean are already working as new



soil conservationists in the Ritzville office. It is not known when the range conservationist position to replace Brad Jacobsen's position will be advertised.

NRCS deadlines will become more solid. Some applicants for CSP or EQIP will not be eligible due to not having a SAMs number or not having an updated AGI on file with FSA. The deadline for the new CSP signup may be March 31. The goal for obligating EQIP contracts is April 1. For EQIP Energy, \$4 million will be available, with \$100,000 hold downs. The Local Working Group has the option to designate some of the WPT EQIP funding to EQIP Energy. The total CRP workload is not yet known. The CRP task order will not be submitted until after the current CRP signup ends on February 26.

The Human Resources staff has been reorganized at the State Office into teams that no longer service just Washington but service 8 – 10 western states. Many of the state office staff are now teleworking from their home when they can. If you want to meet with state NRCS staff, it is now a very good idea to make an appointment ahead of time, as they may not be in the office, and if they are, the state office door is typically locked for security purposes. The WA-NRCS state office has also signed up for a pilot plan for reorganizing office floor plan space. The client gateway for NRCS is still not fully functional and it is very beneficial for producers who login to the gateway to have a high speed Internet connection.

#### **Irrigation Update**

Jeff noted that the Columbia-Snake River Irrigators Association lawsuit that was filed against the Bureau of Reclamation, for delays in issuing a water service contract for a privately funded pipeline to supply water from the East Low Canal to portions of the Odessa Subarea north of I-90, has been dismissed. Copies of the East Columbia Basin Irrigation District, Odessa Groundwater Replacement Program, Preliminary Delivery System Alignments map were distributed. The first pipeline scheduled to service 10,000 acres of Odessa Subarea land south of I-90 only has signups for 2,000 acres, most likely due to the high costs for obtaining surface water through the new pipeline to replace declining deep irrigation water well levels.

#### **Bedrock Map for Lincoln County, Summary on Soil Health Information**

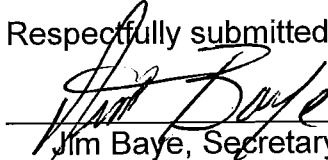
Dean handed out copies of an initial map for bedrock outcrops in Lincoln County that could be used as a starting point for developing a map of critical aquifer recharge areas for the upcoming VSP process. The map is based on the concept that bedrock, primarily basalt flows, exposed at or near the surface and next to water in the scablands or along streams or lakes, may be receiving aquifer recharge, while the areas of deep loess with no streams or lakes probably aren't receiving much or any aquifer recharge. The bedrock layers for the map were taken from data stored on the GWMA external hard drive.

Dean also handed out copies of a summary that he compiled on soil health concepts, soil health webinars, and application of gypsum to farm fields.

Dean will be attending the training session sponsored by AMMO in Ritzville on February 11 that will address updates to Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) requirements.

**The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 AM.** The next board meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 9, at 8:30 AM in the conference room in Davenport.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Jim Baye, Secretary

  
Dean White, Minute Taker

**SUMMARY:**

All 19 motions were reviewed:

- 1. M/S/P to approve the January 15, 2015 minutes as presented.
- 2. M/S/P to pay and approve vouchers #9666 to #9687, with 5 EFT's, totaling \$29,075.44.
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- 13. M/S/P to approve the Treasurer's report and the Grant's report as presented.
- 14. M/S/P to adopt the cash receipting policy as presented.
- 15. M/S/P to proceed forward with signing the contract with Anchor QEA to develop the VSP plan for Lincoln County.
- 16. M/S/P to submit the 2016 Annual Working Plan as presented to the Conservation Commission.
- 17. M/S/P to submit the 5 Year Work Plan as presented to the Conservation Commission.
- 18. M/S/P to approve the application from Weston Sailor for direct seed grant funding.
- 19. M/S/P to send a letter to Leslie Michel, Okanogan CD, and ask that buckwheat NOT be planted in any cover crop mixtures for the proposed dryland cover crop grant, due to the adverse effect of the potential for any buckwheat to be a contaminant in wheat sold to Japan. In addition, it was requested that a reminder be made requesting that all brassica seed used for cover crops be certified blackleg free.

