

**LINCOLN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING**
Lincoln County Public Works Meeting Room – Davenport, WA
Wednesday, October 8, 2025

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

Meeting called to order at 9:02 AM by Chairman, Jeff Schibel. Those attending the meeting in person or by phone were as follows: Braidy Haden and Jason Echelbarger - LCCD Supervisors; Mike Baden, Conservation Commission; Jo Gilchrist, Lincoln County Commissioners; Elsa Bowen, Delaini Disher, Elayne Hovde, Brean Nieman, Matthew Rosman, and Dean White - LCCD staff.

A. MINUTES: Additions / Corrections:

- 1. Braidy moved to approve the July 9, 2025 minutes as presented. Jason seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.*

B. TREASURER'S REPORT / TRANSACTIONS REPORT:

- 2. Braidy moved to pay and approve vouchers #12826 to #12887, along with 43 EFT's, totaling \$760,406.50. Jason seconded. Discussion was held. Motion passed.*
- 3. Braidy moved to submit voucher #1 for the 26-39-FH grant in the amount of \$1,259.30 to the Conservation Commission. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 4. Braidy moved to submit voucher #2 for the 26-39-FH grant in the amount of \$3,803.76 to the Conservation Commission. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 5. Braidy moved to submit voucher #3 for the 26-39-FH grant in the amount of \$5,307.08 to the Conservation Commission. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 6. Braidy moved to submit voucher #1 for the 26-39-IE grant in the amount of \$899.97 to the Conservation Commission. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 7. Braidy moved to submit voucher #22 for the Adams CD TA grant in the amount of \$0.00 to Adams CD. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 8. Braidy moved to submit voucher #23 for the Adams CD TA grant in the amount of \$1,321.94 to Adams CD. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 9. Braidy moved to submit voucher #24 for the Adams CD TA grant in the amount of \$593.40 to Adams CD. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 10. Braidy moved to submit voucher #1 for the 26-39-NR grant in the amount of \$27.39 to the Conservation Commission. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*

- 11. *Braidy moved to submit voucher #2 for the 26-39-NR grant in the amount of \$986.24 to the Conservation Commission. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 12. *Braidy moved to submit voucher #3 for the 26-39-NR grant in the amount of \$90,848.85 to the Conservation Commission. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 13. *Braidy moved to submit voucher #12 for the Direct Seed 3 grant in the amount of \$78,051.47 to DOE. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 14. *Braidy moved to submit voucher #12 for the NE Lincoln Well Monitoring grant in the amount of \$14,819.53 to DOE. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 15. *Braidy moved to submit voucher #13 for the NE Lincoln Well Monitoring grant in the amount of \$15,827.93 to DOE. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 16. *Braidy moved to submit voucher #1 for the 26-39-IM grant in the amount of \$35,627.91 to the Conservation Commission. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 17. *Braidy moved to submit voucher #2 for the 26-39-IM grant in the amount of \$13,605.66 to the Conservation Commission. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 18. *Braidy moved to submit voucher #3 for the 26-39-IM grant in the amount of \$9,966.15 to the Conservation Commission. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 19. *Braidy moved to submit voucher #24 for the VSP 5 grant in the amount of \$35,651.93 to the Conservation Commission. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 20. *Braidy moved to submit voucher #1 for the VSP 6 grant in the amount of \$8,270.85 to the Conservation Commission. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 21. *Braidy moved to submit voucher #2 for the VSP 6 grant in the amount of \$8,897.04 to the Conservation Commission. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 22. *Braidy moved to submit voucher #3 for the VSP 6 grant in the amount of \$69,962.66 to the Conservation Commission. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 23. *Braidy moved to submit voucher #10 for the #23-DG-11062752-163 CWPP grant in the amount of \$2,361.50 to DNR. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*

- 24. *Braidy moved to submit voucher #11 for the #23-DG-11062752-163 CWPP grant in the amount of \$925.60 to DNR. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 25. *Braidy moved to submit voucher #12 for the #23-DG-11062752-163 CWPP grant in the amount of \$1,944.31 to DNR. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 26. *Braidy moved that the Lincoln County Conservation District VISA statement for June 26, 2025 through July 25, 2025 be approved. The total amount owed was \$1,736.57. Jason seconded. Discussion was held. Motion passed.*
- 27. *Braidy moved that the Lincoln County Conservation District VISA statement for July 26, 2025 through August 25, 2025 be approved. The total amount owed was \$1,439.31. Jason seconded. Discussion was held. Elsa noted that a tire on the Tahoe had to be replaced and then was washed. Motion passed.*
- 28. *Braidy moved that the Lincoln County Conservation District VISA statement for August 26, 2025 through September 24, 2025 be approved. The total amount owed was \$2,854.31. Jason seconded. Discussion was held. Motion passed.*
- 29. *Braidy moved to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Co-Energy / Pacific Pride gas card statement with a closing date of July 15, 2025. The total amount owed was \$119.78. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 30. *Braidy moved to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Co-Energy / Pacific Pride gas card statement with a closing date of July 31, 2025. The total amount owed was \$238.27. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 31. *Braidy moved to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Co-Energy / Pacific Pride gas card statement with a closing date of August 15, 2025. The total amount owed was \$80.95. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
- 32. *Braidy moved to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Co-Energy / Pacific Pride gas card statement with a closing date of August 31, 2025. The total amount owed was \$244.23. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*
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Elsa noted that all of the grant funding had been spent from of the grants that expired at the end of June.

After reviewing the statements, the Board members initialed each page of the bank statements for the checking and money market accounts.

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

- ***34. Braidy moved to approve the Treasurer's report and Grant's report as presented. Jason seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.***

C. AGENDA

Line of Credit

Elsa reported that US Bank would require \$8,000 from the District in order to set up a line of credit that would be used for easier payment methods for large grant money projects such as Irrigation Efficiency projects that can cost several hundred thousand dollars. Washington Federal Bank (WaFd) in Odessa would not require a fee for establishing a line of credit but instead would require that all District bank account money across multiple banks be moved to WaFd in Odessa, which would not work for the Lincoln County CD for multiple reasons. Elsa is now working with Wheatland Bank in Davenport which has noted that it would not require a separate charge for establishing a line of credit.

Mike reminded the Board and staff that establishing a line of credit is approved by the Conservation Commission as long as a Policy for using the line of credit has been established beforehand. Elsa noted that Lincoln County CD has paid out about \$1 million for cost share projects already for 2025. Mike noted that if the District ever pays out \$2 million or more cost share dollars in a year, the State Auditor would have to conduct an audit every year instead of every three years.

Elections Update

Elsa reported that Jim will not be seeking reelection for another term as a Board member. Three county producers/county residents have expressed a potential interest in serving as a new Board member and may attend future Board meetings as soon as the upcoming November meeting. The election ballot process is expected to be the same as last year with Walt's Mail out of Spokane mailing out the ballots again. The official resolution for the spring 2026 Board member elections will be presented and approved at the December meeting.

Lincoln County CD 50th Year Anniversary Dinner

Elsa reminded the Board that 2025 has been the 50th anniversary year for Lincoln County CD covering the entire county and asked if the Board was still interested in having the District sponsor a 50th Year Anniversary Dinner. The general consensus was yes.

Elsa proposed that the Anniversary Dinner be held at Memorial Hall in Davenport for the best acoustics and that the dinner be held in January after the holiday celebrations and commitments are over. Julie Jacobsen was suggested as the caterer for the dinner, as she has served well as the caterer for previous District dinners and there are few other local caterers available.

Grants Update

Elsa announced that multiple grant addendums had been submitted for approval during late summer. The Irrigation Efficiency addendum was submitted for \$461,714.93. In addition, addendums for the NRI, Forest Health, VSP 6 and Lincoln County CD Implementation grant were also submitted.

The \$40,000 non-competitive capital funds grant for the VSP 6 grants needs to be approved by the Board. ACGO, the successor to White Bluffs consulting, submitted an RFP to serve as the facilitator for the VSP 6 grant which also needs approval.

35. *Braidy moved to approve the grant addendums as presented along with the \$40,000 non-competitive grant payment and RFP and contract to AGCO for the VSP 6 grant. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*

Elsa reported that a new task order had been reached with NRCS and the Conservation Commission to conduct more CRP field checks this year in Lincoln and Adams counties for \$149,115.17. There are 149 CRP field checks to do in Lincoln County and 15 field CRP checks to be done in Adams County.

For 2026, there are only 27 CRP field checks to be done in Lincoln County which will be conducted by Davenport NRCS staff. There are about 140 CRP field checks to be done in Adams County. Heidi Hennings has been hired to conduct these field checks and she will be able to use an NRCS pickup in the Ritzville field office to do these checks. The District still needs to get a cooperative agreement with NRCS to use their buildings and to use an NRCS ATV with the necessary training obtained.

The Edwall flood reduction / Canby Creek channel cleanout is progressing forward. Elsa is working on the JARPA permit. The overall plan is to clean out the creek channel from the bridge at Edwall and continue several miles downstream to the west and just north of Bluestem Road down to the intersection with Thorp Road. Elsa has worked with the Department of Ecology to find that the Flood Plain by Design Grant would be a good fit for this project. Arrow Leaf Consulting, which has worked with other conservation districts and applied for this grant before, would be a good fit to write this grant for the district. Elsa has met with Arrow, and the cost would be about \$8,000.

36. *Braidy moved to approve the selection of Arrow Leaf Consulting to write the Flood Plain by Design grant for \$8,000 for the cleaning out of the Canby Creek channel from the Edwall bridge downstream to Thorp Road in order to reduce the flooding hazard in Edwall for future runoff events. Jason seconded. Motion passed.*

New Grants Submitted

Matthew submitted a grant application for the CWD (Community Wildfire Defense) grant but the District was not awarded this grant. Many conservation districts submitted applications for this grant but only 4 CWD grants were awarded across the state.

Elayne successfully submitted a Manure Management grant for \$58,648.79 for the Zeigler dairy farm west of Harrington.

Delaini submitted a Direct Seed 4 application to Ecology for the Centennial Clean Water grant and also submitted an application to build a beaver dam equivalent structure to help protect the railroad car bridge that was installed over Little Creek with District submitted grant funding and assistance back in 2008 at the Harman creek crossing.

Elsa submitted a grant application to Ecology for the installation of riparian fencing / restoration projects to assist Hawk Creek livestock producers who received water

quality violation letters from Ecology. Elsa also noted that the District recently received notice of a letter of violation from Ecology to a new landowner for tires left in a creek channel by the previous owner in the Porcupine Bay area.

Fires 2025 and Cost Share Resolution 25-04

Matthew successfully submitted a grant application to SCC for a spring 2026 tree replanting project on the David Sprecher land that was burned by the Crescent Road Fire in August. The project covers 36 acres and 9,600 stems of primarily ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir conifer seedlings will be planted.

The grant funding from DNR will be transferred to the Conservation Commission and then to the District.

37. Braidy moved to approve Resolution 2025-04 for providing 100% cost share for fire recovery projects. Jason seconded. Motion passed. The Resolution will be forwarded to the Conservation Commission.

Cost Share Action

Copies of the October 8, 2025 Cost Share Action sheet were distributed for review and approval. The Cost Share Action sheet included four requests for cost share payment from the Direct Seed 3 grant, one cost share payment request from the VSP 6 plus 26-39-NR grant, and cost share payment requests from the Lincoln County CD and 26-39-AMM grants for an overall total of \$145,416.04. Discussion was held. Delaini briefly described each of the cost share projects.

38. Braidy moved to approve the Cost Share Action spreadsheet for the October 8, 2025 Board Meeting as presented for a total of \$145,416.04. Jason seconded. Motion passed.

2026 NACD Support Request

Elsa announced that the District had received the annual support request from the National Association of Conservation Districts. The District has invested \$775.00 per year in recent years to support NACD. Jeff asked if NACD was able to provide any assistance to support the District's resolution for CD's to opt out of signing new CRP contracts from FSA that was submitted to NE Area meeting, then to the Annual WACD meeting for approval and then forwarded to NACD. Mike noted NACD was not able to provide any assistance for getting FSA to accept the resolution for conservation districts to opt out of having to sign new CRP contracts from FSA. Elsa noted that all of the new CRP contracts for 2025 had already been signed by the district.

39. Braidy moved to approve the renewal of the \$775.00 investment in NACD for 2026. Jason seconded. Motion passed.

Annual NE Area Meeting

Elsa announced that the annual NE Area Meeting will be hosted by Stevens CD on October 22 at the Chewelah Golf Course and needed to RSVP on how many people from Lincoln County CD would be attended. Jeff and Braidy are planning on attending and Elsa will contact Josh and Jim. Delaini will be giving the presentation on District activities for the year. Jeff noted that the NE Area is still looking for NE Area Directors to serve on the WACD Board. At this time, there are no resolutions from Lincoln County CD for the NE Area Meeting.

WACD Update

The Annual WACD Meeting will be held again at the Northern Quest Casino in Airway Heights on December 1 through December 3. Jeff noted that the agenda for annual meeting has already been released. Elsa may be volunteering to help staff the sign in desk again. Delaini was accepted into the Ag Forestry program and will be attending the first training session on District time and travel on December 3 – 4. Delaini asked if there was an important issue in the District that the Board would like her to work on and present it at the Ag Forestry class, and if so, please let her know.

Jeff reported that at the recent WACD Board meeting, riparian program controversies are a continuing issue. PMC sales have been flat. Long time PMC Manager Jim Brown has retired and John Knox has taken over as the new Manager. Another continuing issue for WACD was the recently allocated \$700,000 in competitive VSP funding in which \$600,000 out of the total \$700,000 funding was awarded to CD's in just 3 counties in the state. The other CD's in the state who are participating in the VSP program are not happy with this lopsided allocation of the limited VSP funding.

Conservation Commission Report

Mike reported that the Conservation Commission is continuing to deal with issues concerning Commission grants and CD's across the state not receiving enough grant funding to fully operate as desired. Following survey responses from CD's across the state, the Conservation Commission and CD staff have been working on requested/needed updates to the Commission Grants Manual because what is written in the manual is mandated as law in the state. One of the highest update priorities from CD's is for the Grants Manual to clearly differentiate between policy, law and best practices. The Commission and CD staff are scheduled to develop a list of priority updates by November and send out to CD's across the state for comment.

Mike noted that Dean Longrie, one of the NE Area Directors will not seek reelection to serve on the Conservation Commission Board and that applications have been sent out the NE Area CD's. MRSC (Municipal Research and Services Center) will be making multiple presentations on issues facing CD's at the Annual WACD Meeting. The After the Flames Conference will be held in Washington this coming spring in Cle Elum.

County Commissioners Report

Commissioner Gilchrist reported that the current Lincoln County Budget exceeds projected County income by \$2.5 to \$2.6 million. At the next Commissioners Meeting on November 3, all county departments will be asked to justify expenses for the coming year and keep expenses at the same level as this year. If current expenses barely cover salaries, then there may not be enough funding to maintain equipment and buildings and there may be reductions in staff and services. An important source of funding for the county, property taxes, will only increase by \$26,000 for 2026. All counties in Eastern Washington are facing the same budget dilemma. Unfunded mandates from the state such as the requirement for multiple Public Defenders contribute to county budget shortfalls.

County Planner Courtney Thompson is working with a consultant on the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The long time manager for the Lincoln County Fair retired after the recent fair and the Commissioners have been helping to fill in the gap until a new manager can be hired.

Fiber optic cables will be installed in Odessa, Reardan and Sprague, the last 3 cities in the county to receive service through the county fiber optic system. Fiber optic cables are currently being installed in Odessa. After fiber optic cables are installed in these cities, fiber optic work will make its way down Miles-Creston Road to install cables in the Hawk Creek, Seven Bays and Deer Meadows communities and is expected to take all of 2026. Margie Hall and Scott Hutsell are doing all of the management work for the installation of the fiber optic cable broadband system in the county.

NRCS Report

There was no NRCS report due to the current Federal Government shutdown

FSA Report

There was no FSA report due to the current Federal Government shutdown

2024 -2025 Crop Year Precipitation and Well Monitoring

Dean distributed copies of the 2024 – 2025 crop year precipitation spreadsheets and maps. Separate spreadsheet columns and the 2 separate maps showed the difference between the 2024 – 2025 crop year precip at each station compared to the previous 2023 – 2024 crop year precip, and the comparison of the 2024 – 2025 crop year precip at each station versus the long term cumulative crop year precip at each station.

Most but not all of the precip stations reported an increase in precip for the 2024-2025 crop year compared to the 2023 – 2024 crop year, with some precip stations in the northeast part of the county reporting 2 to 4" more precip. Most but not all of the precip stations also reported more precip for the 2024 – 2025 crop year compared to the cumulative long term crop year precip average.

Dean noted that the only reason why there was more precip for the 2024 – 2025 crop year was the above average 5 – 8" of rain received and also absorbed into the soil for November and December 2024 and the first half of January 2025. If there had been normal or above average precip for spring and early summer 2025, all of the precip stations should have had 2 – 4" or more precip above the long term crop year average leading to record crops, but instead the dry spring and summer led to moderate, severe, and even extreme drought conditions in the county by September.

Dean also distributed some copies of the long term well level and precip measurements for well BIU506 from summer 2015 through early fall 2025. The 6.5" of precip received in November 2024 through mid-January 2025 followed by the very large runoff event on 2/24/2025 led to the highest well level measurement recorded so far. But then the dry spring, summer and early fall led to a steep decline in well level that fortunately was still above the lowest level in 2024, the bad drought year of 2021, and original static well level just after the well was drilled in 2015.

Dean noted that Davenport Well #1 has shown similar well level peak and trough measurements this year. The very large runoff event on Cottonwood Creek on 2/23/2025 that nearly overtopped the bridge in the park contributed to the highest level measured recently so far at just over 118 ft. below ground level, but then dropped to the lowest level measured recently at over 135 ft. in September. One thing to keep in mind is that Davenport Well #1 had dropped to 133 ft. and 134 ft. in recent years and so the drop this year to 135 ft. is not significant.

Miscellaneous

Brean will be giving a presentation for CBSWC (Columbia Basin Sustainable Water Coalition) on the Drought Management Plan in the near future at the Wenatchee Convention Center.

Elsa showed photos of the new concrete lagoon at the Ziegler Dairy Farm on the large TV.

Jeff and Elsa will be attending a wildlife caucus meeting tomorrow at the Spokane Airport.

The Lake Roosevelt Forum is canceled due to the Federal Government shutdown.

The LWG (Local Working Group) was not funded for its application to obtain IRA (Inflation Reduction Act) funding from NRCS because Congress recalled all non-allocated IRA funding.

District staff are not allowed to work in the office due to the Federal Government shutdown.

Elayne has been working on virtual fencing project in Adams County. Elayne has also been working on 10 ft. wide pollinator planting belt around the outside of a potato circle in Adams County to increase pollinator habitat and insect predator habitat to help reduce insect pests. Elayne would like to see if pollinator habitat belts might also be planted around alfalfa circles, but capital funding from the Conservation Commission can't be used on pollinator plantings because they are terminated every year. However, this practice may fall under a cover crop BMP.

Request for Public Comment

Jeff asked if there was any more public comment for the meeting. There was no public comment.

Chairman Jeff Schibel adjourned the meeting at 10:59 AM

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting is on Wednesday, November 12.

Respectfully submitted,

Josh Sherwood, Secretary

Dean White, Minute Taker

SUMMARY:

All 39 motions were reviewed:

- 1. M/S/P to approve the July 9, 2025 minutes as presented.
- 2. M/S/P to pay and approve vouchers #12826 to #12887, along with 43 EFT's, totaling \$760,406.50.
- 3. M/S/P to submit voucher #1 for the 26-39-FH grant in the amount of \$1,259.30 to the Conservation Commission.
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