

**LINCOLN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING  
USDA Service Center Conference Room – Davenport, WA  
Wednesday, October 12, 2022**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:**

Meeting called to order at 8:30 AM by Chairman, Jeff Schibel. Those attending the meeting in person or by telephone were as follows: Jim Baye, Chris Laney and Braidy Haden - LCCD Supervisors; Mike Baden, Conservation Commission; Mark Stedman, Lincoln County Commissioners; Cari Roepke and Lauren Samaniego, NRCS; Elsa Bowen, Delaini Disher and Dean White - LCCD staff.

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

- *1. Jim moved to approve the July 13, 2022 minutes as presented. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*

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

- *2. Jim moved to pay and approve vouchers #11822 to #11884, along with 37 EFT's, totaling \$306,372.37. Chris seconded. Discussion was held. Motion passed.*
- *3. Jim moved to submit voucher #13 for the VSP 4 grant in the amount of \$5,909.84 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*
- *4. Jim moved to submit voucher #14 for the VSP 4 grant in the amount of \$5,295.72 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*
- *5. Jim moved to submit voucher #15 for the VSP 4 grant in the amount of \$6,965.93 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*
- *6. Jim moved to submit voucher #1 for the 23-39-IM grant in the amount of \$20,687.53 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*
- *7. Jim moved to submit voucher #2 for the 23-39-IM grant in the amount of \$17,281.18 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*
- *8. Jim moved to submit voucher #3 for the 23-39-IM grant in the amount of \$16,144.04 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*
- *9. Jim moved to submit voucher #8 for the Hwy 25 grant in the amount of \$902.02 to DNR. Chris seconded. Motion passed.*

- **10. Jim moved to submit voucher #12 for the 22-39-FR grant in the amount of \$189,654.42 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **11. Jim moved to submit voucher #1 for the 23-39-FR grant in the amount of \$430.63 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **12. Jim moved to submit voucher #2 for the 23-39-FR grant in the amount of \$86.13 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **13. Jim moved to submit voucher #3 for the 23-39-FR grant in the amount of \$86.13 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **14. Jim moved to submit voucher #13 for the 21-27-NR grant in the amount of \$258.38 to Adams CD. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **15. Jim moved to submit voucher #12 for the 22-39-NR grant in the amount of \$344.50 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **16. Jim moved to submit voucher #13 for the 22-39-NR grant in the amount of \$344.50 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **17. Jim moved to submit voucher #1 for the 22-39-TP2 grant in the amount of \$37,000 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **18. Jim moved to submit voucher #1 for the 22-39-TP3 grant in the amount of \$17,760.00 to the Conservation Commission. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **19. Jim moved that the Lincoln County Conservation District Visa statement for June 24, 2022 through July 25, 2022 be approved. The total amount owed was \$832.34. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **20. Jim moved that the Lincoln County Conservation District Visa statement for July 26, 2022 through August 24, 2022 be approved. The total amount owed was \$719.45. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **21. Jim moved that the Lincoln County Conservation District Visa statement for August 25, 2022 through September 26, 2022 be approved. The total amount owed was \$786.83. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**
- **22. Jim moved to approve the Lincoln County Conservation District Co-Energy / Pacific Pride gas card statement with a closing date of July 31, 2022. The total amount owed was \$53.60. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**

Delaini passed around bank statements for the board members to initial.

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

- **23. Jim moved to approve the Treasurer's report and Grant's report as presented. Chris seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.**

## **C. AGENDA**

### **Cost Share Approval**

Hardcopies of the Cost Share Action spreadsheet were distributed. There were 2 applications for Fire Recovery and for Wildlife Proviso funding, 1 request for NRI grant payment and 4 requests for Direct Seed 3 grant payment.

- 24. Jim moved to approve the Cost Share Action spreadsheet as presented. Chris seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.**

### **Fire Recovery Addendum**

Elsa reported that the District had received \$50,000 in grant funding from the Conservation Commission for the Fire Recovery Addendum over the summer and that Board approval was needed for the Addendum funds received. Jeff asked if there was any public comment. Mike noted that the Conservation Commission was now out of Fire Recovery funding but that conservation districts should continue to send ready to implement fire recovery projects so that the Conservation Commission can fund these projects in the order that they were received as soon as more funding becomes available. Mike also noted that the State Legislature had recently approved a new Disaster Assistance program for the FY 2022 - 2023 to fund relief programs for disasters with various causes (i.e. more than just wildfires) but that the funding policy had not yet been fully established.

- 25. Chris moved to approve the Fire Recovery Addendum for \$50,000 in funding from the Conservation Commission. Jim seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.**

### **Columbia Basin Development League Investment Request**

Elsa announced that the District had received the annual investment request from CBDL. Lincoln County CD has invested \$175 in CBDL in recent years. Elsa reminded the Board that CBDL is working as a partner with the District on the WaterSMART grant to establish the Columbia Basin Sustainable Water Coalition. Jeff asked if there was any public comment. Mark requested that Lincoln County CD continue its support for the Columbia Basin Development League.

- 26. Jim moved to approve an investment of \$175 in the Columbia Basin Development League for 2023. Chris seconded. Motion passed.**

### **National Association of Conservation Districts Investment Request**

Elsa announced that the District had received the annual investment request from NACD. Lincoln County CD has invested \$775 in NACD in recent years to renew its annual membership.

**27. Chris moved to approve an investment of \$775 for membership in NACD for 2023. Jim seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.**

### **County Commissioner Report**

Commissioner Mark Stedman reported that County Auditor staff were working on preparing the absentee ballots to be mailed out soon for the November elections. The county continues to plan and design for the installation of county owned fiber optic networks in all towns across the county. County Commissioners are reviewing the available options for selecting a different health insurance provider for county staff and are currently leaning toward selecting the Public Employment Benefits (PEB) plan. The county rock crusher has been modified to increase production which is needed for various ongoing county projects. Ecology is currently working on a study to identify the causes of flooding in the city of Sprague during spring runoff. Most local residents point to excessive plant growth in the upper reaches of the Cow Creek channel just downstream of Sprague Lake that is restricting high outflow from the lake as the primary cause of spring flooding in Sprague. Mark noted that a primary reason for the Ecology study is that most Sprague Lake stakeholders and Ecology were not able to agree on the major cause of Sprague Lake flooding between themselves.

### **NRCS Report**

Cari reported that the West Palouse Team has obligated 24 new CSP contracts or about 25% of the CSP applications, which is higher than usual. The WPT is working to meet the end of October deadline for conducting 100 CRP field stand evaluations for contracts expiring in 2023. NRCS has moved up the deadline dates for EQIP and CSP applications in order to allow more time to rank, approve and obligate more contracts. There are 17 CSP contracts in Lincoln County and 3 CSP contracts in Adams County up for renewal. Contract holders have an opportunity to renew their CSP contract for 5 years. The CSP payments process will start next week. NRCS will have 3 times the typical funding available next year, but the majority of this funding is not for EQIP or CSP but instead for working on projects with multiple partners such as RCPP (Resource Conservation Partnership Program).

Cari recently attended a quarterly leadership team meeting in Olympia. NRCS-WA has scheduled a two day all employee meeting for the first time in several years for early November in Ellensburg. Casey Wren recently started work as a Soil Conservation Technician in the Davenport office. The Administrative Assistant position for the West Palouse Team is still open and may be filled in either the Ritzville or Davenport office. Lauren Samaniego transferred from the Ritzville office to Davenport last year as a Soil Conservationist and was introduced to the Board members for the first time.

### **Elections 2023**

Elsa announced that the elected position currently held by Jim is up for reelection in spring 2023. March has been designated as elections month for conservation districts across the state. Elsa proposed that Lincoln County CD hold elections the week of March 20 – 24, 2022 which would allow another week to address any issues with the elections process if needed. There could be potential conflicts with the annual tree sale

packing and order distribution activities during the last week of March (March 27 – 31) if any adjustments are needed.

Elsa noted that only 18 ballots were received for board supervisor elections in 2022. According to county records, there are about 8,000 registered voters in Lincoln County. One possible alternative for elections process would be to print, fold and post absentee ballots to all 8,000 registered voters in the county, but the cost of just the postage for all of these ballots would be about \$9,000 alone. However, the cost of adding board supervisor elections to the county November ballot has already been estimated at \$30,000. Mike noted that if Lincoln County CD tried sending out its own absentee ballot to all of the registered voters in the county, it would be the first CD in the state to try this process for elections. Mike also noted that at the September meeting, the Conservation Commission approved its support for resurrecting the elections reform bill agreed upon by both WACD and the Conservation Commission last year that was unexpectedly sidelined in the 2022 Legislative session by a large west side CD.

#### **Ag Burn Permit Delegation Letter**

Elsa reported that the District had received a request from Ecology to renew its delegation authority to issue ag burn permits for Lincoln County. A hard copy of the draft letter to Ecology requesting the renewal of delegation authority for ag burn permits in Lincoln County was included in the board member packets.

**28. Chris moved to approve the draft Ag Burn Permit Letter to Ecology as presented with the request to renew the delegation authority for Lincoln County CD to issue ag burn permits in Lincoln County. Jim seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.**

#### **NE Lincoln County Groundwater Conditions Monitoring Grant Update**

In mid-summer a Request for Proposals (RFP) was advertised for a technical contractor to assist with the NE Lincoln County Groundwater Conditions Monitoring grant by writing the QAPP and helping to select wells to conduct well level monitoring along with interpreting the results and writing the final report for a total amount of \$50,000. GeoEngineers and Landau Associates were preliminarily selected as the preferred contractor for the grant.

**29. Chris moved to approve the selection of GeoEngineers and Landau Associates to serve as the technical contractor for the NE Lincoln County well level monitoring grant for \$50,000. Braidy seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.**

#### **Letter of Support for Conservation Commission Wildlife Fencing Initiative**

Elsa noted that she had written a letter of support in August on behalf of the District and the Board members for the Conservation Commission's administering of funds for the Washington Shrub-Steppe Restoration and Resiliency Initiative – Wildlife Friendly Fencing program.

#### **Technical Assistance MOU with Adams CD Update**

Elsa announced that Adams CD had acquired two new implementation grant projects and had requested technical assistance from Lincoln County CD through the Technical Assistance MOU between the Districts to install the projects. One project is for a livestock watering facility and the other project is for the installation of a windbreak

project for a total of \$4,900 in technical assistance funding available to Lincoln County CD.

**30. Jim moved to approve the update to the Technical Assistance MOU with Adams County CD to include the two new proposed projects as presented for a total of \$4,900 of technical assistance grant funding available to Lincoln County CD. Chris seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.**

#### **RCPP Interlocal Agreement with Palouse CD Update**

Elsa announced that the Interlocal Agreement with Palouse CD for RCPP (Resource Conservation Partnership Program) grant implementation in the WRIA 43 watershed (Palouse Basin) in the southeast corner of Lincoln County needed to be renewed. Elsa noted that District staff have tried to get producers in the southeast corner of the county to apply for RCPP funding, but so far no Lincoln County producers have signed up for this RCPP funding opportunity.

**31. Jim moved to approve the renewal of the RCPP Interlocal Agreement with Palouse CD. Braidy seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.**

#### **NE Area Engineering Cluster Grant Request**

Elsa reported that District staff had applied to the NE Area Engineering Cluster for a \$3,000 grant to pay for engineering design costs to implement a runoff water diversion grant on the Westly property along Hwy 23 north of Sprague. Horrocks Engineering has been contacted to design a portable water pump system to pump excess water from the culvert and to help keep the adjacent Westly hay field from flooding.

**32. Jim moved to approve the application for funding from the NE Engineering Cluster grant for \$3,000 to work with Horrocks Engineering on the Westly runoff and flooding reduction project along Hwy 23. Chris seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.**

#### **Community Wildfire Protection Program Grant Request**

Elsa reported that the county Community Wildfire Protection Plan needed to be updated. A request for \$86,659 in grant funding to update the CWPP plan has been made to DNR, which has an estimated \$5.2 million in grant funding to pay for CWPP updates across the state. Elsa contacted former District employee Kristen Balko and enlisted her help for \$280 to write the grant application to DNR for CWPP update funding for Lincoln County.

#### **DOE Hawk Creek Watershed Monitoring**

Elsa hosted a Hawk Creek Watershed Monitoring conference in the office conference room with Amanda Richardson, Ecology, and with Matt Schneider, one of 9 landowners whose livestock or horse operations along Hawk Creek and its tributaries in the Hawk Creek watershed north of Davenport caught the attention of Ecology staff who did their first roadside survey of the watershed this past March. Ecology staff plan to drive by the same nine livestock operations in fall 2022 and then again in March 2023, and if there are continued signs of adverse impact of livestock operations on water quality, Ecology staff will start the process of contacting the livestock producers / landowners and notify them that there are potential water quality impacts and encourage them to contact the District and consider implementing BMPs to address these impacts.

Elsa also attended a recent Lincoln County Cattlemen's meeting to describe the Hawk Creek Watershed Monitoring being done by Ecology and offer the assistance of the District to help implement voluntary BMP's as requested by concerned livestock producers / landowners. Maps of Hawk Creek Watershed 1702000118 in north central Lincoln County were distributed to meeting participants. The Hawk Creek watershed is a sub-watershed that is part of the larger WRIA 53 Lower Lake Roosevelt watershed north of Davenport and adjacent to much of the southern border of Lake Roosevelt.

### **Seven Bays Fire**

The Seven Bays Fire started on Labor Day, September 5 and burned about 1,232 acres in the Bean Canyon area along Miles-Creston Rd and just southeast of the Seven Bays community area. One livestock producer, Dirk Jacobsen, has applied to the District for fire recovery funding to replace 5 miles out of an estimated total of 8 miles of burned fence line and for grazing deferment of about 1,040 acres of burned range and forested grazing land inside the burned fence line. DNR made the decision to let the fire burn to the top of ridgelines where it was safer and easier to contain the fire, but most of the fencing within the fire area was also below the ridgelines and was burned in the fire.

### **NE Area Meeting October 20**

Lincoln County CD will be hosting the 2022 NE Area Meeting on Thursday, October 20 at Davenport Memorial Hall starting at 8:30 AM for registration and continuing into the early afternoon. Hazel's Dozen from Davenport has been scheduled to provide catering for the meeting. Lasagna and white lasagna will be the main course for the noon meal. Delaini is developing a PowerPoint presentation to highlight District activities and accomplishments for the year. All Board members are highly encouraged to attend if possible.

### **Annual WACD Meeting November 28 - 30**

The Annual WACD Meeting will be held in person this year in Wenatchee on November 28 – 30. Meeting participants will also have the option to participate virtually through Zoom. Elsa requested that Board members contact her and let her know if they plan on attending in person so that hotel accommodations can be made.

### **Agriculture Roundtable Meeting with Cathy McMorris-Rodgers**

Elsa and Delaini helped District 5 Congressional Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers and assistant Andrew Engell hold a recent Agricultural Roundtable meeting at the downstairs Lincoln County Public Works. Some of the concerns raised at the meeting included the importation of grocery store meat from Brazil, the lack of livestock processing plants and the labor shortage to process local livestock raised in Washington, the shortage of penicillin needed by veterinarians, adjustments needed for CSP applications in low precip areas of Eastern Washington, and the need to raise maximum CRP rates from \$49 to \$64 per acre in the local area. Elsa and Delaini also had the opportunity to meet with Don Llewellyn, the new WSU Extension Livestock Agent based in Davenport and who grew up in the Wilbur area.

### **Task Order for Whitman County CRP**

District staff recently completed the development of 96 CRP plans for Whitman County CRP contracts for \$17,760 in funding from a CRP task order in a little over a week during late summer.

**33. Jim moved to approve the \$17,760 in task order funding received for completing the development of 96 CRP plans for Whitman County CRP contracts this summer. Chris seconded. There was no public comment. Motion passed.**

### **Letter of Resignation / VSP Update**

A letter of resignation was received from District staff employee Connor Nikkola on September 19, with his last day of working for the District on September 30. Connor has accepted a position with DNR to manage a Wildlife Area in the Spokane area. The Board members decided by general consensus that there was no need to pass a motion to accept the letter of resignation from Connor, as the Board had been notified earlier in September and Connor is already working in his new position with DNR.

Delaini has now taken over the Lincoln County VSP duties formerly covered by Connor. Delaini had a chance to visit with Connor in the office and in the field on what he had done for the VSP activities.

### **WACD Update**

Jeff reported that the need to select a new NE Area Representative on the WACD Executive Board to replace the second Representative position held by John Birnbaum will be addressed at the upcoming NE Area Meeting. John is away from the area much of the time at work and is not able to participate in WACD Board meetings as needed to help represent the NE Area. The WACD Board met on September 19. The PMC reported that tree and shrub sales are ahead of last year. The State Envirothon committee has been very short of funding, and so WACD has elected to make a \$5,000 donation to support Envirothon contests and activities in the state. The WACD Executive Board has been discussing the possibility of changing the area representatives from 2 board supervisors to 1 board supervisor and 1 CD staff member. Jeff wanted everybody to know that WACD is celebrating its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.

### **Conservation Commission Report**

Mike reported that the Conservation Commission has significantly higher funding available to fund engineering design requests this year, up to \$200,000 per area. The Commission is working to develop policy guidelines for engineering assistance grants. The Conservation Commission has recently hired some new staff positions to fill vacancies in the Communications, Sustainable Farms and Fields, and Farmland Preservation programs.

### **Crop Year Precip and Well Transducer Data Collection**

Dean distributed copies of the 11 X 17" maps and spreadsheets for the 2021 – 2022 crop year. Three versions of the maps were made. The first version was the standard version with the crop year precip received by each precip station along with the highest monthly precip listed below. The highest precip month overall this year for the Lincoln County precip cooperator stations occurred in June this time. The second version of the map listed the crop year precip above the change in precip between the 2021 -2022 crop year and the awful hot and dry 2020 – 2021 crop year. All precip stations had



higher crop year precip for 2021 – 2022, but the increase in precip varied widely from +1 to over +6 inches of precip. The third version of the map listed the crop year precip above the cumulative average precip for each precip station. The accompanying spreadsheet listed the years of crop year precip that has been collected for each station so far. The crop year precip collected also varied widely from as long as 79 years to as short as 1 year.

Dean also distributed copies of transducer well level depth charts for the ERO706 (Dreger Observation Well) and for Davenport Well #1 wells. The charts showed a slowly declining roller coaster ride pattern for both wells, which is representative of the vast majority of large irrigation wells and municipal wells measured in the recently completed well level grant across Lincoln County. The highest levels measured in spring at the both of the wells has been slowly declining each year over the past several years. However, with several years of above average precip like that seen in 2016 and 2017, the well levels are expected to increase to somewhat higher levels again. Davenport Well #1 also shows regular small drops in well level about every 12 hours on average in this retired, open casing well, indicating that another municipal well, most likely the nearby actively pumped Davenport Well #6, is in hydrologic connection with Well #1.

#### **FSA Report**

There was no report from FSA.

#### **Request for Public Comment**


Jeff asked for any more public comment before the start of the executive session. There was no public comment.

#### **Executive Session**

The Board went into executive session under option 1(g) of RCW 42.30.110 at 10:45 AM for an estimated 30 minutes to discuss personnel matters. The Board came back out of executive session at 11:15 AM. No actions were taken as a result of the Executive Session.

Chairman Jeff Schibel adjourned the meeting at 11:20 AM. The next board meeting is scheduled as an in-person meeting on Wednesday, November 9, 2022 starting at 8:30 AM at conference room in the USDA Service Center in Davenport. A telephone call in number will be available for those people wishing to participate by phone.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Josh Sherwood, Secretary

  
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Dean White, Minute Taker

SUMMARY:

All 33 motions were reviewed:

- 1. M/S/P to approve the July 13, 2022 minutes as presented.
- 2. M/S/P to pay and approve vouchers #11822 to #11884, along with 37 EFT's, totaling \$306,372.37.
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- 31. M/S/P to approve the renewal of the RCPP Interlocal Agreement with Palouse CD.

- 32. M/S/P to approve the application for funding from the NE Engineering Cluster grant for \$3,000 to work with Horrocks Engineering on the Westly runoff and flooding reduction project along Hwy 23.
- 33. M/S/P to approve the \$17,760 in task order funding received for completing the development of 96 CRP plans for Whitman County CRP contracts this summer.