



PO Box 129, Mountainair, NM 87036 Ph: 505-847-2243 Fax: 505-847-0615

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
December 13, 2019**

**Supervisors Present:** Felipe Lovato, Jr., Chairman  
David Cain  
LeRoy Candelaria  
Larry Gomez  
Dan Williams

**Absentees:**  
William Caster  
Richard Shovelin

**Others Present:** Jonathan Aday, Estancia FFA  
Robin Dunn  
Jack Lockridge, Claunch-Pinto  
Andrew Lujan, Estancia FFA  
Kenneth Lujan, NRCS  
April Luna, NRCS  
Heze Ortiz, Estancia FFA  
Javier Sanchez, Torrance County, District 3  
Ernest Taylor, U.S. Forest Service  
Katheryn Taylor, volunteer

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The Claunch-Pinto Soil and Water Conservation District (CPSWCD) regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors was called to order by Felipe Lovato, Jr., Chairman, at the Natural Resource Conservation Center Conference Room located at 1206 South HWY 55 in Mountainair, NM at 8:05 a.m.

**Welcome Attendees:**

The chairman welcomed those present and thanked them for taking the time to attend. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

**APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

The board reviewed the agenda. **ACTION TAKEN:** Larry Gomez moved to approve the agenda. David Cain seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**ACTION TAKEN:** Larry Gomez moved to approve the minutes of November 1, 2019 as read. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:**

The board reviewed the treasurer's report for the month of November, 2019 with accounts payable for December, 2019.

The district manager said that she has received a mil levy payment from Socorro County but not from Torrance, Valencia or Lincoln Counties.

**ACTION TAKEN:** LeRoy Candelaria moved to approve the treasurer's report for November, 2019 and pay the accounts payable for December, 2019. Dan Williams seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

**REPORTS:**

**New Mexico Department of Agriculture:**

Jim Wanstall's written report is included in the board packets. The district manager pointed out the item requiring the district to review the mileage and per diem policy. The per diem policy remains unchanged, but the mileage rate goes from 54 cents to 58 cents per mile upon approval by the board. She said that the review and approval of the policy is on the agenda under New Business.

**Field Office Report:**

The NRCS written report dated December 6, 2019 is included in the board packets. Kenneth Lujan said that April Luna was selected for a position in Los Lunas, and he praised her work in the Mountainair office, saying that both she and Steven Ferguson have done excellent work. He said that her position will be advertised in the next two weeks.

Mr. Lujan reported that hemp growers will have to have a license number. He explained how to get the number. With the license number, the growers can participate in NRCS programs.

Next, he covered changes to CSP, published in the Federal Register, which affect participants' eligibility to apply for the program. He wants to discuss options with producers, and he will work towards helping individuals to do what is best for each situation. He encourages everyone to sign the modification that has been issued.

April Luna expressed her thanks to the board members, and said that she has enjoyed working with them.

Jonathan Aday, Heze Ortiz, and Andrew Lujan, members of the Estancia FAA, introduced themselves and expressed their thanks to the board members for their support in raising money to travel to Scotland and Ireland to participate in international livestock judging contests. They qualified to judge in the competitions because the team, which also includes Daniel Lujan, placed second in the United States in judging. They passed around their album of pictures and answered questions about their experiences. Board members expressed pride in the accomplishments of the team. Mr. Lujan said that the funds not needed for the trip may be set up as scholarships for the team members.

**District Manager's Report:**

The district manager referred board members to her written report included in the board packets. She said that she attended the State Land Advisory Committee meeting the previous day at the Bureau of Mines in Socorro. She has an annual report available for review. She reported on activities of the State Land office concerning the petroleum industry and renewable energy, among other things.. The office is working with the tribes on various matters. She reported that the committee didn't have a quorum, but they heard reports.

Because of the meeting of the advisory committee, the district manager couldn't attend the Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee meeting. She said that the committee was waiting for news about who will be the new district manager in the East Torrance district because of the contract the committee has with East Torrance for secretarial work. The minutes, treasurer's report and agenda for the meeting are in the board members' packets. She explained a problem that the committee had in balancing its accounts with the county.

The district manager also attended an Estancia Basin Resource Association meeting the previous Wednesday night. In January, Chairman Varela will bring the Santa Fe County land use plan to the members because of a mention of the Estancia Basin. She will share the plan with the district board members. The annual meeting of the association will be held on January 29. She reported on the efforts of someone in Fort Sumner to pipe water to Rio Rancho and possible effects on the Estancia Basin.

**CORRESPONDANCE:**

Claunch-Pinto SWCD

December 13, 2019

Regular Meeting

The district manager reported on three letters that she received from the county regarding wind projects. She also received a water discharge report, but the district is not affected.

#### **UPDATE ON GRANTS:**

The district manager's report on grants listed below includes meetings attended, progress on projects, status of proposals to funding agencies, and RFPs issued by funding agencies.

#### **Watershed Health Grant – Water Trust Board (WTB):**

The district manager said that the two proposals, one for the Estancia Basin project and the other for the Greater Rio Grande project, each proposal for \$600,000 are on the legislative list for approval. If she can meet requirements by their deadlines, she expects the projects to be funded. She reported on projects being completed for Estancia Basin and for the Greater Rio Grande.

#### **The State Forestry Grant:**

The district crew is nearly finished on the Deer Canyon Trail defensible space project. She will discuss with the homeowners' association president the fact that some landowners insist on keeping certain trees, which might affect their safety in case of the need to evacuate. She mentioned additional work that needs to be done. Jack Lockridge commented that both he and Tom Carroll had spoken to some residents to explain the project and the need for thinning to protect residents. They also addressed their concerns.

The Ramah Navajo crew is camping on district property and is working on the state land project. They have cut 45 acres on this project that borders Deer Canyon Preserve.

The Alamo Navajo crew is staying in campers on the project property where they are working, but it has been so muddy that work has been impeded.

The district manager said that the district has been able to provide work for five contractors whose livelihoods have been affected by the injunction against the Forest Service regarding the Spotted Owl. She spoke of the possible future damaging effects on certain industries in New Mexico because of this injunction.

#### **Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance (GRGWA) aka Upper Rio Grande Salt Cedar Project:**

The district manager said that she is contracting with Boss Reclamation, Restoration Solutions and Taylor Services. The projects will take place at Ojo Caliente, the Truchas area, the Sandia and Acoma Pueblos and the Seboyeta land grant. A 60-acre project will also take place on the Stein ranch.

#### **BNSF Railroad Project:**

A thousand grass plugs will be planted, and the district manager wants to get some compost from the Bio Reactor to find out how well it works. However, so far no composting material has become available. This effort may become a demonstration project for the district and for the railroad.

#### **Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP)**

The district manager will make two presentations during the following week concerning what worked and what didn't in CFRP projects.

#### **Corona CFRP:**

The district manager said that the work on this project is finished. She thanked the SWCA for its work on the unexpected number of cultural sites and expenses incurred. Three copies must be submitted, so the costs on this project have exceeded planned expenses. The district manager said that she tried her best to affect the number of hard copies but to no avail, so SWCA absorbed the costs of printing hard copies.

A proposal cannot be submitted until the following year, which could have adverse consequences in case of fire.

#### **Chupadera CFRP:**

The district manager will ask for a fourth-year extension on this project. All of the work needs to be finished in the third year, but she will ask for the balance of the funding in the fourth year.

**Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP):**

The district manager apologized for not being able to submit a proposal for 2019. She explained the glitch in the technology that occurred. She and Mr. Lujan reported on projects.

**2018 RCPP Funding:**

The district manager will meet with NRCS staff members to discuss funding that affects a large area. Contracts are being written now.

**Additional RCPP Funding:**

An additional 2.3 million dollars will be received. A short proposal will be submitted to ask for the funding.

**New Mexico State Park Project:**

No report.

**FEMA Grant Proposal:**

The paperwork is available to start phase 2, and the district manager reported on the plans for work to be done.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Capital Outlay, Shop Building - Report:**

The district manager reported that she put out a second request for proposals.

She has recently spoken to Senator Stefaniks and Representative McQueen about a new request for capital outlay funds. She will draft a proposal and ask board members for their suggestions so that she can provide the details required for the proposal.

**Cibola National Forest – Forest Plan Revision:**

The district manager sent the comments of the Mountainair Collaborative to the board with the primary comment being on Mr. Cordova's private land on the top of the mountain near Tajique. A letter is supposed to be sent from the Forest Service to Mr. Cordova saying that it recognizes that the area in question is private land in spite of their map, which indicates that it is public land. The comments have been turned in. No discussion took place in Collaborative meetings on wilderness. The largest wilderness area is in the Magdalena area. A meeting will take place in January so that the forest supervisor can provide guidance on what the plan is for future review of the plan.

**Beautification – Partnership with the town of Mountainair – Elm Trees in Town Right of Ways:**

The district's work remains at a standstill, waiting for the electrical co-op to do its part.

**Lincoln, Torrance and Socorro Transmission Line SunZia Transmission Line:**

The district manager says that she has heard that SunZia may build its line along side of the Western Spirit line.

**Torrance and Lincoln County Wind Energy:**

**Corona Wind Companies, Western Spirit Transmission Line:**

The district manager reported on progress on the work on best practices. An issue has come up with the Western Spirit Transmission Line because the company wants to hold to its 180-foot easement. The district manager insists that 1000 feet of defensible space is needed in case of fire caused by a break in the line, especially in areas where the piñon-juniper forests are thick.

**2019 Supervisor Elections:**

The district manager said that Felipe Lovato, LeRoy Candelaria and Robin Dunn were elected.

**NMDA – Healthy Soils Program Proposal – Rodney Garcia and Janis Pauliks:**

The district manager would like the board's approval to do the work on the organic farm identified in the proposal. **ACTION TAKEN:** LeRoy Candelaria moved to go forward with the proposal. Larry Gomez seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Personnel Policy – Absenteeism and Tardiness:**

The district manager asked for some help in drafting a personnel policy on absenteeism and tardiness. She explained that there was a problem with a current employee, and she needs a district policy to support how she deals with it. Jack Lockridge offered his help in drafting the policy.

**District Manager – Re-appointment to the Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee:**

**ACTION TAKEN:** LeRoy Candelaria moved to re-appoint the district manager to the Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee. Dan Williams seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Review and Approve Mileage Rates:**

**ACTION TAKEN:** LeRoy Candelaria moved to approve the new government mileage rate of 58 cents a mile. Larry Gomez seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**REPORTS:**

**Torrance County Update – Javier Sanchez, Torrance County Commissioner:**

Javier Sanchez, who represents District 3 on the Torrance County Commission, distributed a brochure describing issues that he thinks need to be addressed. He has prioritized a reorganization of county governance and an expansion of the county commission to five members, the identification of economic development goals and needed projects, reform of the solid waste authority, and expansion of emergency services. He has supported measures to increase accountability in local government. He elaborated on his priorities and spoke about other issues that the county is addressing.

Mr. Lovato said that he received notice that 300 blades from wind farms ended up in the Vaughn solid waste facility. He thinks that when a wind farm is planned, recycling discarded blades and other mill parts must be a priority in the plan.

**South Central Mountain RC&D:**

A meeting was held, which Felipe Lovato was unable to attend.

**ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR INPUT:**

Mr. Lockridge said that he hopes to serve the board as an associate supervisor and mentioned other groups that he is involved with. He will attend the January meeting.

**OTHER:**

**MEETINGS ATTENDED:**

**PLAN for NEXT MEETING:** Board reorganization will be on the agenda for the next meeting. A new Secretary/Treasurer is needed.

**NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:**

The next regular meeting will be held Friday, January 10, 2020 at 8:00 a.m. at the Natural Resource Conservation Center, 1206 South Highway 55 in Mountainair, NM.

**ADJOURN:**

There being no further business to come before the board, the regular meeting of the Claunch-Pinto Board:

**ACTION TAKEN:**

LeRoy Candelaria moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 am. David Cain seconded the motion, which carried.

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FELIPE LOVATO, JR., CHAIRMAN

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RICHARD J. SHOVELIN, SEC. – TREAS.