



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
January 8, 2021**

Supervisors Present: Felipe Lovato, Jr., Chairman
David Cain
LeRoy Candelaria
Robin Dunn
Larry Gomez
Jack Lockridge
Dan Williams

Absentees:

Others Present: Diedre Tarr, District Manager
Kenneth Lujan, NRCS
Dale Rose
Ernie Taylor, U.S. Forestry Service
Katheryn Taylor, CPSWCD, 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, both in person and via Zoom at 8:15 a.m.

Welcome Attendees:

The chairman welcomed those present and thanked them for joining the meeting. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The board reviewed the agenda. **ACTION TAKEN:** Jack Lockridge moved to approve the agenda. Dan Williams seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dan Williams, aye; David Cain, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye, LeRoy Candelaria, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF MINUTES:

ACTION TAKEN: LeRoy Candelaria moved to approve the minutes of December, 2020 with one correction. David Cain seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote with one abstention: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dan Williams, aye; David Cain, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye, LeRoy Candelaria, aye; Larry Gomez, aye.

On page 4, correct the misspelling "Rahma" under UNFINISHED BUSINESS to "Ramah."

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Claunch-Pinto SWCD
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The board reviewed the treasurer's report for the month of December, 2020 with accounts payable for January, 2021. **ACTION TAKEN:** Jack Lockridge moved to approve the treasurer's report for December, 2020 and pay the accounts payable for January, 2021. Dan Williams seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dan Williams, aye; David Cain, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye, LeRoy Candelaria, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye.

OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

This Chairman, Treasurer, and district manager met with the district auditor for the exit interview on December 12, 2020, and the audit was submitted to the state auditor for approval. She was notified by the auditor that Integrity Accounting won't be doing audits anymore, so she will have to advertise an RFP for a new auditor.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Department of Agriculture:

The department of agriculture's report is included in the board packets.

NRCS Mountainair Field Office Report:

The report is included in board member's packets. Mr. Lujan said that the deadline for EQIP is Friday January 8. He encouraged interested producers to call their local NRCS office to speak to staff about applying. The CSP deadline is Friday, January 15. Mr. Lujan said that funding for both EQIP and CSP is less than in 2020. He said that the Mountainair office is running smoothly and described the activities of the staff. He also said that productivity is about the same as usual in spite of the challenges.

District Manager's Report:

The district manager reported that she had a doorbell installed at the front door so that visitors can let staff know they are at the door.

CORRESPONDANCE:

None.

UPDATE ON GRANTS – the District Manager's Written Report to the Board: January 8, 2021

Report to CPSWCD Board – Update on Grants, January 8, 2021

Watershed Health Grant – Water Trust Board (WTB):

2019 GRGWA Projects: We have completed all the current projects. We have a contract with NM Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute for monitoring with a balance of \$27,122.71. We have approximately \$27,000.00 to be used for re-sprout treatments on completed projects. The re-sprout treatments are working well if we can keep treating the re-sprouts for three - five years. We have not been able to get the remaining re-sprout treatments completed because of various equipment problems and the weather. Hopefully, we will be able to work on some of these treatments in the spring.

2019 WTB Funds – EBWHRM Projects: East Torrance SWCD has completed three projects. Edgewood SWCD has contracted the majority of its portion of the funding. Edgewood SWCD will be contracting the remaining portion of its funding soon. Claunch-Pinto SWCD has the Cain State Land Project, Deer Canyon Gate project and a couple of small projects it has contracted. We have contracted with SWCA Environmental Consultants to continue the monitoring project.

2020 WTB Proposal – We have been funded for both the Estancia Basin Watershed Health Restoration and Monitoring Project and the Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance project. Both proposals were for \$600,000/ea. All of the readiness items have been submitted and approved. The Water Trust Board legal team closed both of these grants on December 18, 2020.

NM State Forestry Grants:

2018 NFL Funding – The Ramah Navajo Natural Resource Thinning Crew has worked on the Cain State Land project a couple of times during the month of December. They come in for two eight -- day periods. They appreciate the restrooms with showers that we have been able to provide for them. All of the saw work has been completed. They just need to chip approximately 150 acres of slash.

2019 NFL Funding – I have reviewed the draft work plan for this funding in the amount of \$276,500.00.

2020 NFL Funding – We have been notified we have received funding in the amount of \$276,500.00. Our proposal ranked number one in the proposal rankings.

Forest and Watershed Restoration Act (FAWRA) Funding

The district has been funded for the Box Canyon Project in the amount of \$375,000.00. The CPSWCD hand crew started work on the hand thinning portion of this project on December 28th. We have asked for a partial inspection for Thursday, January 7th. New Mexico Forest Industry Association has contracted with Forest Fitness to complete the mastication portion of the project and Restoration Solutions, LLC to complete the cut, skid and deck portion of the project. A pre-work meeting was held on Thursday, January 7th. The CPSWCD field technician attended the meeting to represent Claunch-Pinto SWCD. Both of these contractors should be starting their work within a couple of days of the meeting.

BNSF Railroad Project

The district has been working with Rick Worley, BNSF to finalized all of the remaining work on this project. We have been waiting for three months to hear back from EPA on the Notice of Termination of Coverage under a NPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharges associated with Industrial Activity. Mr. Worley had me send the documents to him and he asked the district to remove all of the erosion control structures that have been put in the project area. We have removed about half of the structures as of today. We hope to remove the remaining structures today, January 8th weather permitting. After we complete this work on the project the railroad will release the final payment of \$47,500 to the district.

Collaborative Forest Restoration Projects:

Chupadera CFRP – We have now moved into the fourth year on this project. All documents **have to be submitted and approved** for this project prior to August 31, **2021**. The cultural resource survey crew has been out twice in the last month to work on the surveys for this project. We are still having communication problems with the surveyors, but the district manager is working on them.

New 2019 CFRP Proposal – Ian Fox, Collaborative Forest Restoration and Forest Product Modernization Program Manager sent the following update: “I am working with the Washington Office (WO) to route the recommendations and report through the Washington Office to get signed off by the Chief and her Staff. Once that is complete, the WO will route to the Dept. of Ag. for the Secretary’s review and approval. We cannot award any new projects until the Secretary approval process is completed. At this time, I have no ETA on how long this process will take. In addition, the Federal government is operating under a continuing resolution. I will continue to keep you posted on the progress for this proposal.”

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP):

2018 RCPP Funding – All of the cultural resource survey reports for Mountainair have been sent to NRCS for review. NRCS only has a couple to review before they are sent to SHPO. The remaining reports are either on SHPO’s desk or have been approved. We have two outstanding reports for the Grants/Gallup Field Office. One of the reports has been submitted to the Forest Service for its review and concurrence. The second report is being drafted and should be submitted soon.

Additional RCPP Funding – All of the negotiations have been sent to the Washington DC office for approval. When New Mexico receives the approval on these negotiations, an

agreement will be prepared between the district and NRCS. The district participated in the ZOOM meeting with NMACD concerning the RCPP projects.

New Mexico State Park Project:

The thinning portion of the Manzano State Park project has been completed. State Forestry is working with a contractor to cut the wood into two and four-foot lengths and haul it to a staging area. The district will then haul the wood to the district wood yard to sell to Land Grant heirs.

FEMA Grant Proposal:

Grant No. FEMA-4197-DR-NM-11-01 – The contractor has started the work on this FEMA project. The Ramah crew has approximately 15 acres cut.

Hazard Mitigation Project - Sub-grant Application HMGP – 5281:

The district submitted a proposal for this funding on July 24, 2020 in the amount of \$451,043.00. This funding is planned to complete projects on the Aceves Ranch, Swenka Ranch, and Deer Canyon Preserve. The project on Deer Canyon Preserve will include a clearing for a helicopter pad and also a staging area in case of a large wildfire. We have received the first round of comments and questions from FEMA. The answers have been re-submitted to FEMA. We are working on the BCA (Benefit-Cost Analysis) for this project. FEMA has changed the criteria it is looking at for this analysis, so it is taking some time to complete this.

During the board meeting, the district manager added to her written report saying that the Box Canyon project near the Red Canyon camp ground was inspected and received a positive outcome. The inspection was especially important because she needs to submit a reimbursement to State Forestry on Monday so that the state legislature can be notified that the funding is being spent.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Capital Outlay:

Request for a new chipper:

The district manager said that the district's chippers, except the newly purchased machine, are wearing out. She discussed the issue with Mr. Lovato and Mr. Lockridge, and they decided to request capital outlay funds to buy a new chipper.

ACTION TAKEN: Mr. Lockridge moved to apply for capital outlay funds to buy a new chipper.

Dan Williams seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dan Williams, aye; David Cain, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye, LeRoy Candelaria, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye.

Torrance and Lincoln County Wind Energy, Corona Wind Companies, Western Spirit Transmission Line:

The district manager reported that according to an article in "The New Mexican," Pattern Energy is proclaiming that the company will be putting a lot of money into New Mexico over the next 10 years. She thanked Mr. Candelaria because the company that he works for did some striping on Highway 55 in front of the district office, and there are now several no passing zones that will make turning into the property safer. A discussion occurred on the equipment being brought in to put up the transmission line and on the poor condition of the highways.

The district manager said that she will contact Adam Clark to find out whether any progress is being made on the fire plan.

Paperwork through the Forest Service for an Incident Command Center:

Mr. Taylor said that he has given instructions for the district manager to be contacted.

NEW BUSINESS:

Election of Officers – Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer:

ACTION TAKEN: LeRoy Candelaria moved to keep the current officers in their positions by acclamation. Dan Williams seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye;

Dan Williams, aye; David Cain, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye, LeRoy Candelaria, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye.

Approval of New Mileage Rate – IRS rate \$.575/mile:

ACTION TAKEN: Mr. Lockridge move to accept the IRS mileage rate of \$.575/mile. Robin Dunn seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dan Williams, aye; David Cain, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye, LeRoy Candelaria, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye.

Partnership to Purchase a New Motor for the 1400 Chipper:

Mr. Lovato explained that Bill Ferranti has proposed to form a partnership with the district to put a brand-new engine in the 1400 chipper as well as a new radiator. He and Mr. Lockridge met with Mr. Ferranti to discuss his proposal. The district manager explained Mr. Ferranti's background and relationship to Claunch-Pinto. She said that Mr. Ferranti used to be the resource director of Alamo Navajo. He now has his own business, Ferranti Natural Resources. He is the person who represents the Navajo Nation regarding its contracts with Claunch-Pinto. The district manager described the chipping work that both Mr. Ferranti and the district have yet to do. She then explained some of the details of the proposal plus the advantages of the proposal to the district and to Mr. Ferranti. Board members raised questions regarding rental fees, the cost of the new engine, the mechanical integrity of the rest of the machine, the equitable sharing of the machine by Mr. Ferranti and the district, and the district's responsibility for making payments to Mr. Ferranti. Mr. Lockridge explained a downside in case the engine blew up before the loan was repaid. The district manager explained other work carried out by Mr. Ferranti's business besides chipping. She also pointed out that at this point, the 1400 is inoperable. Mr. Lockridge said the board will receive a draft written proposal spelling out details. The district manager pointed out that there is some urgency about making a decision as soon as possible.

ACTION TAKEN: Jack Lockridge moved that a special conference call meeting be held on Monday to draw up a contract that will be presented to the board at a special meeting on Monday night for approval. Dan Williams seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dan Williams, aye; David Cain, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye, LeRoy Candelaria, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye.

Appoint an Associate Supervisor:

The chairman appointed Dale Rose as the new Associate Supervisor and asked her if she would accept the appointment. She responded that she would be honored to serve and that the work of the board is very important.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts:

The legislative liaison has been asked to monitor legislation of interest to the NMCCD.

South Central Mountain RC&D:

No report.

Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee:

The district manager said that she serves on a committee to investigate the feasibility of digging a deep well for monitoring. The committee is working with South Central Mountain RC&D to find funding. Also, the district manager was nominated to serve as a board member of the South Central Mountain RC&D.

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR INPUT:

OTHER:

MEETINGS ATTENDED:

PLAN for NEXT MEETING:

Claunch-Pinto SWCD

January 8, 2021

Regular Meeting

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:

The next regular meeting will be held Friday, February 5, 2021 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, LeRoy Candelaria moved to adjourn. Larry Gomez seconded the motion at 9:35.

FELIPE LOVATO, JR., CHAIRMAN

David Cain, SECRETARY