



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
February 5, 2021**

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

Absentees: David Cain
Jack Lockridge

Others Present: Diedre Tarr, District Manager
Ernie Taylor, U.S. Forestry Service
Jim Wanstall, USDA
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 8:10 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:** LeRoy Candelaria moved to approve the agenda. Larry Gomez seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dan Williams, aye; LeRoy Candelaria, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF MINUTES:

January, 2021 Minutes of Regular Meeting:

ACTION TAKEN: Larry Gomez moved to approve the minutes of January 8, 2021 as read. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dan Williams, aye; David Cain, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye; LeRoy Candelaria, aye; Larry Gomez, aye.

January, 2021 Minutes of Special Meeting:

ACTION TAKEN: Larry Gomez moved to approve the minutes of January 11, 2021 as amended. Dan Williams seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dan Williams, aye; LeRoy Candelaria, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye. On page 2, move comment beginning with "Claunch-Pinto has worked with FNR for the past ten years . . ." to page 1 as part of the discussion.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Treasurer's Report for January, 2021:

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

Second Quarter Financial Report to DFA:

The district's financial report for FY 2021 Q2 has received LGA approval and is included in the board packet for information.

OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS:

REPORTS:

New Mexico Department of Agriculture:

The department of agriculture's written report is included in the board packets. Mr. Wanstall elaborated on bills before the legislative session that began in January. He said that in the bill to legalize marijuana, there is no requirement to prove water rights. He gave examples of the possible negative effects on a community's domestic water system if a grower uses domestic water instead of acquiring and proving its own water rights.

Mr. Wanstall also commented on House Bill 57 regarding prescribed burns.

NRCS Mountainair Field Office Report:

The written report is included in board member's packets.

District Manager's Report:

The district manager said that she and Vern Kohler have to drive to Gallup to get their Linc passes.

CORRESPONDANCE:

None.

UPDATE ON GRANTS – the District Manager's Written Report to the Board: February 5, 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 3 - 5 years. We have not been able to get the remaining re-sprout treatments completed for 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 their portion of the funding. Edgewood SWCD will be contracting the remaining portion of their soon. Claunch-Pinto SWCD has the Cain State Land Project, Deer Canyon Gate Project and a couple of small projects they have 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. Both of these grants closed on December 18, 2020. The East Tarrant SWCD has started planning their portion of this EBWHRM grant. The District Manager is working on a Request for Proposals for the Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance projects that have been planned.

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 January. They come in two 8-day periods. All of the saw work has been completed. They just need to chip approximately 150 acres of slash

2019 NFL Funding – The District Manager has 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 1 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. A portion of the mastication portion of this project has been completed.

BNSF Railroad Project:

The district has removed part of the erosion structures that were constructed on the railroad project. We will remove the remaining structures as soon as we can.

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 – The district manager has been told this project should be funded in September 2021. The Forest Service regional office is waiting for approval of the projects.

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 of these reports to review before they are sent to SHPO. We have two outstanding reports for the Grants/Gallup Field Office. One of the reports has been submitted to the Forest Service for their 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.

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 in 2 and 4-foot lengths and haul to a staging area. The district will then haul the wood to the district wood yard to sale 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 25 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 Preserves. 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 they are looking at for this analysis, so it is taking some time to complete this.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Capital Outlay:

Request for a new chipper:

The district manager reported that Representative McQueen will support the district's request for capital outlay funds to buy a new chipper.

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

The district manager reported that she hasn't heard anything on the wildfire plan, but she will contact Pattern Energy representatives for an update.

Paperwork through the Forest Service for an Incident Command Center:

The district manager said that she and Mr. Lovato met with Anthony Martinez and Adrian Padilla regarding an incident command center. The district manager will submit required paperwork to Mr. Martinez for review before she sends it on to the finance office.

Work on 1400 Chipper:

The district manager said that she has almost finished the contract between the district and Ferranti Natural Resources. She will distribute the contract to the board for review.

NEW BUSINESS:

Approval for the Chairman to Sign Two Coordinated Resource Management Plans for the Carrizozo Field office – NRCS:

The district manager explained the conditions of the two plans.

ACTION TAKEN: LeRoy moved approval for the chairman to sign two coordinated resource management plans for the NRCS Carrizozo Field Office. Larry Gomez seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Felipe Lovato, aye; Dan Williams, aye; LeRoy Candelaria, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Larry Gomez, aye.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts:

The coalition placed its logo on boxes of New Mexico products which were given to state legislators.

South Central Mountain RC&D:

A meeting was held which the district manager participated in by conference call. She plans to attend meetings so that she can report to the board and to the Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee. She said that the committee has identified a new board member and that a lot of work is being done in the Alamogordo, Ruidoso, and Cloudcroft areas.

Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee:

The district manager said that the committee will hold a meeting in two weeks, and she will distribute information to the board members. She said that one of the members, Art Swenka, had passed away. She described Mr. Swenka's contributions to Torrance County and said that he was very involved in any issue concerning water and that he would be very much missed.

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR INPUT:

OTHER:

Mr. Lovato will send information on soil conservation to Ms. Dunn.

Mr. Williams reported on a mining operation near San Isidro. The mine extracts oxidized lignite. He explained what it is and what it is used for – to introduce microbes into the soil to enhance it. He talked about the cost and where it is available from nurseries, where it is expensive, and from the mining company itself. This product is applicable for large areas. A representative from the company is interested in making a presentation. He will provide information to Mr. Williams, who will make it available to the board.

The district manager said that there is a new volunteer, Lynnelle Chavez, who will help out in the office on Fridays. Ms. Chavez is a science teacher at Mountainair High School.

MEETINGS ATTENDED:

PLAN for NEXT MEETING:

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:

The next regular meeting will be held Friday, March 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, Larry Gomez moved to adjourn. LeRoy Candelaria seconded the motion at 9:05.

FELIPE LOVATO, JR., CHAIRMAN

David Cain, SECRETARY