



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
April 14, 2023**

Supervisors Present: Felipe Lovato, Jr., Chairman
Robin Dunn
Jack Lockridge
Dale Rose

Absentees: David Cain
Larry Gomez

Others Present: Dierdre Tarr, District Manager
Roy Gibson, Associate Supervisor
Kenneth Lujan, NRCS
Chanda Monk
Arlene Perea, Mountainair Ranger District
Katheryn Taylor, volunteer

CALL TO ORDER:

The regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the Claunch-Pinto Soil and Water Conservation District (CPSWCD) was called to order by Felipe Lovato, Jr., Chairman, both in person and via Zoom at 8:05 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, followed by a moment of silence.

The district manager introduced Chanda Monk, the District's new part-time employee. She described Ms. Monk's background including employment by the DOT and BLM. She will work three days a week and will learn what both Anita and Vern do.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The board reviewed the agenda. **ACTION TAKEN:** Jack Lockridge moved to approve the agenda. Dale Rose seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Dale Rose, aye; Felipe Lovato, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye.

OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS:

The district manager said that the district auditor, Dan Austin, will attend the next board meeting. She explained that when the district seeks a new auditor, applicants submit a bid for three years. Mr. Austin will be the district's auditor for fiscal year 2023, so a motion is needed to approve the next year's contract.

ACTION TAKEN: Mr. Lockridge moved to approve Mr. Austin's contract for fiscal year 2023. Ms. Rose seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Dale Rose, aye; Felipe Lovato, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye.

APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF MINUTES:

ACTION TAKEN: Dale Rose moved to approve the March, 2022 minutes as read. Robin Dunn seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Dale Rose, aye; Felipe Lovato, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The board reviewed the treasurer's report for the month of March, 2023 with accounts payable for April, 2023.

Mr. Lovato commended the district manager for the number of cords of wood sold.

ACTION TAKEN: Jack Lockridge moved to approve the treasurer's report for March, 2023 with accounts payable for April. Dale Rose seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Dale Rose, aye; Felipe Lovato, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye.

REPORTS:

New Mexico Department of Agriculture:

The NMDA's written report for April was provided to the board members. Katie Mechenbier highlighted the relevant items for the district or actions needed.

- Pass and submit the annual mil levy resolution.
- Submit the third quarterly budget report.
- Finalize and submit the annual work plan for the coming fiscal year.
- Submit the Point System Worksheet.
- Between June 10 and July 10, notify the county clerk of all board positions and position numbers to be filled in the regular local election.
- Submit proposals for the 2023 Water Quality and Conservation Grant.
- Submit appointed supervisor positions.
- Interested Eligible Entities submit applications between April 11 and May 17 for the Healthy Soil Program grant.
- Submit pre-proposals to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for America the Beautiful grant funding.
- Respond to request for public comment by the New Mexico 30 x 30 Advisory Committee by May 18.
- Participate in the Resilience in New Mexico Agricultural Resilience Survey by April 21.
- Identify local youth between the ages of 15 – 19 to apply to participate in the 2023 NM Youth Ranch Management Camp to be held June 11 – 16.
- Submit pre-applications through April 21, 2023 for the Historically Underserved Farmer – to -- Farmer Outreach Grant Program.
- The NM State Land Office offers an interactive mapping feature on its website.
- The Forest and Watershed Partners Program Request for Proposals is now available.

NRCS Mountainair Field Office Report:

The NRCS Mountainair Field Office written report is included in board member's packets. Mr. Lujan said that Josh Archuleta has accepted a position as an Area Resource Conservationist for the North Area, so the Soil Conservationist position for the Estancia field office will be advertised at a later date. He mentioned the positions open in NRCS in New Mexico. He will have a civil engineer position in Santa Rosa and technicians in Santa Rosa, Ft. Sumner and Mountainair. He described the work responsibilities in the field for these technicians.

The deadline for EQIP is today and applications are being ranked. Mr. Lujan will review the rankings.

The RCCP funding included funds remaining from 2014 and money from the renewal of 2018 funding. Team five took about 95% of the allocations, approximately \$1.6M of the funding. He has asked for an additional million dollars for remaining projects.

Mr. Lujan included information on the partnership grant in case the district is interested in applying for funding. The deadline is April 22.

District Manager's Report:

The district manager said that she would like to move the date for the board meeting in May so that the interim budget is available. She would like to invite the FFA students who have been very successful in state competitions to the meeting. She would like for the board to acknowledge them for their hard work.

She explained that vehicle and trailer maintenance expenses have amounted to more than \$21,000. She will have the vehicles checked by the mechanic periodically to try to cut down on those expenses this year.

She will also work on getting more accurate figures on the mil levy funding from Torrance County for better budget planning.

The district manager is working with Bill Ferranti with Ferranti Natural Resources, LLC and Ramah Navajo Natural Resource Department to bring in extra people to work with the district's sawyer because she hasn't been able to find dependable workers from the Mountainair area.

CORRESPONDANCE:

No report.

UPDATE ON GRANTS:**The District Manager's Update on Grants Report to CPSWCD Board, April, 2023:**

The district manager pointed out that the Water Trust Board will meet in May to announce the funding for the FY2023 projects. The Estancia Basin project is in the number one position and the Rio Grande project is in fourth position in the Watershed section of the projects that could receive funding.

A project in the Edgewood Soil and Water Conservation District has just been finished. The second payment will probably amount to approximately \$180,000. A significant amount of money will be drawn down on both Water Trust Board and State Forestry grants.

The district manager is working with her third or fourth mitigation specialist for the FEMA grant. She still doesn't have the phase 1 budget addendum approved, so she can't pay SWCA.

The State land project in the Edgewood SWCD area will be started the last week in April, and the wood from the project will go to the area land grants.

The planning for the two highway projects is underway in cooperation with the Department of Transportation.

The district manager is working with Torrance County to get funding to update both wildfire protection plans. Lincoln County is working to update their hazard mitigation plan. She will ask that the district be included in the plan, so the District would be eligible for FEMA funding for work in the Corona area.

A list of all the district's projects is included at the end of the report. The list shows that there are several large projects, not just projects of one or two acres. The report also shows the cost of the projects. The district manager added that there are four more applications for projects that Vern Kohler needs to complete an assessment in the field, with the land owners. Two of the projects are in the Corona area. Ms. Rose thanked the district for supporting Corona landowners.

April 14, 2023 -- The District Manager's Written Report to CPSWCD Board – Update on Grants**Watershed Health Grant – Water Trust Board (WTB):**

2021 EBWHRM WTB Funds – The district is preparing thinning contracts for signature. Claunch-Pinto and East Torrance have a couple of projects that work is being completed. Claunch-Pinto has 3 projects ready to contract and 11 pending projects. Ken Leiting, East Torrance SWCD has contacted his landowners who have contracts to find out the progress on their projects. We are working with Edgewood SWCD, NM State Land and NM State Forestry on the Bear Cat 50-acre project. The wood from the Bear Cat project will be delivered to Chilili Land Grant by a contractor contracted by NM State Land Office. The Land Grant Counsel will then distribute the wood to the area land grants. The district manager is working with two East Torrance SWCD landowners on project extensions. The district manager is also working with one Edgewood SWCD landowner and contractor on a project extension. The district's field technician conducted a site visit for the Chilili thinning project. The funding for this grant has to be expended by November 19, 2023.

2021 GRGWA WTB Funds – The contractor has completed all but 3 acres of the San Cristobal project and the project should be completed soon. We are expecting a contractor bid on the Glorieta project within the next week. We have scopes of work for GRGWA ready to advertise a request for proposals. The work on these projects will start after August 15, 2023. The funding for this grant has to be expended by November 19, 2023.

2023 WTB Proposals: The EBWHRM proposal is No. 1 for Watersheds and the GRGWA is No. 4. The Water Trust Board meets in May, so we will know then if these projects will be funded.

NM State Forestry Grants:

2020 NFL Funding – The district has started submitting reimbursements for this funding. These funds must be spent by December 31, 2023.

2022 NFL Funding – The district has been notified that their FY2022 NFL proposal has been funded. The district manager is working with State Forestry on the work plan for this funding. It should be signed within the next couple of months.

2023 NFL Funding – The district submitted a proposal for this funding.

State Forestry – Funding for a Liaison – The district was requested by NM State Forestry to act as the fiscal agent and contractor to hire a sub-contractor to act as a liaison for the EMNRD, Forestry Division with the Hermit's Peak-Calf Canyon Economic Recovery line of Effort's Timber Task Force. The district has signed all of the necessary paperwork associated with this project. We will get bids from contractors on this work.

BNSF Railroad Project:

The district will continue to monitor the area for any erosion issues.

Collaborative Forest Restoration Projects:

Watershed Restoration and Fuel Reduction in Bartolo Canyon of the Manzano Mountains:

Romero Wood, LLC has completed 73 acres on the project. We are in Gosshawk nesting season, which is from March 1st to September 30th, so Romero's will only be allowed to load

and haul during this time frame. Romero's will start cutting and skidding on the project after September 30th. We have a plan to have a pre-work meeting with the Forest Service inspector prior to Romero's starting work in the fall. Hopefully we will be able to work out any problems on the project during that meeting. SWCA Environmental Consultants will work with a couple of high school students in mid-July to conduct the monitoring on this project. The district will need to request an extension for work to be completed in the fourth year to complete this project.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP):

2018 RCPP Funding – The majority of the \$327,985.62 for the 2018 RCPP has been contracted. The district does have funding for SWCA to complete cultural resource surveys for the funded project.

2019 RCPP Funding – This is the renewal of the 2015 RCPP funding. There was \$1,781,286.43 available for producer contracting within the NCNMWRP during the EQIP sign up period that ended late year. The majority of this funding is in the process of being contracted. The district has \$416,404.62 available for cultural resource surveys, workshops and a RCPP brochure.

Additional RCPP Funding – The district was notified that NRCS found the 2017 RCPP renewal funding in the amount of \$969,225. The district manager is in the process of reviewing all of the paperwork for this grant.

NRCS is advertising that they are seeking applications to expand conservation assistance to underserved producers and underserved communities about conservation programs and services. The cooperative agreements would be for two years for projects that encourage participation in NRCS programs, especially underserved communities and among urban and small-scale producers.

FEMA Grant Proposal:

Hazard Mitigation Project - HMGP 5281 Sub Grant Agreement: The Phase 1 agreement has been extended to June 30, 2023. The district is waiting to hear if FEMA has approved the additional funding that was spent to complete the NEPA work on the two projects. The district is also waiting to hear if FEMA has approved the Phase 2 funding. This funding is to complete hazardous fuel reduction projects on the Aceves ranch and Twin Peaks ranch.

Soil and Water Conservation Commission Grant:

The Memorandum of Agreement has been signed by all parties on this funding and we have received a PO from NM State University for the funds. Cody Stropki, SWCA, Joe Zebrowski, NM Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute and the district manager have met to discuss the project. The goals of the project are: 1) to develop a planning document to guide CPSWCD over the next decade and beyond; 2) Development of an electronic capacity building document that will benefit future managers of CPSWCD. The template will provide a road map for the district when looking to grow their capacity to get projects on the ground. It will also provide the tools and ability to chase and leverage alternative funding.

New Mexico State Land Projects:

The Edgewood SWCD will be using some of the Water Trust Board allocation to complete a 50-acre State Land Project known as the Bear Cat Project. Claunch-Pinto SWCD will match

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the funding with their State Forest NFL funding. The NM State Land Office has found some funding to hire a contractor to buck the wood and move it to a designated place on the Chilili Land Grant. The wood will then be divided among the area Land Grants. The district has three additional State Land projects we are working on with the State Land Office.

New Mexico Department of Transportation Project:

The district is working with Lawrence Crane, District Forester for the Bernalillo Office, EMNRD – Forestry Division, NM State Land Office and the NM Department of Transportation on the remaining paperwork that needs to be completed prior to starting any work on the HWY 337 project. We are working on a report from the SHPO office, the traffic control roadway work permit, the State Land authorization to complete conservation work, and Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument on cultural authorizations for both the HWY 337 and 55 projects. Lawrence Crane has been given a verbal commitment for capital outlay funding to fund this project.

New Mexico Association of Counties (NMAC):

The district is working with Torrance County on updates of both Community Wildfire Protection Plans. The district and Torrance County each submitted proposals to the NMAC for funding to pay for these updates.

The district has the following projects either contracted or ready to contract as we have the funding and contractors available:

Project Status	Acres	Project Cost
Approved	5.3	\$7,775.10
Approved	2.0	2,001.00
Approved	10.5	5,239.50
Approved	50.0	58,285.00
Approved	409	600,003.00
Approved	92.6	190,200.40
Approved	2.5	5,000.00
Approved	36.0	20,220.00
Approved	48.0	70,416.00
Approved	1.5	1,330.50
Approved	3.2	1,596.80
Approved	8.0	7,096.00
Approved	5.0	7,510.00
Approved	274.0	294,002.00
Approved	45.0	17,955.00
Approved	38.0	33,706.00
Approved	10.0	15,020.00
Approved	2.0	2,146.00
Approved	19.0	7,986.00
Approved	69.0	45,295.00
Approved	38.45	31,098.15
Approved	166.0	183,680.00
Approved	136.0	234,872.00
Approved	143.0	246,961.00
TOTAL PROJECTS	1,851.55	\$2,329,765.95

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The District has 5 more projects to plan and another 2 applications to come into the office.

Unfinished Business:

Capital Outlay:

FY2022 Capital Outlay Funded – Skid Steer:

The district was funded for \$100,000 to add to the \$40,000 previously funded, so a skid steer and attachments can be bought. It will not be necessary to go out on bid because Kabota in Roswell has a state price agreement.

Torrance and Lincoln County Wind Energy:

The district manager said that she expects to see the beginning of construction on the SunZia transmission line and additional wind mills towards Ancho area.

NEW BUSINESS:

Appoint Supervisor for Position No. 4:

The district manager sent a resume of a candidate to the board whom Mr. Lovato proposes to fill position number 4 on the board – Gerald Chavez. He would represent residents of the area around Manzano and Punta de Agua. **ACTION TAKEN:** Mr. Lovato moved to appoint Gerald Chavez to position number 4 on the Claunch-Pinto Board of Supervisors. Dale Rose seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Dale Rose, aye; Felipe Lovato, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye.

Appoint a Budget Committee:

Mr. Lovato suggested re-appointing the current members of the budget committee with their concurrence. Mr. Lovato appointed Dale Rose, Larry Gomez and Jack Lockridge as members of the budget committee.

Land Use Agreement with EMNRD – Forestry Division:

Lawrence Crane, the district forester from the Bernalillo office, wants to establish a land use agreement with the Claunch-Pinto district so that fire crews can be housed on district property as needed. Fire managers could use the area as a staging area during fires. Crews would camp on the property and use showers and rest rooms in the shop building. The district manager is working on compiling figures that she and Mr. Crane can work with to reach an agreement. **ACTION TAKEN:** Dale Rose moved to give permission to the district manager to work with Lawrence Crane on a land use agreement. Mr. Lockridge seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote: Dale Rose, aye; Felipe Lovato, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye.

Appointed Supervisor Positions 6 and 7:

The district manager reminded the board that appointed supervisors 6 and 7 are Jack Lockridge and Dale Rose. **ACTION TAKEN:** Robin Dunn moved to re-appoint Jack Lockridge to position 6 and Dale Rose to position 7. The motion carried by voice vote: Dale Rose, aye; Felipe Lovato, aye; Robin Dunn, aye; Jack Lockridge, aye.

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NM Coalition of Conservation Districts:

The district manager continues to work with public relations personnel from State Forestry and the Forest Stewards Guild to publicize fire preparedness.

South Central Mountain RC&D:

No report.

Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee:

The committee met yesterday. The committee's funds are running short. The district manager is working with the Estancia Basin Resource Association and with its chairman, Ted Varela, to explore jointly funding the company that is monitoring some wells within the basin. This work is important because of the continuing threat from outside the basin to take water from it. The district manager has been asked to be the chair person, but she has declined.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Gibson thanked the district for monitoring activity in the area by the power companies and for spraying salt cedar in the Abó canyon.

OTHER:

MEETINGS ATTENDED:

PLAN for NEXT MEETING:

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:

The next regular meeting will be held Friday, June 2, 2023, 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, Jack Lockridge moved to adjourn. Dale Rose seconded the motion.

FELIPE LOVATO, JR., CHAIRMAN

DAVID CAIN, SECRETARY