

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Public Meeting Minutes
July 8, 2004**

I. Time and Place of Meeting.

A regular meeting of the Board of Supervisor of the Whatcom Conservation District was held at the Ag Service Center, 6975 Hannegan Rd, Lynden, Washington on July 8, 2004, at 12:00 p.m.

II. Attendance and Quorum.

The following Supervisors, being a quorum of the Board, were present:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Robert Barker	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jerry Van Dellen
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rod Visser	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cornelius Timmermans
<input type="checkbox"/>	Randy Kinley		

Also in attendance were:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	George Boggs, District Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>	John Gillies, NRCS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant		Bas Scholten, Associate Supervisor
	Todd Jones, Associate Supervisor		Beth Chisholm, Pub Ed Tech
	Sabina Gouran, CREP Tech		Stu Trefry, Conservation Commission

III. Meeting called to order.

The meeting, lacking a quorum, was started at noon.

Correspondence was reviewed. The Conservation Commission Board meeting is in Skagit County on July 14th and 15th. The tour and dinner are on Wednesday with the Board meeting on Thursday. There was discussion regarding who would be able to attend.

George discussed the concerns of Jim Hansen, Lummi Natural Resources, over the CREP change in policy for maintenance expenses as they affect the three CREP projects maintained by Lummi Natural Resources. George explained that staff has responded to Jim's project maintenance concerns. Jim seemed satisfied with the resolution.

Robert Barker, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 12:31 p.m.

IV. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting.

Rod Visser moved that the minutes of the June 10, 2004 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Cornie Timmermans seconded the motion. The motion passed.

V. Financial Report.

Currently grants are invoiced to show Accounts Receivable along with the Accounts payable in order to generate the financial reports prior to the Board meeting. This gives a very short window to get all the information together. The Board has only a few minutes at the meeting to review and discuss the financial report prior to approving it. It was decided that to streamline the meetings and to allow for full review, the financial report would be mailed to the Board prior to the meeting. Accounts payable (checks for payment) will still be presented and approved at the Board meeting.

Accounts Payable –

The District received an invoice for the 2004 WACD dues. There was discussion regarding how the dues are figured and what WACD can do with Districts dues. The Board approved payment of the 2004 WACD dues.

Review and approval of payment of District invoices and incurred expenses, as listed in the Accounts Payable Report. The Board further authorizes the payment of District expenses incurred subject to their review and approval at the next Board meeting.

The following voucher/warrants are approved for payment:

June 04 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>12235</u>	through	<u>12256</u>	and totaling	<u>17,119.18</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>12256</u>	through	<u>12269</u>	and totaling	<u>18,527.81</u>
July 2004					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>12270</u>	through	<u>12306</u>	and totaling	<u>141,263.04</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>12307</u>	through	<u>12320</u>	and totaling	<u>18,545.88</u>
Voucher (check) number	<u>12321</u>				<u>1,480.00</u>

moved by Rod Visser. Cornie Timmermans seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Cornie Timmermans moved to approve payment of the 2004 WACD dues. Rod Visser seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VI. Action Items.

A. Dairy.

1. Approval of Dairy Nutrient Management Plan.

Chris Clark wrote a Dairy Nutrient Farm Plan for a new dairy, Alan Van Hofwegen.

Cornie Timmermans moved to approve the Dairy Nutrient Farm Plan for Alan Van Hofwegen that was reviewed and submitted for Board approval. Rod Visser seconded the motion. The motion passed.

2. Cost-share.

George reported that there are no State cost-share funds available at this time. Whatcom County dairies are not eligible for state cost-share at this time. The only funds available are federal EQIP funds.

B. Approval of Contracts.

1. CREP Contracts.

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) is the administrative lead on the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) joint program. The FSA County Committee approves all contracts. The current policy is that once FSA approves the Federal Contract and CREP Plan, George can sign for the District. The contract is then brought to the Board meeting for ratification. As a matter of course, the District has several CREP contracts to approve.

Cornie Timmermans moved to ratify the list of CREP contracts. Rod Visser seconded the motion. The motion passed.

02-04-CR02: 03-125	Bryan	Van Loo
02-04-CR02: 04-06	Kay	Ingram

CREP Cultural Resources Contracts –

George reported that most of the new CREP applicants need to have cultural resource assessments on their proposed projects. The District sends out requests for bid to a list of certified archeologists. From those that respond the District selects the lowest bidder. The

District enters into an agreement for the cultural resource assessment with the contractor. George presented 5 contracts for approval by the Board.

George discussed that the USDA Farm Service Agency is looking into what is considered an "undertaking" for CREP projects. Undertakings require the exhaustive cultural resource investigation. FSA has some latitude and may consider planting trees not an undertaking. Stu Trefry reported that the Conservation Commission received a grant from the State to address Cultural Resource Issues and to train the Area Engineers to do Cultural Resource Assessments. The process is working towards lowering costs while still address the federal cultural resource concerns.

Rod Visser moved to approve the list of Cultural Resource Assessment contracts. Cornie Timmermans seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Contractor	Contract #	Project	Cost
Garth Baldwin (Drayton Archaeological Research)	04-04-CR02: 04-11	Hadaway	\$1,898.87
Garth Baldwin (Drayton Archaeological Research)	04-04-CR02: 04-02	Waddell	1,656.30
Garth Baldwin (Drayton Archaeological Research)	04-04-CR02: 04-01	Rutgers	2,649.58
Mark Hovezak (Arch Consultant)	04-04-CR02: 04-03	VanRooyen	1,480.00
Alfred Reid Arch Consulting	done by contractor	Faber	1,738.00
Alfred Reid Arch Consulting	done by contractor	Visser	1,738.00

2. SRF Loan contract.

To continue with the contract for the Manure Digester SRF Loan contract with the Department of Ecology the Conservation District needs to pass a resolution to indebt the District. The resolution includes an agreement for the District Chair to execute, on behalf of the District, an agreement with the Department of Ecology to borrow up to \$500,000 at the rate of 1.5% per year for a twenty-year term. The agreement will secure the loan with proceeds from building rental. The Resolution also outlines criteria for applicants to borrow the funds through the loan program.

Rod Visser moved to approve and sign Resolution 04-02 A Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of the Whatcom Conservation District to Incur Indebtedness. Cornie Timmermans seconded the motion. The motion passed.

There was discussion regarding the Southern California Air Pollution Board issue with air emissions and proposed new rules for livestock operations.

3. MOA with Skagit Conservation District.

George explained that the District has a sub-contract with Skagit Conservation District for fire safety. The Firewise contract is \$10,000 for salaries and \$500 for supplies and travel.

Cornie Timmermans moved to amend the current Memorandum of Agreement with Skagit Conservation District to include the Firewise program. Rod Visser seconded the motion. The motion passed.

VII. Other Business.

A. Staff Presentations.

Beth Chisholm –

Beth is a Public Information and Education specialist with the Conservation District. Beth explained that both Andrea and she provide landowner education through workshops and public education in schools and public community events. They educate landowners in how to farm according to the County's rules and regulations.

The Board asked Beth her opinion on where they needed to look when doing their Long Range Plan. Beth suggested that the Conservation District needs to have a higher profile in the urban community. The District has been working hard in the background and received limited notice from the general public of Whatcom County. She would like to see that change. Beth had been talking with Cheryl DeHaan and Cheryl said that there were three vacancies on the Farm Friends board. Water quantity and water quality are still big natural resource issues to be addressed. Ground water protection and riparian corridor habitat and recovery efforts are also important.

Sabina Gouran –

Sabina gave the board an overview of her background and education. She grew up in Kent Valley. After High School, Sabina went to Western Washington University. She then got a job with the Department of Ecology working in hazardous waste. Sabina got her wetland delineation qualifications. She went back to Western Washington University.

Sabina is a CREP technician. She does project planning and oversight. Sabina has helped with statewide CREP issues. She helped develop the statewide CREP maintenance policy and spreadsheet.

There was discussion regarding knotweed. The invasive weed looks like bamboo. It is very easy to grow and very hard to kill. There was discussion on how it grows.

Stu Trefy said that his conversations with Sabina helped the Conservation Commission to get the \$50,000 grant for Cultural Resources from the state.

George pointed out that CREP maintenance cost hold-downs and CREP-in-a-Box both started with the Whatcom Conservation District.

Long Range Plans for CREP: People are open to stream restoration but have expressed concerns with entering into a contract with the government. Others have expressed the desire to re-enroll their CREP projects for another 10 or 15 years, similar to the CRP roll over. Sabina suggested CREP should look at in-stream work and stream meanders.

B. Long Range Plan.

Stu explained the 5-year Plan vision from the Conservation Commission. He suggested that the Board not let funding drive the Long Range Plan. Let the plan drive the funding requests. Set priorities and ask everyone for funding to implement your plan.

Water quality and quantity are key issues. Air quality is also a factor. The District needs to continue to address water quality concerns. The District has not spent much time on water quantity issues. We should look at ways to conserve water.

Todd Jones is the Conservation District's representative on Whatcom County's Ag Advisory Committee. He suggests the District should look at the critical mass or infrastructure of Ag in Whatcom County. There is a major disconnect between people in the cities and the urban growth issue impact.

If maintaining farming is important for the Conservation District, should we focus on this generation or the next? There was discussion regarding the viability of long-term farming in Whatcom County.

What is the purpose of the Whatcom Conservation District? Should the District give an opinion on zoning law? Bob said yes. It would be appropriate for the District to comment on zoning issues all areas are connected. But should the District focus their efforts in this area? George explained that the Whatcom Conservation District is a local government. The preamble to RCW 89.08 (Conservation District enabling act) states that the Legislature wants to preserve and

make wise use of natural resources. Then they set up Conservation Districts as a way to accomplish this. Todd Jones suggested that if land use is a key focus of the District, then the District needs to be vocal about it.

There was further discussion regarding dairy farming in Whatcom County. Laws and regulations that are coming to other areas of the nation will also likely impact local farms.

On the land use issue, efforts should be made to make agriculture sustainable in Whatcom County. The potential to use national standards instead of more restrictive state and local standards was discussed.

There was a brief discussion regarding other agriculture in Whatcom County, such as berries. A "green" label for milk in Washington might help bring additional dollars to farmers. Currently the other states that ship to Darigold do not observe the same standards as Washington State does. So a "green" label is not achievable at this time. However, the concept would benefit the producers in Washington State.

The vision of the Whatcom Conservation District is to help land be used in the best environmental way possible.

It was decided to have Stu draft some concepts from the discussion today and send to Dawn and George to present to the Board for further Long Range Plan discussion.

VIII. Record of Board Actions.

04-43 Rod Visser moved that the minutes of the June 10, 2004 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Cornie Timmermans seconded the motion. The motion passed.

04-44

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moved by Rod Visser. Cornie Timmermans seconded the motion. The motion passed.

04-45 Cornie Timmermans moved to approve payment of the 2004 WACD dues. Rod Visser seconded the motion. The motion passed.

04-46 Cornie Timmermans moved to approve the Dairy Nutrient Farm Plan for Alan Van Hofwegen that was reviewed and submitted for Board approval. Rod Visser seconded the motion. The motion passed.

04-47 Cornie Timmermans moved to ratify the list of CREP contracts. Rod Visser seconded the motion. The motion passed.

02-04-CR02: 03-125	Bryan	Van Loo
02-04-CR02: 04-06	Kay	Ingram

04-48 Rod Visser moved to approve the list of Cultural Resource Assessment contracts. Cornie Timmermans seconded the motion. The motion passed.

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Garth Baldwin (Drayton Archaeological Research)	04-04-CR02: 04-11	Hadaway	\$1,898.87
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04-49 Rod Visser moved to approve and sign Resolution 04-02 A Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of the Whatcom Conservation District to Incur Indebtedness. Cornie Timmermans seconded the motion. The motion passed.

04-50 Cornie Timmermans moved to amend the current Memorandum of Agreement with Skagit Conservation District to include the Firewise program. Rod Visser seconded the motion. The motion passed.

IX. Adjournment.

There being no further business before the meeting, Cornie Timmermans moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:00 p.m. Rod Visser seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Dated: August 18, 2004

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant