

**WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
Public Meeting Minutes  
December 8, 2010**

**I. Time and Place of Meeting.**

A regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the Whatcom Conservation District (WCD) was held at the Ag Service Center, 6975 Hannegan Rd, Lynden, Washington on December 8, 2010, at 7:00 p.m.

**II. Attendance and Quorum.**

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

Joe Heller  
Larry Davis  
Dick Yoder

Terry Lenssen  
Ed Stone

Also in attendance were:

George Boggs, Executive Director  
Dawn Bekenyi, Admin. Assistant

Alex Hall, NRCS staff  
David Unruh, FSA staff

**III. Meeting Called to Order.**

Joe Heller, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**IV. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting.**

**Dick Yoder moved that the minutes of the November 9, 2010 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**V. Financial Report.**

The financial report was mailed to the Board with their draft minutes from the November meeting.

Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant, asked if there were any questions regarding the Financial Report. There were no questions.

**Larry Davis moved to approve the Financial Report. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed. Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Treasurer's Report was approved.**

Accounts Payable –

A copy of District invoices and incurred expenses, as listed in the Accounts Payable Report, were reviewed and approved. 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:

Nov 2010 - balance					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>18174</u>	through	<u>18184</u>	and totaling	<u>9,716.77</u>
Payroll check numbers:	<u>18185</u>	through	<u>18197</u>	and totaling	<u>27,170.48</u>
December 2010					
Voucher (check) numbers	<u>18198</u>	through	<u>18257</u>	and totaling	<u>65,225.34</u>

Payroll check numbers: 18258 through 18270 and totaling 27,476.94  
**Moved by Larry Davis. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

## VI. Action Items.

### A. Approval of Conservation Plans.

Livestock Nutrient Management Plan (LNMP) Approval and Certification –

There were two Livestock Nutrient Management Plan updates submitted for Board approval and certification.

**Dick Yoder moved to approve and certify the Livestock Nutrient Management Plan update for Blok Dairy, LLC (Roger) and Clearbrook Holsteins (Arlyn Visser). Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

## VII. Other Business.

### A. Supervisor Reports.

Joe Heller –

Joe attended the Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) Annual Meeting at Suncadia in Cle Elum. Joe reported that there were 176 in attendance at the Annual meeting and that this year there were fewer Supervisors than normally attend. The expense appeared to be a factor in attendance.

There were a total of 34 resolutions acted upon at the annual meeting. Three of the four resolutions presented by the Whatcom Conservation District passed at the general session. Capricorn CREP was modified to make it clear that this was limited to “site prep” for a project. Grazing as maintenance would not be studied.

The “Power to the People” resolution that would allow installation of electrical power to pumps would require a change in the Farm Bill language. It was suggested that a representative go to the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) annual meeting and present the resolution there.

Joe also reported on the resolution regarding WACD creating a Long Range Plan tied to a dues structure. This one was more controversial. After a while it was finally seconded and brought up for discussion. The outcome was to develop a task force to review the bylaws and look into the matter. Lynn Brown, Conservation Commission Board member, was chosen to head the Task Force. He will seek representatives from each of the areas. The Task Force will come up with a recommendation with a deadline of next year’s Annual Meeting. Larry Davis expressed a willingness to serve on this Task Force. The Board was in agreement.

Larry Davis –

Larry reviewed the proposal to partner on a project with the Fruit Tree Planting Foundation (FTPF). He advised that the Board should have a policy with objective criteria to use when receiving requests for partnership from groups. A selection of criteria considerations was discussed. Some key elements may include: 1. The need for support for the project from those that would be impacted, 2. The groups mission statement (or vision) must be compatible with the District’s mission statement, 3. The proposal must be in line with the District’s Long Range Plan, goals and vision, 4. How does the proposal support local businesses, 5. Make sure that the proposal does not compete with local businesses in the community, 6. Make sure that the proposal is not in conflict with the natural environment of Whatcom County. It was thought that an applicant would write a proposal addressing the approved criteria.

**B. Alex Hall, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).**

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) – Staff are busy doing contract modifications and payments by the end of the year. They are sending out reminder letters and making phone calls.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) – Staff completed the CSP payments without any problems. Alex reported that the payment process is a little different than EQIP, but it went well. The CSP sign-up deadline is January 7, 2011.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) – Staff completed all pending payments. Alex reported that the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA) is working on projects putting in culverts and bridges. Due to program constraints NSEA may partner with landowners to do more projects. The WHIP sign-up deadline is January 7, 2011.

Student Trainee – The student trainee, Mary Kennedy, will be full time over the winter break from December 10 – January 10. She is working on Highly Erodible Land (HEL) determinations for FSA. Mary will be here until June 2011.

Technical Service Provider (TSP) –

Alex reported that the TSP contract for Chris Clark and Bill Bonsen's services to help with EQIP through May should be approved any day now.

**C. Dave Unruh, Farm Service Agency (FSA).**

Dave reported that FSA is getting caught up with the Farm Bill. The office will be losing a temporary staff position at the end of the month with funding cuts.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) – The first contracts that were for ten years are coming up on the expiration date. FSA will need to get a new contract before the old one expires to roll the contracts over. Otherwise they will not be eligible for the program. They will send out a mailing to those contracts. The rental rates are now about a 1/3 higher than when the projects were first enrolled. The contract participants will get the new rental rates upon signing up for another contract.

Dave wants to work with the FSA County Committee and CD staff on marketing the hedgerow practice in the dairy community. George explained that Himalayan blackberries have been identified by WSU as a host for a new fruit fly pest. They should be taken out. It was also recommended that producers plant pollinator species to foster better fruit set. Hedgerows could also serve as windbreaks to protect livestock. This could help with the cold. Dick mentioned that cows eat 1% of their body weight for every degree under 32° F.

**D. George Boggs, Executive Director.**

National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) –George informed the Board that there was an expectation by WACD that the proponent of a national resolution attend the national meeting to support its passage. He asked if anyone wished to attend the NACD Annual Meeting to discuss the issue. It will cost approximately \$2,100 to send someone to Nashville, TN. Board members wanted to ruminate on the suggestion.

State Budget – George gave an overview of the WACD lobbyist perspective on the state budget and potential impacts. We need to talk with our legislators to get support. The Poultry industry, Cattlemen Association and Dairy Federation support an independent Washington State Conservation Commission.

Soil, Water, Air, Plant, Animals, Human and Energy (SWAPAHE) Resource Concerns – George reported that there is a new resource concern E for Energy. The new planning tools need to address the energy concerns. For example the producer needs to address the energy needs to

grow their crops. The Dairy Federation is doing some pilot planning for dairies in two counties to try it out.

Nooksack River Corridor Management – The River Corridor Management Committee met with the Flood Control Zone District Committee. The County has some money set aside for a pilot project. The Committee will be putting together a rough scope of work. George drew a simple cross section of a watershed and showed how a small increase in temperature would result in large increases in runoff. Gravel extraction cannot provide the additional channel capacity to avoid flooding.

Birch Bay Grant – Candidates for the Birch Bay Watershed Advisor are being reviewed by the committee to select interviewees. Someone or organization should be selected in January.

Animal Feeding Operation/Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (AFO/CAFO) meeting – Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 10 is convening a regional meeting (Idaho, Washington and Oregon) to discuss developments in the national AFO/CAFO general permit. A select few have been asked to attend the meeting in Portland, OR. Chris, Nichole and George will attend to offer policy and technical input.

Air Quality – George reported that a draft Dairy Air Quality Management Plan has been published by the Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency. Nichole has offered comments to the draft. This will likely set the stage for Air Quality plans for the rest of the state. George spoke with Rick Noble, NRCS, about getting EQIP funds in place to provide technical and financial assistance to address air quality concerns.

Ag Advisory Sub-Committee – The sub-committee is working in the background. The next meeting will be held on January 19, 2011 at WECU's Ferndale educational facility. Residents of California Creek 14 sub-basin will be invited

North Lynden Watershed Improvement District (WID) – The North Lynden WID and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) appear to be at an impasse on mitigation to clean out the creek. There is concern regarding snow build-up around hedgerows. It was suggested that snow fences would help with this issue. George is not sure how the matter will be resolved.

Grants and Funding – George reviewed several grant and funding opportunities. Frank Corey wrote a Centennial Clean Water Fund (CCWF) grant application to create a Natural Resource Marketplace in Whatcom County.

Whatcom Conservation District will receive TSP funds to do a Resource Inventory for NRCS in Whatcom County. The process is already being done in Kittitas County. We were waiting to make sure that we could receive the funds and not impact our TSP contract for Bill and Chris.

George was approached by Linda Crear for the District to participate in a grant proposal to do Risk Assessment Audits in farm plans for small and medium farms.

Employee Matters – Two employees are eligible for step increases effective January 1, 2011. All other employees have reached the pay scale cap or are not eligible for a step increase at this time. George informed the Board that he reviewed the performance of these employees and recommended that they receive the increase. The step increases were anticipated in the current budget. There are also funds to hire an additional full-time position through the end of this fiscal year. If these funds are not utilized, they will return to the State. Based upon her work performance as a part-time employee this past year, George recommended that the Board hire Emily Hirsch full-time at Band C1 Step 1. George did not recommend a Cost of Living Adjustment. It is likely given the current State fiscal difficulties that the level of employment and compensation will have to be addressed in the next annual plan of work.

**Dick Yoder moved to approve a step increase for Sonya Schaller and Chris Clark and to hire Emily Hirsch at Band C1 Step 1 effective January 1, 2011. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Election – The Supervisor Election is set for March 8, 2011.

Public Records – George reported that representative from Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington (MRSC) were at the WACD Annual meeting. They shared some information regarding public resources and disclosures. George shared some information regarding the Open Public Meetings Act and some things to avoid.

Dawn will also look for further guidance on document management and archiving.

NACD meeting – There was further discussion regarding sending someone to Nashville, TN to attend the NACD meeting. Terry was going to see if he could. Otherwise Larry was selected to attend. It would be determined who would attend prior to arrangements being made.

**Ed Stone moved to send a Board member to the NACD Annual Meeting in Nashville, TN. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Dick Yoder –

Dick gave a brief overview of the lawsuit over the wolves and the exempt status on water wells for stock.

January Board meeting –

Due to Board Supervisor conflicts the January Board meeting was changed to January 5, 2011.

### **VIII. Record of Board Actions.**

**10-94 Dick Yoder moved that the minutes of the November 9, 2010 Board meeting be approved as mailed. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**10-95 Larry Davis moved to approve the Financial Report. Dick Yoder seconded the motion. The motion passed. Upon motion made and duly seconded, the Treasurer's Report was approved.**

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**10-99 Ed Stone moved to send a Board member to the NACD Annual Meeting in Nashville, TN. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**IX. Adjournment.**

**There being no further business before the meeting, Dick Yoder moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m. Larry Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

The meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Dated: January 20, 2011

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

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Dawn Bekenyi, Administrative Assistant