



WINKELMAN NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Quarterly Meeting February 16, 2022 Final Minutes

Location: General Kearny Inn, Kearny AZ

The Winkelman Natural Resource Conservation District (NRCD) meeting was called to order at 10:06 am.

Board and Staff

Bill Dunn, Steve Turcotte, Barb McGuire(absent), Carol DuBois, Steve Turcotte, Gary Vinson, Kyle Thompson (Absent), and Chris Postel (Absent-WNRCD Clerk). Shadd Beebe, Advisor.

Agencies - Organizations

Ashley Hall (UA Co-op Extension), Heather Knight (AACD Contractor), Ali Martinez and Tyler Sciess (Pinal County Sheriff), Tom Reis (NRCS), Liz Harris-Tuck (Recording meeting minutes), and Cooperators: Becky Dunn, Hattie Hedrick, Francie Meyer, Nick Cline, and Roger Beebe.

Minutes of Past Meetings

Reviewed minutes 11/17/2021 and 12/29/2021. Supervisor Turcotte moved to accept the minutes. No discussion. Gary Vinson seconded. **Motion passed 4-0.**

Financial Report (See Attached Report) & Invoices: District/State funds, \$49,811.54 and \$26,357.06. The Financial Report was reviewed. Steve Turcotte moved to accept and file the financial reports. Carol DuBois seconded. **Motion passed 4-0.**

- Chairman Dunn asked for a motion to approve the invoice for \$33,450.00 to pay Knight Construction invoice for clearing and masticating 17 acres. Supervisor DuBois moved to approve the invoice and Supervisor Vinson seconded the motion. **Motion passed 4-0.**
- Becky Dunn stated she has receipts for \$150.83 for food provided to the volunteers who planted trees along the Gila River. Supervisor Turcotte moved to approve the invoice and Supervisor Vinson seconded a motion to reimburse Ms. Dunn. **Motion passed 4-0.**

Old Business

Grants Update (See Attached WNRCD Update-Kyle Thompson): Per Chairman Dunn, asked for a motion to approve contract with ACE Environmental to hand cut salt cedars along the Gila River for a cost not to exceed \$18,000.00. He also mentioned that the WNRCD should apply for funding for larger clearing projects as they are much less expensive per acre.

Telegraph Fire Update:

Discussion: The Arizona Legislature has designated \$10 million to rebuild infrastructure damaged by the Telegraph Fire. Previously, the statute stated that the state would be the funder of "last resort" and that restriction has been removed. Now, the question is, how will applicants be ranked to receive funding since there are more applications than funding.

Sonoran Desert Tortoise Update: WNRCD has been actively involved in the effort to recognize that the tortoise is not endangered. The latest petition to list the SDT has been determined this month. Determination was that the tortoise population is healthy and abundant with no significant loss of population in the foreseeable future. The Winkelman District should be proud of their role, along with the role of the Meyer family in the FWS' decision.

Fire Committee Update: No report.

New Business

2022 Elections (See Attached Document):

- **Form Election Board:** Bill Dunn moved to appoint Supervisor Turcotte as the Judge and Supervisor McGuire & Carol DuBois as Inspectors. No discussion. Carol DuBois seconded. **Motion passed 4-0.**
- **Approve Cooperator List:** The Board reviewed the Cooperator list and suggested several changes. Supervisor Turcotte moved to table the item until the changes can be recorded. A conference call will be held to approve the updated Cooperator List. Supervisor. DuBois seconded. **Motion passed 4-0.**
- **Nominate Supervisors:** Steve Turcotte moved to approve to nominate Barbara McGuire and Gary Vinson as appointed Supervisors. No discussion. Carol Dubois seconded. **Motion passed 4-0.**

Plan to Plant Remaining Trees:

Per Chairman Dunn, the WNRCD has over 200 Gooding Willow trees left to plant along the Gila River. There is space for another 100-150 trees. Volunteers from Oracle Community Learning Garden and WNRCD are planning on planting trees on March 4th. Volunteers are needed.

Grant Opportunities: Per Chairman Dunn, the WNRCD will know by the end of February if they will be receiving funding from AGFD for cleaning and sealing stock ponds in the District.

Reports from Agencies & Other Organizations

NRCS (Tom Reis – Per Report):

CONSERVATION PLANNING (FARM AND RANCH): Continued work on developing plans for new applications, 29 applications for FY22 and Team 7 = 71 applications

EQIP-General (Environmental Quality Incentive Program): Application Cutoff December 17, 2021 with Obligations May 6, 2022 and Anticipated allocation of \$1,272,363

EQIP-CIC and Urban Initiative (Conservation Incentive Contracts): Application Cutoff February 18, 2022 with Obligations July 1, 2022 (Urban = \$250,000, CIC = \$ 550,000)

EQIP-Border Initiative: Damage from border activities, focus on fence, pipeline, watering facilities and pumping plants (382,516, 614, 533). \$400,000 allocated to Arizona, Application Cutoff is 4/29/22, and Obligations August 19, 2022.

Coronavirus Agricultural Relief Payments (CARP): Extended through 3/31/2022, Irrigation pipeline, livestock pipeline (430, 516)

Catalina-Rincon Restoration and Fuels Mitigation Joint Chiefs Project: Funded for FY22 - \$1,442,886, with anticipated funding for NRCS \$173,118, application Cutoff 4/29/22, and Obligations August 19, 2022.

Tucson Field Office Workload – Active contracts: 24 Contracts (23 EQIP, 1 CSP), Totaling \$1,733,574 in funding allocations, Team 7 – 87 contracts \$8,401,591 in funding

TEAM 7 STAFF:

Brett Myers was selected as the Watershed Planner for Team 7 – 1/17 start date
Emilio Carrillo has taken a position as State Conservation Planning Specialist - 3/14 start date
RMS GS-11 position announced on 2/9/22 and closes 2/16/22
RMS 5/7/9 proposed under direct hire option

UA Cooperative Extension

Ashley Hall announced that a workshop about the state of vegetation and self-inspection of lands will be held in in Holbrook and Globe. Contact Ashley at 928-978-6752 or Ashleys3@arizona.edu. Ashley Hall stated the UofA Extension has a research plot in the Winkelman district researching vegetation recovery after the Telegraph Fire in Capitan. NRCWAY will be conducting a youth camp this summer for students in grades 8 – 12. It will be held July 25 – 29 The availability of Beef Quality Assurance training was discussed. Ashley offered to provide the training immediately after the next WNRCD meeting on May 18th. WNRCD staff will send out invitations to the Cooperators.

Reports from Supervisors & District Staff:

Steve Turcotte: The US Air Force is seeking permission for lower altitudes for F16s and F35s per an EIS. The new air space would reduce to an altitude of 2,000 feet for pilot training over parts of the district. As a former fighter pilot, Steve believes the lower altitudes are not necessary and could be harmful to livestock and possibly have more possibility for flares used in training to cause fires.

Carol DuBois: Has had difficulty dealing with State Land. Poor customer service has been her experience. Much discussion followed about the problems grazing lessees are having renewing their leases and making lease payments.

Gary Vinson: None

Bill Dunn: Chris Fletcher should be invited to the next meeting to discuss the Sun Zia project.

Call to the Public: None.

Adjourn: Chairman Dunn made a motion to Adjourn the meeting at 12:10. Steve Turcotte seconded it.
Motion passed 4-0.

Final Minutes Submitted by: Chris Postel, WNRCD Clerk

Date: May 18, 2022

Approval of Minutes: _____

Date: _____