



## **Winkelman Natural Resource Conservation District**

Quarterly Meeting

June 18th, 2025

Final Minutes

Location: Dudleyville Multi-Generational Complex.

The Winkelman Natural Resource Conservation District (WNRCD) was called to order at 10:00 am.

### **Board and Staff**

WNRCD: Bill Dunn, Steve Turcotte, Gary Vinson, Carol Dubois, Jonah Cude, Hattie Hedrick. Absent: Chris Postel (WNRCD Clerk), Kyle Thompson (NRCD Coord.) Barbara McGuire.

### **Agencies and Organizations**

Alisha Phipps (NRCS), Keith Warren and Sheyanne Miranda (ASARCO), Stace Walker (SRP San Pedro River Preserve), Nick Schobinger (AZGFD), Rayna Heartquist (Heartquist Hollow Farm), Ashley Hall (UA Coop Ext.). Cooperators: Becky Dunn, Laysa Rought, Catherine Mann (Mann Ranch), Bobby Blake (Aravaipa), Shad Beebe, Button Dubois, and Alyssa Warren.

### **Approve Final Meeting Minutes**

Steve Turcotte moved to approve the final meeting minutes from 03/12/25. Gary Vinson seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

**Review/Approve WNRCD Financial Report** The WNRCD financial report was reviewed. Steve Turcotte made a motion to file and accept the report, Gary Vinson seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0. The following invoices were discussed and approved to be paid:

- AACD reimbursement for Katie Cline work on power line for \$6,617.56.
- Bill Dunn reimbursement for paid invoices (\$2,160.93) plus \$1,000 for hauling tractor from Colorado to Arizona.

Gary Vinson moved to approve the invoices. Steve Turcotte seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

### **Old Business**

#### **NRC Board Update**

Per Bill Dunn, AACD is the current administrator, waiting on money from the state. After some organization, new changes will be made and full funding will be pursued through the Legislature. Another meeting will be in August (AACD Summer Conference) to further organize the NRC Board.

#### **WNRCD Operations Manager Report (Jonah Cude)**

Per Jonah, a new federal bill concerning forest service land is being considered that would be put up some land for sale. The bill has not been through congress as of yet.

#### **Water Protect Fund Grant Update**

Per Bill, the final details of our contract are being discussed concerning a project to clear invasive species and revegetate the river bottom. The issue is that using water from our non-exempt well to water the new plants using that water may not be allowed. Steve reported that we will make an agreement to use his wells if we have to.

### Drought Planning Workshop Update

Steve Turcotte and Button Dubois reported that it was a productive, informative meeting about monsoon & rainfall and the impacts of dry weather. Per Ashley Hall, there was a good turnout and other workshops can be organized based on feedback about the District's needs. Per Bill Dunn, \$545.00 was spent on a new projector for the workshop as our old one died. Total cost of the workshop was about \$800.

Windmill Generator Committee Report Nothing to report at this time.

### **New Business**

#### Review /approve Plans of Work and Request for Funds

Per Bill, it is mandated by AZ state statute to submit Plans of Work and Request for Funds annually. The Fiscal Year ends June 30, 2025. Carol Dubois made a motion to approve the Plans of Work and Request for Funds as presented. Gary Vinson seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

Copper Basin Chamber of Commerce Membership request Tabled.

#### Approve Debit Card (WNRCD District Account) for Jonah Cude

During discussion, Gary Vinson thought that a debit card may be the best solution for Jonah to purchase needed supplies, as two signatures are required for any funds to be released through the checkbook. A small purchase limit was discussed to allow Jonah a more efficient way to utilize funds in his day-to-day work. Any purchases of \$100.00 or more will need to be approved by Bill or another supervisor. A motion was made by Steve Turcotte to approve the Debit Card with a \$100 purchase limit with those restrictions. Carol Dubois seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

#### Hire Alyssa Warren (Administration & Financial Recordkeeping)

Carol Dubois made a motion to hire Alyssa for the Clerk position, Steve Turcotte seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0. Steve Turcotte offered to put together a contract, and proposed keeping Chris Postel as a consultant for as long as it takes to train Alyssa.

### **Reports from Agencies & Other Organizations:**

NRCS (Alisha Phipps): Alisha said that NRCS is back to writing contracts with producers and money is being paid for completed contracts. NRCS is down about forty employees state wide.

U of A Cooperative extension (Ashley Hall): Ashley Hall explained the use of virtual fencing and other ways of animal tracking using cattle tags. She said that a new app is being developed to track production estimates. With fires becoming more prevalent, the use of virtual fencing may be helpful to prevent potential loss of animals. A virtual fence workshop could be organized. Also, Ashley has been working to find a grant to aid the project to reduce Salt Cedars by using goats.

Game and Fish (Nick Schobinger): Per Nick, the land owner relations program provides grants. The Habitat Partnership Committee is raffling tags instead of using applications, reducing income for the agency's partnership grant income from \$4 million to \$2.5 million. Public grant opportunity? Bill asked about river bottom clearing and if a grant can be applied for to cover that. Nick explained that grant money would need to come from elsewhere. Bill will contact Sarah Gandaria.

ASARCO: Keith Warren reports there will be a July meeting to discuss a grant through an ASARCO partnership to aid in invasive species solutions for next year. He reports a larger ASARCO objective

is to get Salt Cedar out of the Gila to aid in production, reduce flooding, fires, etc. They are also working with the AZ Bighorn Sheep Society to provide water tanks for the wildlife at their Silverbell operations. Per Bill, he would like to discuss with him the irrigation well across the river from Kearny.

SRP San Pedro River Preserve Stace Walker reports they are mapping the wet/dry levels on the San Pedro. Water is low, almost nothing. Bird surveys are being done also. ASU is wrapping up a park study this fall.

Call to the Public: Nothing to report at this time.

Next Planned Meeting Dates: July 14,15 or 16 (Call at 7 pm), 09/10/2025 & 11/12/2025

Reports from Supervisors and District Personnel:

Steve Turcotte: He has been tasked with tracking the process and reports for lines 1 and 2 of the SunZia Project. They are looking at heating up line 1 in October after the fire season. They will approve the reclamation plans for areas and 96 gates need to be reinstalled. Funds, \$96,000 for this project, will be provided by the developers and our contractors will install them. They will be working with individual ranchers to install these new gates. Funds have been collected line 1 (\$340,167.67) and line 2 \$(125,000.00). He is working with El Rio Sol, the owner of line 2. Steve will write up the contracts and that he will need the original settlement agreement

Bill Dunn: He said that in the AZ District Court, "Environmentalists are suing USFWS again over desert tortoise EAS listing change." We may need to re-engage our efforts. One of the suit's goal is to eliminate grazing on public land. Gary proposed using Sunzia money to establish site monitoring or for whatever we need to do on this subject. Per Bill, he is engaging with Pima NRCD and Redington NRCD to come up with a plan. Since it is a lawsuit, he thinks that the only thing we may be able to do is provide comments in a brief.

Adjournment WNRCD

Carol Dubois made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 am. Steve Turcotte seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

Final Minutes Submitted by: Chris Postel & Alyssa Warren

Date: 9/10/2025

Approval of Minutes: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_