



# Santa Cruz Natural Resource Conservation District

Santa Cruz Regular Meeting      November 3, 2022      Draft Minutes

Location: Wild Horse Restaurant, Patagonia, AZ

Board Supervisors & Clerk: Stephen Williams, Daniel Bell (Absent), Bill Schock, Andy Jackson, and Chris Postel (Clerk).

Agencies & Guests: Yisell Martinez & Tom Reis (Natural Resource Conservation Services - NRCS),

Called to Order: 12:08 pm

Review/Approval of Minutes, 8/24/2022 & 9/11/2022: The minutes were reviewed. Bill Schock moved to approve the minutes as written. Andy Jackson seconded. The motion passed unanimously. 3-0.

Treasurer's Report (See Attached Report): \$2,500 needs to be transferred from the State account to the Education Center account. Bill Schock moved to accept and file the report. Andy Jackson seconded. The motion passed unanimously. 3-0.

Administration Update (See Attached Invoice): The Clerk's Invoice (August-October) was \$1,378.08 (69.25 hours plus expenses). Andy Jackson moved to pay the invoice. Bill Schock seconded. The motion passed unanimously. 3-0.

- Newsletter: Per the Clerk, the next newsletter should be done by the first week in December. The Chairman's Column has been drafted but additional articles are still needed. Bill Schock contacted Ashley Wright (UA Cooperative Extension) regarding nutritional content of certain grasses. Per Stephen Williams, soils workshops were conducted by UA Cooperative Extension and Arizona Land & Water Trust.
- Website (Clerk Cell Phone #): Per Stephen Williams, a new Public Records law requires that a point of contact be listed on the website. Per the Clerk, the website has been updated with the Clerk's email address and his new cell phone number (520-220-2962). The cell phone cost (about \$20-25/month) will be split between the Santa Cruz & Winkleman districts.
- Inventory: Per Stephen Williams, the container's (at the Santa Fe Ranch) contents needs to be inventoried.

Ed Center Update: Dean not in attendance. Per Stephen Williams, the Santa Fe Ranch Days and Project WET are planned to be held Spring, 2023.

## AGENCY UPDATES

NRCS (Tom Reis See Attached Report): Tom reviewed the report:

### FARM BILL PROGRAMS:

**EQIP-General** (Environmental Quality Incentive Program) & **CSP** (Conservation Stewardship Program)

- Applications year-round. **Application deadline to be eligible for next funding cycle is December 16, 2022**

**Tucson Field Office Workload – Active contracts**

- EQIP = 28 contracts
  - Totaling \$1.9 million in funding allocations
    - 15 contracts within Winkelman NRCD
    - 8 contracts within Pima NRCD
    - 4 contracts within Santa Cruz NRCD
    - 1 contract within Eloy NRCD (managing for Casa Grande NRCS office)
- CSP = 7 contracts
  - Totaling \$1.1 million in funding allocations
    - 3 contracts within Winkelman NRCD
    - 1 contract within Pima NRCD
    - 3 contracts within Santa Cruz NRCD

**Total Workload for Team 7 (Douglas, Tucson & Sells Field Offices), the highest in Arizona for 2022:**

- EQIP 37 contracts, \$2,787,494
- CSP 10 contracts \$1,586,992

Current workload (all years)

- 127 active contracts across all programs, the highest count in the State.
  - 109 EQIP, 15 CSP, 3 RCPP
- \$12,001,000 obligated
- \$2,154,616 paid

**TEAM 7 STAFF:**

- New Hire, Heather Knight. Hired as Rangeland Management Specialist for the Tucson Field Office. Started July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Heather is a recent graduate from the University of Arizona and majored in Natural Resources, Range Management. Will be shadowing Dave Womack and Alisha Phipps over the next year.
- New Civil Engineer hired for Team 7 (Tucson, Douglas, Sells), Melanie Stepanovic. Melanie will be working with Trevor Towers to assist Team 7 with engineering needs. Melanie previously worked for the Bureau of Reclamation for 2 years in Yuma.

Bill Schock is still looking for information on: the nutritional value of different grasses, temporary electric fencing, and what is involved to complete his archeological certification. He needs about \$1,000 for temporary electric fencing to separate ecological areas. Per Stephen Williams, the Inflation Reduction Act allocated \$8 billion to EQIP. Per Tom, NRCS is putting together a strategy to hire & train new staff and he will check on what can be done to complete Bill's certification. He is looking for a Rangeland Management specialist for the Douglas office. Multiple openings are in Arizona.

**OLD BUSINESS**

SC NRCD Scholarship: Dean Fish was absent, item tabled.

Santa Cruz County Fair Update: Per Stephen Williams, the fair had a lot of traffic and signed up 4-5 new cooperators. 700+ pencil-eraser bags with given out to the students and maintenance needs to be done on the Watershed trailer. Per Bill Schock, the signage needs to be updated.

Open SCNRCD Board Position Update: Per Stephen Williams, still working on it.

Signage Update: Per Stephen Williams, no update or change.

2022 Monitoring Update: Per Bill Schock, monitoring was done on his ranch.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Call to the Public: none

### Supervisor & Clerk Reports

- Andy Jackson: A Tucson group is doing conservation work on the Santa Cruz river. The river dump is on private land with a lot of trash going into the river. They need a way to capture the plastic and clean up the area. Per Bill Schock, it is a Federal problem. The International Boundary Commission meets in Nogales and should be made aware of the situation.
- Bill Schock:
  - He went on a Sentinel Landscape tour of Ramsey Canyon with (Amber Morin). They are doing fuels reduction work. The Sierra Vista environmental park uses effluent to re-recharge the aquifer. Palominas is using levies to recharge the aquifer next to the San Pedro river.
  - Dan Bell is using drones to find cattle. Bill bought a drone at Costco with a zoom lens which enables him to view the tags on the cattle. He can view the video on his laptop.
  - The cost of diesel fuel is going up. Climate Change has produced a lot of misinformation about CO2's impact on Climate Change. Water vapor has a 4 times stronger ability to absorb and radiate heat than CO2 and there is a hundred times more of it.
- Stephen Williams: The Santa Cruz NRCD was awarded a "Certificate of Appreciation" regarding the Sky Island Stewardship Partner program from the US Forest Service. Dan Bell's ranch (ZZ Cattle Co.) was also awarded a certificate.

Adjourn: Andy Jackson moved to adjourn the meeting. Bill Schock seconded it. The motion carried unanimously. 3-0. The Meeting adjourned at 1:13 pm.

Planned next meeting date: February 22, 2023.

Final Minutes Submitted by: Chris Postel

Date: February 22, 2023

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

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