

Minutes
TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD
Workshop Meeting
December 15-16, 1993

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board met for a workshop meeting on December 15, 1993 at 1:00 p.m. in its Conference Room at 311 North Fifth Street, Temple, Texas and ended at noon on December 16, 1993.

Board members present were:

Albert Evans, Chairman
Paul Robertson, Vice Chairman
Charles D. "Buddy" Clark, Member
C. F. "Dick" Schendel, Member
Harvey Davis, Member

Staff members present were:

Robert G. Buckley, Executive Director
James Moore, Assistant Executive Director
William C. Neiser, Assistant Executive Director
Mel Davis, Director of Programs
Beade Northcut, Engineer
Bo Spoons, Director of Programs
Clyde J. Gottschalk, Information/Education Director
Cherie King, Planner
Steve Jones, Dublin Regional Manager
Stephen Deiss, Planner
Lois Cain, Administrative Technician

Others present were:

Donald Swann, Association of Texas SWCDs
Tom Curran, Lower Colorado River Authority

Chairman Evans called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

James Moore introduced new employees Bo Spoons, Cherie King and Steve Jones and explained their responsibilities. Mr. Moore then passed out an updated employee organizational chart and explained the responsibilities of each department. He said the

Dublin Regional Office officially opened December 6, 1993.

Mr. Moore then held an informal discussion on Senate Bill 502 and advised the Board that this legislation required the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission and River Authorities to coordinate water quality assessments on agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source pollution with districts and the State Board. He then discussed Senate Bill 503 and broke down what the legislation does and how it will be administered. Mr. Moore discussed where we are, what we are doing and where we are going to be in the future on S.B. 503. Rules are in the process of being written for the cost share part of the program with plans to have a preliminary set available for Board review at the January 19, 1994 board meeting. Criteria for water quality management plans also have to be established. Mr. Moore said the State Board would maintain a file on all certified water quality management plans. He explained how complaints could be handled and what procedure each local district would follow when they receive a complaint.

Mr. Moore discussed the regional offices and explained what they will be doing. He reviewed the sources of information the Board used for locating the regional offices which included the existing assessment of nonpoint source impacted waters and priority watersheds identified by the Board. It should be known by the end of December who got the bid in Hale Center and Mount Pleasant for regional office building space. Next fiscal year, the agency will have resources for two additional regional offices. Possible locations include the Lower Rio Grande Valley and the coastal plain

rice belt area. Mr. Moore said the regional offices are to serve as an extension of the State Board staff and they will be taking care of whatever needs the agency has in getting water quality management programs and practices on the ground and functioning as planned.

Mr. Moore advised the Board that the Memorandum of Agreement with the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission had been signed by both parties and published in the Texas Register.

The Board was provided an outline of S. B. 503 rules along with a complete copy of the rules as adopted. It was the advice of the Board to rely primarily upon State Board staff for activities that educate soil and water conservation district directors on this program.

The meeting adjourned for the evening at 4:45 p.m.

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board reconvened at 8:00 a.m. on December 16, 1993 in its Conference Room at 311 North Fifth St. in Temple with the same people in attendance.

Mr. Moore began discussion with Reauthorization of the Clean Water Act and passed out the agency's position paper on the Act. He provided the Board information prepared by NACD on S. 1114 by Senator Baucus and H. R. 2543 by Congressman Oberstar. Mr. Moore suggested to the Board they review both bills that have been introduced. He informed the Board that amendments were being prepared to the bills that would help make the program more voluntary instead of regulatory. No hearings are expected on these bills before April, 1994.

James Moore provided the Board copies of the preliminary draft report on the Texas Coastal Management Program dated December, 1993 and said comments were due to the General Land Office by January 29, 1994. He discussed the goals of the program, coastal boundary, program goals and policies and draft rules for goals and policies. Mr. Moore pointed out where the State Board is mentioned in the draft documents. He said the State Board and agriculture are not mentioned very often but when they are mentioned it is very significant.

Bill Neiser provided each Board member a copy of the current Agency Strategic Plan for the 1992-1998 period. He said the State Board's plan is consistent with "Texas Tomorrow", the State of Texas Strategic Plan, and is included in the State's Natural Resources Mission. After public input a revised "Texas Tomorrow" will be published and we will have until June 1, 1994 to prepare a revised agency plan. The appropriation request will be due in August for the 1995-1996 biennium. Mr. Neiser asked for the Board's guidance in beginning the planning process. He told the Board the needs for matching funds and technical assistance funds have been growing but have been funded at the same or lower levels for 12 years. Mr. Neiser discussed the Brush Control Program which has not been funded. The Board wants to continue seeking funds for this program. USDA reorganization and its impact on districts was discussed. Mr. Buckley advised the Board that Congressman Charles Stenholm would be holding a public meeting in Waco on January 18, 1994 at 2:30 p.m. in the Convention Center in conjunction with the

BIG meeting to seek input into the USDA reorganization. It was the consensus of the Board for staff to prepare testimony for either the Chairman or Vice Chairman to present at the hearing. It was also the consensus of the Board for Buddy Clark to represent the Board at the Grazing Lands Initiative Conference to be held on January 20, 1994 at the Bamburger Ranch near Johnson City.

Future needs for S.B. 503 implementation were discussed. Mr. Neiser said funding for the next two regional offices would be available September 1, 1994. No locations for these offices have been set.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Albert Evans
Chairman

Lois Cain
Secretary

1-19-94
Date

I certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the workshop meeting held on December 15-16, 1993.

1-19-94
Date

Robert S. Buckley
Executive Director