

Minutes
TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD
November 15, 2001

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board meet on November 15, 2001 at 8:00 a.m. in its Hearings Room at 311 North Fifth Street, Temple, Texas.

Board members present were:

Edward G. Albrecht, Chairman
T. Wayne Register, Vice Chairman
Donald Swann, Member
W. T. "Dub" Crumley, Member

Board member absent was:

Dayton Elam, Member

Staff members present were:

Robert G. (Bob) Buckley, Executive Director
James M. Moore, Director of Conservation Programs
Bobbie Stephens, Director of Administration
Mel Davis, Director of District Operations
Kevin Wagner, Natural Resources Specialist
Dawn Heitman, Human Resources Specialist
Sam Unberhagen, Program Specialist
John Millican, Program Administrator
Kevin Canfield, Planner
Donna Long, Program Specialist
John Foster, Program Specialist
Kenny Zajicek, Contract Manager
Tonni Balas, Information Specialist
Jason McAlister, Planner
Lois J. Cain, Administrative Technician

Others present were:

John Burt, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Freddie Williams, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Tim Buscha, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Clyde Bohmfalk, Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission
George Noelke, Attorney General's Office

Chairman Albrecht called the meeting to order and welcomed those present.

Minutes from the September 20, 2001 Board meeting were considered. On motion of Donald Swann, seconded by Dub Crumley, the minutes were approved as mailed.

Mel Davis presented district director appointments and said all appeared to be in order but was waiting for original paperwork for two appointments from the Lower Sabine-Neches Soil and Water Conservation District #446. On motion of Wayne Register, seconded by Dub Crumley the following appointments were approved including the two appointments from Lower Sabine-Neches SWCD pending receipt of original paperwork:

Bart Greer, Floyd County SWCD #104
Johnny Drew, Red River County SWCD #423
Bennie Plunkett, Lower Sabine-Neches SWCD #446
J. B. Arrington, Lower Sabine-Neches SWCD #446
Wayne E. Holland, Rusk SWCD #447

Mr. Davis then reviewed the 2001 Annual Statewide Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors recently held in San Antonio, Texas on October 15-17, 2001. He discussed a preliminary statement of expenses and revenue and said 697 individuals attended and two districts – Kendall SWCD #216 and Bastrop SWCD #340 – had all five of their directors in attendance. Wayne Register suggested a letter be mailed to these two districts commending their 100% attendance. Mr. Davis asked for Board comments and suggestions for next year. Mr. Register said attendance at the Wednesday morning general session was embarrassingly low and asked Mr. Davis to talk to field staff for their ideas on how to improve the attendance.

The 2002 Annual Statewide Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors will be held in Corpus Christi, Texas on October 7-9, 2002 at the Corpus Christi Bayfront Plaza Convention Center.

Mel Davis discussed future state meeting sites for 2004 and advised the Board he and Memo Benavides had checked out facilities in Laredo as directed by the Board in their September meeting. After discussion and on motion of Wayne Register, seconded by Donald Swann, staff was authorized to make commitments for October 18-20, 2004 in Laredo at the Laredo Civic Center.

Mr. Davis informed the Board that hotel reservations had been made for them for the 2002 NACD national meeting to be held on February 3-6, 2002 in Sparks, Nevada at the Nugget Hotel.

Mr. Davis provided an update on district director elections held in Zone 5 of each district during October 1-15, 2001. He said next year revision to the Agriculture Code would be in effect when elections are held in Zones 1 and 2 of each district. Staff will be presenting the Board members with proposed rules and procedures to implement the required revisions.

Mr. Davis updated the Board on results of the NRCS Teaming Survey. He advised staff was working closely with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to address issues identified in the survey.

Mel Davis provided a written Public Information/Education report. There were no questions.

Dawn Heitman gave the Human Resource report and introduced two new employees – Jason McAlister and Jay Bragg hired as Planners to work for the Section

319 group in the Temple office. She also advised the agency is still recruiting for the Assistant Executive Director for External Customer Relations for the Temple office and for an Engineer for the Harlingen Regional Office. Ms. Heitman also gave an employee training update and an Affirmative Action/Recruitment Report.

Ms. Heitman provided a staffing and recruiting report and said interviews had been held on November 14th for the position of Assistant Executive Director for External Customer Relations. She expressed her thanks to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Board for serving on the interview team.

Bob Buckley discussed a draft organizational chart for staff to better handle the new responsibilities the Legislature has given the agency. He said the agency is authorized 66 full time employees. On motion of Donald Swann, seconded by Wayne Register, the chart was adopted as presented. (Copy attached)

Bobbie Stephens discussed the annual internal audit report for Fiscal Year 2001. The agency responded to all recommendations within the report. Final copies of the Annual Internal Audit Report for Fiscal Year 2001 were mailed to the required oversight agencies.

Audits to be addressed in Fiscal Year 2002 are the Brush Control Program, Human Resource System and Control and the Senate Bill 503 Program.

Ms. Stephens provided the Board the Fiscal Year 2001 Budget Versus Expenditure Report ending August 31, 2001. She said any funds left in the Brush Control Fund had been transferred to the Fiscal Year 2002 Brush Fund.

Ms. Stephens also provided and discussed the Fiscal Year 2002 Budget Versus Expenditure Report ending October 31, 2001.

Ms. Stephens advised the Board of a meeting of the Technical Assistance Workgroup which consisted of ten directors, ten district employees and the ten field representatives of the State Board. The workgroup developed criteria for distribution of technical assistance allocations. A draft survey was developed to allow district input. The survey will give districts the opportunity to respond to potential changes to allocation criteria for the Technical Assistance Grant Program beginning with Fiscal Year 2004. The Board was asked to review the draft survey and provide input. Staff advised the Board the survey would be mailed in early December in order to have replies returned to the agency in a timely manner to be incorporated into the Legislative Appropriation Request process.

An updated travel report as of October 31, 2001 for Fiscal Year 2001 for the agency was provided and discussed by Ms. Stephens.

Ms. Stephens discussed proposed revision to Title 31. Natural Resources and Conservation Part XVII, Soil and Water Conservation, Chapter 525. Audit Requirements for Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The rule revision addresses the financial reporting and audit requirements of districts. The changes have been published in the **Texas Register** and no comments were received. On motion of Donald Swann, seconded by Dub Crumley the Board adopted the addition of 525.8 Compliance Contingencies.

John Burt reported on NRCS activities and updated the Board on the status of the proposed appropriation bill in Congress. He advised the State Technical Committee had recently met in Temple.

Clyde Bohmfalk from the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission expressed appreciation to the Board for attending the joint meeting on November 9, 2001 in Austin and for the assistance received from the State Board staff in preparing for the meeting.

John Burt discussed a draft Memorandum of Understanding for the Lower Mississippi Valley Initiative Partnership and explained its purpose. He asked the Board if they would consider signing the MOU which would assist NRCS in seeking additional funds. Mr. Buckley recommended that staff be given time to have discussion with NRCS and others concerning the MOU. On motion of Wayne Register, seconded by Donald Swann, the Board asked staff to put together more information on the MOU and to place it back on the agenda for the January 2002 Board meeting.

James Moore provided copies of and discussed the Draft State Water Plan, Water for Texas 2002. He explained that the plan was based on the regional water plans as instituted in Senate Bill 1 passed during the 1997 session of the Texas Legislature. Mr. Moore pointed out several parts of the plan that contained recommendations that would impact agriculture, conservation programs or the State Board.

Kenny Zajicek gave a Status Report on the Section 319 Program and provided a list of Fiscal Year 2002 applications for federal assistance and a list of all on-going 319(h) projects.

Sam Unberhagen presented a status report on the Water Quality Program. He pointed out that complaint activity is down compared to past years.

Mr. Unberhagen then reported on Fiscal Year 2002 Water Quality Cost Share Allocations. He said no new requests had been received for statewide funds since the last Board meeting and nine requests remain pending that had been deferred from earlier action. Staff recommended not funding anything at this time. No action was taken.

James Moore opened discussion on the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program and asked the Board if there were any questions about any aspects of the program. No questions were asked.

Response to comments and final approval of Lake Aquilla TMDL implementation plan was discussed. The Board was advised a comment letter had been received from the Texas Department of Agriculture. Staff provided the Board a draft response to the comments. The Board was advised the final copy of the Lake Aquilla TMDL Implementation Plan would be brought back for consideration at the January 2002 Board meeting. The Board concurred.

Kevin Wagner provided a status report on the Brush Control Program and specifically discussed four items. He reported that work in the North Concho River Watershed is progressing according to schedule; discussed the status of feasibility studies in the Palo Pinto Lake, Lake Brownwood, Lake Fort Phantom Hill and Lake Arrowhead Watersheds; and discussed the maintenance/management study which had been contracted between the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board and Upper Colorado River Authority. He also discussed the new program implementation areas.

Kevin Wagner discussed revision of the State Brush Control Plan and said according to law a public hearing is required before a revision is adopted. Staff recommended setting the date of the hearing and adoption of the revised State Brush Control Plan for the January 2002 Board meeting. On motion of Wayne Register, seconded by Donald Swann, the Board decided to hold a public hearing and consider the Revised State Brush Control Plan at the January 2002 Board meeting.

James Moore discussed the availability of Technical Assistance for State Water Quality Programs. He indicated the item had been placed on the agenda at the request of Aubrey Russell, District Director from the McClellan Creek Soil and Water Conservation District, Panhandle, Texas. Mr. Moore explained that Mr. Russell is concerned about the lack of help from NRCS on the State Water Quality Program, primarily in the development of Water Quality Management Plans. The Board instructed staff to look into this issue in detail and to have this item on the agenda again for the January 2002 Board meeting and to inform Mr. Russell of this action.

James Moore discussed Adoption of Amendments to 31 TAC Part XVII Chapter 523.3 – Water Quality Management Plans. He reported that these amendments had gone through the required public comment period and no comments were received. Staff recommended the Board adopt the rule amendments as published. On motion of Wayne Register, seconded by Dub Crumley, the Board adopted the rule amendments as published.

Bobbie Stephens provided for the Board's information their travel reports for Fiscal Years 2001 and 2002.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for January 17, 2002.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Edward H. Albrecht
Chairman

Lisa J. Cain
Secretary

1-17-2002
Date

I certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board meeting held on November 15, 2001.

1-17-2002
Date

Robert H. Buckley
Executive Director

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board

Chairman Dayton Elam	Vice-Chair Donald Swann	W.T. "Dub" Crumley
Edward Albrecht	T. Wayne Register	

Executive Director
Bob Buckley
Administrative Technician III
Lois Cain

Director II — Deputy Executive Director
James Moore
Administrative Technician II — Tammy Riefler

Director I — District Operations
Mel Davis
Administrative Technician II — Edna Etheredge

Director I — External Customer Relations
Secretary IV — Paula Zingelmann
Vacant

Director I — Administration**
Bobbie Stephens
Secretary IV — Amy Varner

SWCD Program Assistance
Program Administrator IV — John Millican

Natural Resource Specialist VI —
Kevin Wagner

Information/Education
Info. Spec. II — Tomi Balas
Info. Spec II — Vacant

Human Resources
H R Specialist IV — Dawn Heiman

Budget and Accounting
Accountant IV — Andrea Pennington
Accountant II — Vicki Davis
Accountant I — Janice Gandy
Admin Tech II — Vanessa Haynes

319 Program
Planner I — Kevin Carfield
Planner I — Vacant
Planner I — Vacant

Contracts
Contract Manager — Kerry Zajick
Contract Tech III — Yolanda Brown

SWCD Program Support
Area I
Program Specialist II — Rex Isom
Program Specialist II — Bob Gruner
Area II
Program Specialist II — Joe Freeman
Program Specialist II — Ben Wilde
Area III
Program Specialist II — Kendra Whitaker
Program Specialist II — Adrian Perez
Area IV
Program Specialist II — David Powell
Program Specialist II — Joel Clark
Area V
Program Specialist II — Don Brandenberger
Program Specialist II — Charlie Upchurch

North Concho Project Office
Program Administrator IV — Johnny Oswald
503 Support
Program Spec III — Sammy Unberhagen
Planner I — Lee Munz

Program Support
Engineer IV — Richard Egg
Program Spec IV — Donna Long
Natl Res Spec IV — John Foster
Network Spec II — Clay Wright

Wharton Regional Office
Program Administrator IV — Stephen Deiss
Engineer III — Carter Miska
Natural Resources Specialist IV — Clinton Conrad
Engineer Tech V — Judy Albus
Secretary III — Irene Matos

Hartigan Regional Office
Program Administrator IV — Andy Garza
Engineer III — Vacant
Natural Resources Spec IV — Eduardo Mendez-Gonzalez
Engineer Tech V — Joel Saldivar
Secretary III — Sylvia

Hale Center Regional Office
Program Administrator IV — Charley Rodgers
Engineer IV — Dick Westfield
Natural Resources Specialist IV — Chad Reed
Engineer Tech V — Glenn Baker
Secretary III — Norfleet

Mt. Pleasant Regional Office
Program Administrator IV — John O'Connor
Engineer IV — Larry Gibbs
Natural Resources Specialist IV — Mark Cochran
Engineer Tech V — Linda Shields
Secretary III — Beverly Krause

Dublin Regional Office
Program Administrator IV — Steve Jones
Engineer IV — Henry Neason
Natural Resources Specialist IV — Jerry Lee
Engineer Tech V — Todd Oneil
Secretary III — Trecia Perales