

Minutes
TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD
January 20, 1993

The State Soil and Water Conservation Board met on January 20, 1993, at 8:00 a.m. in its Conference Room at 311 North Fifth Street, Temple, Texas.

Board members present were:

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

Staff members present were:

Robert G. Buckley, Executive Director
John W. Millican, Assistant Executive Director
William C. Neiser, Director of Programs
James M. Moore, Engineer
Leonard Pietzsch, Chief Accountant
Mel Davis, Soil Conservationist
Clyde J. Gottschalk, Information Specialist
Janet Gonser, Planner
Stephen Deiss, Planner
Ramesh Chamala, Research Specialist
Lois Cain, Office Services Supervisor
Bob Gruner, Soil Conservationist
Rex Isom, Soil Conservationist
Johnny Oswald, Soil Conservationist
Joe Freeman, Soil Conservationist
Andy Garza, Soil Conservationist
Roy Freeman, Soil Conservationist
David Powell, Soil Conservationist
Joe McKay, Soil Conservationist
Dub Crumley, Soil Conservationist
Don Brandenberger, Soil Conservationist

Others present were:

Wes Oneth, Soil Conservation Service
Dr. Clarence Richardson, Agricultural Research Service
Dr. Bill Harris, Texas Agricultural Extension Service
Comer Tuck, Texas Water Development Board

Chairman Schendel called the meeting to order and welcomed

everyone.

On motion of Harvey Davis, seconded by Paul Robertson, the minutes of the November 18, 1992 Board meeting were approved as mailed.

John Millican presented district director appointments for consideration. He advised the Board all appointments appeared in order and recommended they be approved. On motion of Albert Evans, seconded by Buddy Clark, the following appointments were approved:

Lindan Morris, Floyd County SWCD #104
Eric Zybach, Wheeler County SWCD #141
Drew Kirkpatrick, Garza SWCD #158
Edith Clarkson, Copano Bay SWCD #329
Flavio Villarreal, Starr County SWCD #332
Fred Magouirk, Bedias Creek SWCD #428
Rose Baldwin, Panola SWCD #448
Judy J. Morrow, Palo Pinto SWCD #518

The Board was asked for direction in looking at future meeting sites for the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors. After discussion the staff was requested to look into facilities available in Austin, McAllen, Galveston, El Paso, Corpus Christi and Fort Worth.

Bill Neiser reviewed and explained the Fiscal Year 1992 Annual Financial Report.

The Fiscal Year 1993 Expenditure Report ending December 31, 1992, was reviewed and Mr. Neiser informed the Board that expenditures were running as budgeted.

Mr. Neiser discussed the Fiscal Year 1993 Technical Assistance needs survey. After some discussion it was the consensus of the Board to continue this survey in order to find out the needs of districts and to see if any funds will be turned back to be used by

other districts.

The 1994-95 Legislative Appropriation Request was reviewed. The Board discussed a recent budget hearing of the agency before the Senate Finance Subcommittee. The Board was informed the Senate Finance Mark-up Hearings will begin February 1st. Mr. Buckley informed the Board he had an appointment with the agency's LBB performance analyst concerning a rider in the agency's recommendation by the Legislative Budget Board concerning payments of state grants to districts on Technical Assistance and Matching Funds. The Board wished to continue payments of these funds as they are currently handled.

Bill Neiser discussed the status of the districts' audits. He said 209 audits were currently in the State Board office with 98 complete and approved. There was much discussion on ways to help educate district bookkeepers in the future. Training sessions were discussed as a possibility. Mr. Neiser will look into accounting computer programs that districts could use. Funds are currently being withheld from districts until a corrected audit is received in the State Board office. Bob Buckley requested the Board to grant a waiver to districts who have not submitted a correct audit an extension before withholding Technical Assistance and Matching Funds. On motion of Albert Evans, seconded by Paul Robertson, an extension until February 15th was granted to allow districts to have corrected audits in the State Board office before withholding Technical Assistance and Matching Funds. Motion carried.

Mr. Neiser discussed the Texas Water Development Board's

agricultural conservation loan program in which some soil and water conservation districts participate. The Texas Water Development Board wants the districts who participate to provide them with an audit each year. Paul Robertson moved that it is the Texas Water Development Board's responsibility and not the State Board's to inform these districts that they require an audit by a Certified Public Accountant. Buddy Clark seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Clyde Gottschalk reported to the Board on the District Director Training Workshop which was held in the State Board's Conference Room on January 12-13, 1993. More than 30 people were signed up for the course, but only 17 attended. A small registration fee was discussed as a possible means to insure better attendance. Mr. Gottschalk also advised the Board that the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation District's Public Information/Education Committee has submitted a grant application to EPA. If approved the grant would be used for environmental workshops for teachers. He also discussed the results of the Public Information/Education Project Questionnaire. He said the committee had met and would recommend to the Association Board of Directors the results of the survey which are: (1) Conservation Education; (2) Conservation Related Films/Videos; and (3) Youth Program. He also discussed a proposed Public Information/Education budget which would be presented to the Association Board of Directors at their next meeting. Mr. Gottschalk informed the Board that the agency was getting good media coverage on the wetland conservation

program.

Bob Buckley discussed a list of bills that were being tracked in the State Legislature that could affect the State Soil and Water Conservation Board or soil and water conservation districts.

Wes Oneth reported that the Soil Conservation Service has completed design on 27 watershed structures to be repaired using \$4,000,000 of emergency watershed funds. Adams Branch Watershed structure in Brownwood is being advertised for bid. Frio County Soil Survey has just been published. He briefly discussed the Food Security Act.

Mr. Oneth also summarized what the Secretary of Agriculture has proposed concerning the USDA reorganization. Plans include the closing of 10 SCS offices in Texas which at present include Van Horn, King County, Menard, Terrell, Longview, Brackettville, Sonora, Sanderson, Tilden and Eagle Pass.

Dr. Clarence Richardson reported that ARS has imposed a hiring freeze nationwide. He reported that ARS named a new Area Director, Dr. Floyd Horn, and a new Associate Area Director, Dr. Charles Onstad.

Dr. Bill Harris advised the Board that the Extension Service has an employee who is working as a liaison between the Extension Service and EPA in the Region 6 office. He also reported on some administrative changes and said Dr. Ed Hiler has been named as the new Deputy Chancellor of Agriculture and the new Associate Director is Dr. Chester Fehlis. Dr. Harris said the Extension looks to the State Board for NPS leadership and enjoys cooperative efforts with

the State Board and Districts.

Comer Tuck reported that the Texas Water Development Board would meet on February 25th and consider their Subchapter H funds and several soil and water conservation districts were on the list to be considered. He said his agency plans to give recognition to other agencies and entities for outstanding plans, etc. and will include several SWCDs who have been more active in the loan program.

Mr. Buckley informed the Board that the Association Board of Directors would be meeting on January 25th to review the resolutions packet for the NACD national meeting to be held in Orlando, Florida, February 7-11, 1993.

The Board was asked if they wanted to adopt a position regarding the USDA reorganization. It was the consensus of the Board to draft a letter with the Chairman's signature to be sent out to appropriate people opposing the closing of area field offices in Texas.

James Moore discussed draft revision of the agricultural and silvicultural nonpoint source management program prepared pursuant to Section 319 of the Federal Clean Water Act. He said plans are to revise the management program and a meeting has been set for January 25, 1993 with EPA to begin the process.

The fiscal year 1992 North Bosque River 319 Proposal was discussed by James Moore. He reported that some progress had apparently been made in negotiating a proper role for the State Board, but that the Texas Water Commission had not yet committed to

it.

James Moore discussed Fiscal Year 1993 319 competitive grant proposals. The Board was provided with a listing and brief description of each project proposal. Mr. Moore reported there would be a base grant for Texas of approximately \$1.1 million which would be committed to a Lake Fork Creek comprehensive watershed project jointly administered by the State Board and the Water Commission. The list of competitive projects will compete in Region 6 for about \$2 million.

Mr. Moore discussed the status of the Wetland Demonstration Project, funded by EPA, and provided the Board with a final copy of the project work plan. Snake Creek Watershed in Fort Bend County was reported as being chosen as the study site. A public hearing has been set in Rosenberg tentatively for February 18, 1993. Stephen Deiss brought the Board up to date on project activities at the local level.

Mr. Buckley reported on the Joint Interim Committee on the Environment. He said the committee was complimentary of the State Board program and adopted the Board's recommendations totally.

Senate Bill 818 activity was discussed by James Moore. He indicated that the Water Commission will be placing emphasis on pilot projects to assess agricultural nonpoint source pollution problems over the next two years.

The Soil Conservation Service Water Management Strategic Plan was discussed. The Board was advised of a meeting to be held in Austin on January 21, 1993. Mel Davis will be attending from the

State Board office.

The Board heard a report from Dick Schendel and Bob Buckley on their attendance of a meeting "Conservation at a Crossroads" held in Chicago, Illinois, January 4-7, 1993. The meeting was held by the Soil Conservation Service and the National Association of Conservation Districts to build support for USDA and SCS.

James Moore provided the Board with a meeting notice for the Coastal Management Program, State Agency Task Force of the General Land Office on which the Board has been placed to coordinate agency programs with the coastal management program.

Dick Schendel advised the Board he was not able to attend the NPS Subcommittee meeting of the Galveston Bay National Estuary Program. He asked Roy Freeman, State Board Field Representative, to attend in his place. Janet Gonser from the State Board office staff also attended. They reported the Coastal Zone Management Program may be postponed until funding is available and that the State Board had been included on the Agriculture NPS Task Force of the Galveston Bay program. Additionally, it was reported that technical assistance funds could become available to coastal soil and water districts from EPA.

Board member elections in State Areas I, III, and V will be held on May 4, 1993. Board members were provided copies of material for each election mailing.

Board members travel was discussed. Travel plans to Orlando, Florida for February 6-10, 1993, to attend national meeting for the National Association of Conservation Districts were put on hold for

the time-being because the State Board staff had been notified that Senate Finance Committee Mark-up Hearings would begin February 1, 1993.

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for March 17, 1993. Dick Schendel invited the Board to hold its May 19th meeting in Kenedy and to attend the dedication of a dam (Site A) on the Ecletto Creek Watershed.

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

Clarence J. Schendel
Chairman

Luis Cain
Secretary

March 17, 1993
Date

I certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Board meeting held on January 20, 1993.

March 17, 1993
Date

Robert S. Buckley
Executive Director