

Minutes  
TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD  
May 20, 1992

The State Soil and Water Conservation Board met on Wednesday, May 20, 1992, at 8:00 a.m. in its Conference Rooms at 311 North Fifth Street, Temple, Texas.

Board members present were:

Harvey Davis, Chairman  
C. F. "Dick" Schendel, Vice Chairman  
Albert Evans, Member  
Paul Robertson, Member  
Charles D. "Buddy" Clark, 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  
Beade Northcut, Engineer  
Clyde J. Gottschalk, Information Specialist  
Leonard Pietzsch, Chief Accountant  
Stephen Deiss, Planner  
Janet Gonser, Planner  
Ramesh Chamala, Research Specialist  
Lois Cain, Office Services Supervisor  
Robert 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  
Don Brandenberger, Soil Conservationist  
Dub Crumley, Soil Conservationist

Others present were:

Dr. Bill Harris, Texas Agricultural Extension Service  
Atlan Pfluger, Texas Water Development Board  
Dr. Clarence Richardson, Agricultural Research Service  
Dr. Allan Jones, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station  
Patti Martinez, General Land Office  
Don Swann, President, Association of Texas SWCDs  
Wes Oneth, Soil Conservation Service

Harvey Davis called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance. He welcomed Charles D. "Buddy" Clark as a new Board member representing State District II who replaced Joe Antilley at a Board member election on May 5, 1992. Mr. Davis also welcomed Albert Evans back as a re-elected Board member from State District IV.

On motion of Paul Robertson, seconded by C. F. "Dick" Schendel, the minutes of the March 18, 1992, Board meeting were approved as mailed. Motion carried.

John Millican presented District Director appointments for consideration and recommended they be approved. On motion of Charles D. "Buddy" Clark, seconded by Dick Schendel, the following District Director appointments were approved:

Billy Paul Simpson, Upper Pease SWCD #164  
Marty Graham, Upper Nueces-Frio SWCD #238  
Will W. Allison, Upper Nueces-Frio SWCD #238  
Roy Boone, Miller-Brazos SWCD#542  
Joe Ed Wise, Central Colorado SWCD #550

Bill Neiser presented a proposal for the allocation of fiscal year 1992 Subchapter H Technical Assistance. There was a total of \$59,850.36 available to be allocated. The proposed allocation amount per area was as follows:

Area I	\$17,123.40
Area II	\$11,904.84
Area III	\$14,514.12
Area IV	\$ 5,218.56
Area V	<u>\$11,089.44</u>
Total	\$59,850.36

On motion of Paul Robertson, seconded by Albert Evans, the

allocations were approved as proposed. Motion carried. (Copy attached.)

Mr. Neiser then discussed the Fiscal Year 1992 expenditure report for eight months ending April 30, 1992. He pointed out that while travel expenditures are slightly over budget at this time appropriation balances are sufficient to cover total expenditures.

Bob Buckley reported on Legislative Budget Board action on Fiscal Years 92-93 budget. He said the LBB had adopted a position on the rider of reduction and should not make any across the board reductions.

Bill Neiser discussed the FY 92 matching fund allocations and provided the Board with a list of districts that had not claimed two-thirds of their allocation by May 15th. He advised the Board that in the past the amount of the reduction was normally paid out to districts as supplemental payments after August 1st. The Board decided to wait until August 1st to release the amount for supplemental payments.

Bill Neiser brought the Board up to date on the Uniform Statewide Accounting System. He said after May the agency would have all current year transactions on the system. He said this system should prove to be an excellent management tool if it performs as expected.

Mr. Neiser then discussed the Americans with Disabilities Act and the impact it will have on the agency and soil and water conservation district operations. The Board was provided with information related to the act and informed that the field staff

would be discussing the act with each district.

Mr. Neiser reported on the performance audit recently conducted by the State Auditor's Office. He said the auditor examined the accuracy and the appropriateness of the Key Performance Targets as identified in the General Appropriations Act. Mr. Buckley told the Board that we expect the audit will be a clean report with some helpful suggestions.

Bill Neiser discussed the Agency Strategic Plan. A copy of Phase II of the Plan had been mailed earlier to each Board member for their review. After discussion Albert Evans made the motion to approve the document in substance and authorized the staff to make changes as needed to consolidate goals, objectives, and strategies for the June 1st submission with final adoption by the Board at the July Board meeting. The motion was seconded by Paul Robertson and the motion carried.

Bob Buckley requested direction from the State Board for the FY 94-95 budget request. He said in the past funding has been requested for the Brush Control program, for operation and maintenance of the watershed program; cost-share program; expanded public information/education program; expanded non point source funding, and for a staff attorney along with the matching fund and technical assistance funding. The Board asked the staff to prepare a proposal and then present it to the Board for their approval.

Dr. Allan Jones told the Board he was pleased to be working with James Moore, Stephen Deiss and other staff from the State Board office on various programs including the Seymour Aquifer

Water Quality Demonstration Project in Knox County.

Dr. Bill Harris advised the Board that the Extension Service had reached an agreement with EPA to set up a liaison in the Region 6 office of EPA in the Pesticides and Toxic Division. He indicated that the person will also be involved with water quality programs and serve on the planning advisory committee. He said EPA is looking more and more to voluntary programs to solve NPS problems. Dr. Harris said they were working with a number of people on the Farm-A-Syst program and have had two meetings in Haskell. Dr. Harris discussed sewage imports from other states to the great plains states. He reported that rangeland in Brewster County was being used by New York City for disposal of sewage and indicated that major concerns existed and that more will probably be heard on this situation. Dr. Harris expressed his appreciation to the soil and water conservation districts for the support they have been giving the Extension Service in their judging contests. He said it helps students extend their education in the field of conservation.

Atlan Pfluger reported that the Texas Water Development Board has 12 agriculture grant requests pending for a total of \$130,000, but would only be able to fund \$80,000.

Dr. Clarence Richardson told the Board that he thought the Agriculture Research Service would not be effected by the USDA reorganization since they are a research agency and cuts have been limited to other types of agencies up to this point.

Donald Swann advised the Board he was making the transition from Association Vice President to Association President. He

thanked the State Board for the help they have given the Association and districts in the past and indicated he was looking forward to working closely with the State Board and staff in the future.

John Millican brought the Board up to date on what had been done for the Annual State Meeting of Soil and water Conservation District Directors which will be held at South Padre Island on October 19-21, 1992. He said that a block of hotel rooms has been reserved for our meeting and that information on room reservations would be mailed to districts in mid July. The Board agreed to use the Sheraton Hotel as the headquarters hotel. Mr. Millican told the Board the field staff was getting good response on the meeting and it looks like there will be good attendance.

James Moore discussed recent activity relative to development of a low interest loan program for agricultural water quality management practices. He said the state revolving loan fund administered by the Texas Water Development Board could possibly be used to make loans to private landowners for installation of nonpoint source Best Management Practices. He added that soil and water conservation district liability in the event of bad loans was the major hurdle to overcome and that several different avenues to address the problem were being investigated.

Mr. Moore reported on the EPA wetland conservation program grant request submitted by the agency. He indicated that EPA appeared interested and was likely to fund the project, which

involves demonstrating non-regulatory, incentive based methods of wetland conservation.

James Moore brought the Board up to date on the status of the nonpoint source management program. He reported that the Arroyo Colorado project proposal for use of FY 92 319 funds should be approved for funding. He also told the Board that projects funded by FY 91 319 funds were nearing the point that funds will soon become available and implementation begin.

Mr. Moore presented information on the Farmstead Assessment System. He reported that EPA had awarded a \$5,000 grant to the State Board to take the lead in forming a state team to look at adopting the Farm-A-Syst worksheets for use in Texas at a workshop to be held in Fort Worth the week of May 25th. He reported that the team would include the Soil Conservation Service, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Texas Water Commission, Texas Water Development Board, Texas Department of Agriculture and the State Soil and Water Conservation Board.

Mr. Moore updated the Board on activities of the different advisory committees of the Texas Water Commission that pertain to State Board programs. He said the NPS Subcommittee of the Agriculture Advisory Committee had completed a mission statement that should be available soon. He also reported on the Permitting Subcommittee which is advising the commission on confined animal feeding rules. He informed the Board that the seven public meetings which had been planned to discuss proposed rules had been postponed until the subcommittee could provide adequate input.

James Moore discussed draft recommendations of the Clean Water Council's NPS Subcommittee which included recommendations for agricultural nonpoint sources. Discussion centered around a recommendation that a permitting program for agricultural nonpoint sources be implemented through the Soil and Water Conservation Board. After discussion, the Board instructed staff to work with the subcommittee to change the wording to recommend that a water quality management plan certification program be established through the State Board to serve as an alternative compliance strategy to the traditional regulatory permitting program.

Wes Oneth discussed the proposed reorganization of the USDA and explained the history of the proposal. He explained that 22 Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service offices could be closed and on paper the Soil Conservation Service has closed 13 offices in Texas. After much discussion concerning the ACP program administered by the ASCS the Board asked that a position statement be drafted for the State Board to share in its administration if the program becomes available.

Mr. Oneth said the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative is underway within sixteen states on a pilot program basis.

Mr. Oneth reported that the Seco Creek Soil Survey had been updated and that the Prime Farmlands list for the watershed is being updated. He then advised the Board that there are eighteen producers in Texas out of compliance with the Food Security Act and stated that SCS would like to see soil and water conservation districts attend the appeals hearings at the Soil Conservation

Service area offices.

Dick Schendel reported that he had attended the March 23-24 meeting of the Galveston Bay National Estuary Program. He said this is the fourth year of the planning process and work on the comprehensive plan for the estuary is moving along as planned.

Clyde Gottschalk advised the Board of the activities of the Public Information/Education program. He had recently attended a Soil Conservation Service public affairs conference in Denver, Colorado and reported in depth on the proceedings. He also advised the Board that the Public Information/Education Committee of the Association had recently had a telephone conference call the week of May 11th and the committee had purchased air time in the San Antonio market for 44 commercials of 30 seconds in length for \$10,000 to run from June 1 to November 20 - one commercial per week. The Board viewed the commercial.

Mr. Gottschalk informed the Board that teacher workshops will kick off the first week of June.

Leonard Pietzsch reported on the Texas Conservation Awards Program and provided the Board with a statement of estimated expenditures for all five area awards programs. A statement of revenue of quotas for the Association was also provided each Board member. Entry forms for the awards program will be discussed at the July Board meeting. There was discussion on a letter received from the Palo Pinto Soil and Water Conservation District questioning the choice of the professional winner for Area V. Mr. Buckley will reply to this letter.

The Board then returned to item #6, Matching funds allocation for FY 92. Due to a clerical error from the San Patricio Soil and Water Conservation District #324 by not sending in the district claim on time their allocation had been reduced by two-thirds. On motion of Dick Schendel, seconded by Albert Evans, there was a waiver granted and the claim will be honored. Motion carried.

The Board then considered a proposed policy position concerning the reorganization of USDA. On motion of Paul Robertson, seconded by Buddy Clark the following policy position was adopted:

"The proposed closure of many ASCS offices across the country has brought about discussion of removing the ACP program from ASCS administration. If this is done, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board recommends transferring the program to the USDA - Soil Conservation Service with Soil and Water Conservation Districts setting priorities locally and the State and Water Conservation Board being given responsibility for state level coordination."

Harvey Davis discussed travel policy and responsibilities of State Board members and staff.

Board member travel was discussed and information for the NACD South Central Region meeting to be held in Lafayette, Louisiana, on July 26-28, 1992, was provided each Board member. Bill Neiser also provided each Board member the balance on their travel funds.

The next item of business was election of officers for the following year. Harvey Davis asked for nomination for chairman.

Buddy Clark moved to elect Dick Schendel as chairman and motion was seconded by Paul Robertson. Motion carried. Mr. Davis then requested nominations for vice chairman. On motion of Dick Schendel, seconded by Paul Robertson, Albert Evans was elected as vice chairman. Motion carried.

Dick Schendel expressed his thanks to Harvey Davis for the fine job he has done this past year as chairman. Mr. Schendel said he will strive to do his best working with the staff, Association and cooperating agencies. He looks for this to be a busy year with many difficult decisions to be made.

Mr. Schendel deferred to a later date the decision of appointing a committee to plan the Annual State Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Clarence J. Schendel  
Chairman

Lois J. Cain  
Secretary

7-15-92  
Date

I certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Board meeting held on May 20, 1992.

7-15-92  
Date

Robert H. Buckley  
Executive Director