

**MINUTES OF THE BENTON SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**  
**USDA SERVICE CENTER**  
**FOLEY, MINNESOTA**  
**May 21, 2008**

**I. Meeting was called to order by Chair Joe Jordan at 8:33 A.M.**

Attendance:

Chairperson:	Joe Jordan	Other:	Gerry Maciej, District Manager
Vice Chair:	Rod Bemboom - Absent	Other:	Katie Evans, District Technician
Secretary:	Duane Tadych	Other:	Bernard Thole
Treasurer:	Mike Gans – Absent	Other:	Chuck Rau – arrived at 8:35 a.m.
Member:	Phil Grosland		

**II. Approve Agenda**

No additions to the agenda. Gerry Maciej introduced Bernie Thole to the Benton SWCD Board of Supervisors. Duane Tadych made a motion to approve the agenda. Phil Grosland seconded the motion. All were in favor. **The motion passed.**

**III. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

Phil Grosland made a motion to approve the April 16, 2008 board meeting minutes. Duane Tadych seconded the motion. All were in favor. **The motion passed.**

*Chuck Rau entered the meeting at 8:35 a.m.*

**IV. Treasurers' Report**

Gerry Maciej advised the board that he would be going through the Treasurers' Report slightly different this meeting than in previous meetings. Gerry stated that instead of going through each individual item he will be going through particular items that he feels the Board should be notified of unless the Board would like to discuss certain items in more detail. Gerry reviewed the Money Market Account, Account Quick Report, and April Treasurer's Report Program Summary with the Board. Phil Grosland made a motion to approve the Money Market Account, Account Quick Report, and the April Treasurer's report. Duane Tadych seconded the motion. All were in favor. **The motion passed.**

Gerry reviewed Accounts Payable report with the Board. Duane Tadych made a motion to approve the Accounts Payable report. Phil Grosland seconded the motion. All were in favor. **The motion passed.**

Joe Jordan asked about the Weed I.D. Booklet from the Elk River Watershed Association meeting that Sherburne County is printing through partial funding from the Elk River Watershed Association 319-2 Grant. Joe wanted to know if the Benton SWCD could receive some as well because he noted it is a really good booklet and easy to use. Bernie Thole also noted that a Weed I.D. booklet would be great for landowners in Benton County. Gerry Maciej will be checking with Sherburne County SWCD to order some for the Benton SWCD office. Chuck Rau also expressed high interest in having a Weed I.D. booklet available.

Duane Tadych signed Poster and Essay Contest Winner checks that will be mailed out today. Joe Jordan asked why Phil Grosland is not able to sign checks yet for the Benton SWCD Board. Gerry Maciej will check to see if Grosland can sign checks in the future.

## V. Conservation Plans

*Mike McMillin entered the meeting at 8:49 a.m.*

- A. **Rod Kaeter, Clean Water Legacy CWL-36, New Contract** – Gerry advised the Board that Rod Kaeter will be comparing one test plot that will be looking at different types of tillage for comparison. Gerry asked the Board if they would like to have Mike McMillin come into the meeting to review plans. Joe Jordan advised that they would like to have Mike McMillin in to discuss his projects. Phil Grosland made a motion to approve the Clean Water Legacy contract CWL-36 in the amount of \$150.00. Duane Tadych seconded the motion. All were in favor. **The motion passed.**
- B. **Fred Fleck, Clean Water Legacy CWL-33, New Contract and Request for Payment** – Gerry advised the Board that the new contract and payment request is for completing a FLEval. Mike McMillin explained that Fred is requesting an incentive payment in the amount of \$150.00. Phil Grosland made a motion to approve the Clean Water Legacy contract CWL-33 in the amount of \$150.00. Tadych seconded the motion. All were in favor. **The motion passed.**
- Phil Grosland made a motion to approve the payment for incentive payment on CWL-33 in the amount of \$150.00. Duane Tadych seconded the motion. All were in favor. **The motion passed.**
- C. **Philip Nelson, Clean Water Legacy CWL-34, New Contract**– Mike informed the Board that a spreader calibration was done for Philip and that the contract compares a plot that does receive anhydrous versus one that does not. Mike advised that the comparison plot is what Philip normally applies and he would like to see if he can cut back. Duane Tadych made a motion to approve cost share contract CWL-34 in the amount of \$150.00. Phil Grosland seconded the motion. All were in favor. **The motion passed.**
- D. **Joe Kuklok, Clean Water Legacy CWL-32, New Contract** – Gerry advised the Board that on the write-up provided the text on the bottom should read the same as listed on the map. Mike advised the Board that Joe is trying to cut back on the amount of starter he is applying. Mike said he has taken soil tests but results have not been provided yet from the U of M. Mike stated that Joe's other fields are relatively high for phosphorus and potassium and that he expects this field to be the same. Phil Grosland made a motion to approve cost share contract CWL-32 in the amount of \$150.00. Duane Tadych seconded the motion. All were in favor. **The motion passed.**
- E. **Bernard Thole, Clean Water Legacy CWL-31, New Contract** – Mike advised the Board that Bernie Thole will be doing two different test plots. The first plot will be comparing two kinds of starter in oats. The second plot will be comparing two rates of anhydrous in corn. Bernie advised the Board that he changed the starter and used 27-5-10 in the corn plot. Duane Tadych made a motion to approve the cost share contract CWL-31 in the amount of \$300.00, \$150.00 for each plot. Phil Grosland seconded the motion. All were in favor. **The motion passed.**

Chuck Rau asked what the incentive payments for these contracts are for. Mike explained that they are incentives to have farmers try different comparisons on their fields to see if they can make changes in their regular farming applications. Mike stated that these incentives encourage farmers to take time to try different things.

- F. **Bunker Hill Creek Farm – Larry Hackett, Clean Water Legacy CWL-35, New Contract** – Mike advised the Board that Larry Hackett will be doing two plots. The first plot compares time of incorporation, one spread in the winter, and one in the fall. He wants to see the effect it will have on the availability of nitrogen. The second plot will compare different rates of chicken manure. Gerry discussed the first test plot and how the amount of nitrogen is pretty high and that there may not be a yield difference with these levels, which is what he would expect. Duane Tadych made a motion to approve the cost share contract CWL-35 in the amount of \$300.00, \$150.00 for each plot. Phil Grosland seconded the motion. All were in favor. **The motion passed.**

*Mike McMillin left meeting at 9:05 a.m.*

- G. **Steve Pekarek, State Cost-Share FY07-10, Request for Payment** – Gerry advised the Board that Steve Pekarek's field windbreak has been planted and that he is requesting partial payment for the cost of the trees and tree planting. Gerry stated that Steve will request final payment after he completes one event of mechanical weed control. Gerry reviewed the bills as follows: \$790.00 for the cost of trees, and \$275.00 for the cost of tree planting at \$0.50 per tree. The total amount of the bills came to \$1,065.00 and Steve is requesting 75% of that, which totals \$798.75. Phil Grosland made a motion to approve the partial payment for cost share contract FY07-10 in the amount of \$798.75. Duane Tadych seconded the motion. All were in favor. **The motion passed.**
- H. **CCRP plans approved by SWCD staff** – Gerry reviewed Pat Gehling's D.C. report and reviewed CRP SAFE contracts: Claude Popp 5.2 acres, Darren Popp 3.8 acres, Mike Lewandowski 18.6 acres, Richard Kollmann 18.0

acres, Troy Simmons 8.4 acres, DuWayne Simmons 4.8 acres, Chad Simmons 7.1 acres, Phil Nelson 8.2 acres, Charlie Plumadore 7.7 acres, Dick Winkelman 20.6 acres, Chuck Rau 38.2 acres, and Sherman Johnson 17.0 acres. Gerry advised the Board that there is approximately half of the 23,100 acres that was available for Minnesota still available for contracts.

## VI. Permits, Applications, Certificates of Compliance

**A. Schlichting Farms Inc., 2008-0665, Appropriation of Waters – Irrigation** – Gerry advised the Board that he applied the same wording on these applications as usually put on by the Board. Duane Tadych made a motion to approve the language that Gerry put on application 2008-0665 for these 50 acres of cropland. Phil Grosland seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

**B. Schlichting Farms Inc., 2008-0666, Appropriation of Waters – Irrigation** – Duane Tadych made a motion to approve the language that Gerry put on application 2008-0666 for these 40 acres of cropland in Langola Township. Phil Grosland seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

**C. Jay Johnson, Permit for Water/Wetlands Project – Dock Wider than 8 Feet** – Gerry advised the Board that the State has changed its requirements for docks on lakes. Gerry stated that it started in the Twin Cities with many wide docks being placed on lakes and the State became concerned that this was disrupting habitat. Gerry advised the Board that Jay Johnson wants to put in a dock that is greater in width than new State laws. Johnson is applying for a variance for putting in a dock that is wider than 8 feet. Johnson uses a wheel chair and is in need of a wider dock. Joe Jordan asked who issues these permits and Gerry advised that it is the MN DNR who issues the permits. Gerry advised that the Benton SWCD is allowed to provide comments on this application if we want to. The Board discussed that they don't see a problem with the application and to let the MN DNR make the decision regarding the application. The Board will not be providing comment on the application.

## VII. Action Items

### A. Old Business

1) **Analyzing the Needs for the Benton SWCD** – Gerry provided Board members with the questionnaire that the Benton SWCD/NRCS staff filled out to list what we are looking for in new Board Supervisors. Gerry stated that this information will be used to direct staff in how to seek new Supervisors and when printing advertisements for these openings. Some of these items would be directly listed in the ads to generate interest in potential candidates. Gerry asked the Board if there is anything that stuck out to them that they think is important for the staff to look for when creating advertisements. Joe Jordan stated that judgment and integrity are very important and also noted the need for being conservation-minded and citizen-minded because the citizens of Benton County are who you are serving. Gerry also advised the Board that he has talked to people who are interested in the Supervisor positions but are concerned about the flexibility of time and day of Board meetings. Gerry advised the Board that he has been telling people that the times are flexible and can be changed. Gerry asked Chuck Rau and Bernie Thole what their thoughts were regarding SWCD Supervisors. Chuck Rau said that the two main elements that Joe talked about, being conservation-minded and citizen-minded, are very important because that's what it's all about. Bernie Thole added that conservation is very important and that there are a lot of things that need to be watched and taken care of. Bernie Thole also noted that he has noticed a trend that if there is a problem relating to resources that a finger is always pointed at the farmer as the cause, but he said that everyone needs to do their share in regards to natural resources. Bernie said he supports the nutrient management plans and soil tests that are being completed. Joe Jordan added that when serving on the SWCD Board, Supervisors have the opportunity to serve on other committees that address other resource concerns as well.

### B. New Business

1) **Set Date for Lunch with the Commissioners** – Gerry advised the Board that June 17<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 p.m. is the preferred date for the Benton County Commissioners. Joe Jordan, Phil Grosland, and Duane Tadych agreed that June 17<sup>th</sup> will work for lunch with the Commissioners at Jack and Jims in Duelm.

2) **Benton SWCD Apparel** – Gerry advised the Board that the Benton SWCD staff would like to have our logo and name put on polo shirts, t-shirts, hats, etc. Gerry said that Annie has bids from two companies which he provided to the Board. Gerry asked the Board to select someone for us to hire for the printing and that we are recommending Henry's to work with because it is a local company and the costs are competitive. Gerry also asked that the Board assist with some of the

cost but that he would prefer that the Board doesn't purchase any particular item, but instead set a not-to-exceed rate for each employee. Gerry recommended that the Board assist with up to \$50.00 in apparel for each staff member and \$25.00 - \$50.00 for each Supervisor. Gerry said this will allow staff to have approximately three items. Joe Jordan stated that he would wear SWCD apparel to support the District. Gerry mentioned that they would also have some apparel available for non-staff to purchase items at cost. Chuck Rau asked if staff would purchase items and then be reimbursed for them, and Gerry advised yes. Chuck Rau also asked if the Board would provide \$50.00 for staff annually or just one time. Chuck said he is big believer in logo-wear for promotion. Joe Jordan asked that Gerry check on casual button-up dress shirts. Duane Tadych said he would like to see samples for the next Board meeting. Duane Tadych made motion to choose Henry's for ordering Benton SWCD apparel as well as paying \$50.00 for each staff and supervisor for a one time offer, and to also charge other items at cost to non-employees. Phil Grosland seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

3) **Consider a Tree Discount for Conservation Program Trees** – Gerry advised the Board that NRCS used to complete spot checks on CRP windbreaks, shelterbelts, and living snow fences every 3,5, and 9 years, but since CRP has transferred from NRCS to FSA that these spot checks are not being completed because FSA only completes random spot checks. Gerry stated that now many tree plantings have holes in them, and that even though landowners are required to do maintenance, because no one is checking them, these landowners are less likely to do maintenance. Gerry stated that a tree discount would be an incentive for State Cost-Share or CRP contracts to replant portions of their plantings if necessary. Gerry said that we can do a mailing for current State Cost-Share and CRP cooperators to advise them that this opportunity is available to maintain their windbreaks, shelterbelts, and living snow fences. Gerry advised that CRP participants are required to do maintenance and are receiving an incentive payment each year for maintenance but that the existing system is not always working. Gerry stated that the staff is recommending that for windbreaks, shelterbelts and living snow fences that are already enrolled into a program, not for new contracts, receive a 25% discount up to 100 trees. Joe Jordan asked what if someone has several contracts in different programs, would this be a 'per person' or 'per contract' discount. Joe Jordan recommended the discount be per individual - per year. Gerry asked the Board if they felt this is a good idea and Board agreed that yes this is a good incentive to maintain these practices. Gerry advised that this would be a change of policy in the policy handbook. Phil Grosland made a motion to approve a 25% discount for shelterbelts, windbreaks and living snow fences, up to 100 trees, for landowners with existing State Cost-Share or CRP contracts, on a per person – per year basis. Duane Tadych seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

4) **Consider the BWSR Native Buffer Cost-Share Program** – Gerry advised the Board that in the last legislative session BWSR received this new program which would provide \$5,000.00 if the District would like to participate. Gerry stated that it will use same process as used for State Cost Share. Gerry advised that the eligible buffer areas need to be approved by the SWCD Board of Supervisors and the language is written so that you can buffer anything (lakes, streams, ditches, wildlife area, city limits, etc.) but the Board needs to prioritize what we intend to buffer. Projects will need to be sustained for 15 year contracts, and eligible project areas for Benton County would need to be located within the Anoka Sand Plains area. Chuck Rau asked if the Anoka Sand Plains area includes Little Rock Lake, Gerry advised yes. Gerry advised that the seed sources requirements have been modified. For Benton County, the first priority is to get seed from the Anoka Sand Plains area, then within Benton County, then we can look for seed sources from neighboring counties, then within the same eco-region, and then beyond our eco-region. Gerry stated that the District would need to make an effort to find local seed if possible and that each project is required to have at least 25 species. Gerry noted that in the contract we can cost-share up to 2 years of maintenance (such as mowing, burning, removing undesirable plants, etc.). Chuck Rau stated that he has been going to different group meetings and he sees real potential to be working together to get projects like these implemented. Gerry stated that it is too late to get projects for this year but that he is asking for approval from the Board to sign the grant agreement when it comes. Phil Grosland made a motion for Gerry to be given the approval to sign the BWSR Native Buffer Cost-Share Program Grant Agreement. Duane Tadych seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

Phil Grosland made a motion to identify buffering surface water in the Little Rock Lake Watershed a priority for the Native Buffer Cost-Share Program. Duane Tadych seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

Chuck Rau asked if it would be okay if he brings this concept up to the other committees he attends, such as the Little Rock Lake Association. Gerry said he would like to work with Annie to put together a proposal first. Gerry said that he is unsure what Annie's schedule is for completing presentations for the Little Rock Lake TMDL project but that he will check with her. Phil Grosland asked if there can be a combined meeting with some of these committees. Gerry said that there used to be combined meetings but that they haven't done that recently.

5) **MASWCD Resolutions** – Gerry advised the Board that each spring all Districts have the opportunity to forward resolutions to MASWCD. If board members have a policy or item that you want them to work on at a state-wide or nation-wide level you can propose a resolution to our state association. Gerry stated that these resolutions get compiled together and then are handed out to all Districts for Supervisors to vote on to either approve, deny, or to be discussed at the annual convention. Gerry handed out current resolutions with sunset dates and added that there are 13 resolutions that will sunset this December 2008. Gerry reviewed all 13 resolutions with the Board asked if there is something that the Supervisors would like put into a resolution. Gerry noted that they have until August 22<sup>nd</sup> to turn them into MASWCD. Joe Jordan asked this to be put on the June agenda so that supervisors can review.

*The Board recessed for break at 10:14 a.m. and reconvened at 10:24 a.m.*

## **VIII. Progress Reports**

- A. SWCD/NRCS Project List – Gerry stated that this month he only included the general project list in the Board packets but asked the Board if they would like to receive all lists (general list, ERWA list, CRP SAFE list, etc.) and Joe Jordan advised yes.
- B. Gerry Maciej – Manager
- C. Pam Kuhn – Program Assistant
- D. Annie Felix – Water Plan Technician
- E. Katie Evans – Technician
- F. Mike McMillin - Technician
- G. Dan Martens – U of M Extension

*Dan Martens entered the meeting at 10:30 a.m.*

Dan Martens handed out a packet including the 2008 Alfalfa Scissors Cut Harvest Alert Project. Dan said that the project has started and that he will be taking samples tomorrow 5/22/08 in several counties. Dan advised that information that he gets back will be shared with 4 different media sources: KASM Radio in Albany, KLTF Radio in Little Falls, INFO-U at 1-800-525-8636, and on the U of M Extension website.

Dan stated that summer tours are being arranged: Todd County on July 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. near Long Prairie to see a double six, swing, parabone parlor; Stearns County on June 27<sup>th</sup> featuring a Methane Digester on a smaller scale dairy farm near Sauk Centre; Summer Forage Farm Tour August 19<sup>th</sup> near Sartell featuring on farm corn silage plots and on farm alfalfa plots related to phnomyces root rot.; and Minnesota Milk Producers along with Extension arranged a summer bus tour in Wisconsin June 17-18<sup>th</sup> visiting five different farms to focus on robot milkers.

Pricing standing forages, how to price a hay crop – reviewed concepts about how to go about pricing these things out which has been a challenge recently.

Board held discussion on average price of renting land. Bernie Thole stated that has heard it's up near \$85 - \$110 per acre. Dan Martens stated that cash rent corn ground is near \$12 (for bottom 10%), up to \$45 as an average, and \$70 at the high end (for top 10%) in 2007.

*Dan Martens left the meeting at 10:43 a.m.*

- H. Pat Gehling – District Conservationist, NRCS
- I. Barb Zeroth – Soil Conservation Technician. NRCS

## **II. Information Items**

### **A. Committee Reports**

- 1) MMM RC&D (Phil) – Phil Grosland advised the Board that at their last meeting, the MMM RC&D agreed to help out with putting money towards roofing the school building at the fairgrounds. Phil stated that they are also looking at working with the MN DNR along the orphan stretch of the Mississippi River, which currently doesn't have any special protection. Phil said they are asking the RC&D to run the funds through and are currently waiting for a contract and to hire staff. Phil said that the MMM RC&D would get a fee for doing it.
- 2) ERWA April 28 and May 19 (Joe) – Joe Jordan advised the Board that they met Tiffany Babich, the new Watershed Coordinator, and that they approved payments for filter strip projects but that there is not enough money in the accounts with ERWA to pay all contracts. Gerry advised that the Sherburne County Board did not agree to pay these contracts until the funds are there. Gerry stated that they will pay the two smaller contracts now and the last one will get paid in July.
- 3) Annual Report Presentation to the Benton County Board – Gerry said that Phil Grosland and he reviewed the Annual Report with the Benton County Board. Dan Martens also attended the meeting and said that they did a good job. Gerry said he also introduced Tiffany Babich to the County Board.

#### **B. Old Business**

- 1) **Update on Elk River and Little Rock Lake Watershed Projects** – Gerry advised the Board that for the Elk River Watershed Association Tiffany Babich, the new Watershed Coordinator, was hired and has been here for a few weeks. Gerry said she is currently familiarizing herself with the TMDL project and that they are still waiting for a contract. Gerry said he talked with Phil Votruba from MPCA and said that it will be most likely the end of June when we receive a contract. Gerry stated that for the Little Rock Lake Watershed he received the contract last Friday 5/16/08 and signed the contract. Gerry said the contract start date will be June 15<sup>th</sup> or June 16<sup>th</sup> or when it is signed by all parties. Phil Grosland asked if Annie has been doing samples already and Gerry advised not on the lake yet will be getting a consultant in to identify sample locations. Gerry said that we are currently taking stream sampling for the Little Rock Creek project. Bernie Thole asked how long the Little Rock Creek project is and Gerry advised him that most of the data has already been collected but that we would like to get data after storm events but recently has been drought or raining on weekends and that we need to get samples early in the week to get them down to be analyzed. Gerry said we should be analyzing data and getting results of what's happening in the next 6 - 9 months. Chuck Rau asked how long samples from Little Rock Lake have been taken and Gerry advised that sample have been taken for 2 years (2006 and 2007) and that this will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Gerry handed out the Little Rock Creek Newsletter. Chuck Rau asked if the newsletter is going to be cut out and Gerry advised that yes is cut out of the plan for Little Rock Lake. Chuck Rau said that this newsletter was brought to the last Little Rock Lake Association meeting.
- 2) **Poster and Essay Contest Winners** – Gerry routed around the winners of the poster and essay contest to the Supervisors. The winners for posters are as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> Place Bethany Rahm, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Abby Monroe, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Jaimie Studenski, 4<sup>th</sup> Place Courtney Adelman. The winners for murals are as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> Place Kalley Barriger & Rhiannon Nocoll, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Bradi Busse & Sabrina Palacio. The winners for essays are as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> Place Lindsey Johnson, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Jennifer Rassmussen, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Grant Henry, 4<sup>th</sup> Place Brenana Burggraaf. Gerry advised the Board that the winning posters and murals have been sent to the State competition.

#### **C. New Business**

- 1) **Benton SWCD 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** – Gerry advised the Board that the Benton SWCD staff is putting together items to recognize the Benton SWCD's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Gerry stated that staff will be participating in the Foley Fun Days parade and will be pulling the Plotmaster and the new tree planter. Gerry also mentioned that staff has been discussing an open house. Gerry asked the Board if they had any ideas for our anniversary to let staff know.

### **III. Correspondence**

- A. Several Thank You Notes for Soil and Water Stewardship Week** – Gerry distributed thank you notes for soil and water stewardship week.

- IV. Adjourn** – Duane Tadych made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Phil Grosland seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 11:04 am.

*Respectfully submitted by Katie Evans.*

**Calendar of Future Events:**

May 27<sup>th</sup>, Water Resources Advisory Committee Meeting  
May 29<sup>th</sup>, Finance Committee Meeting  
June 16<sup>th</sup>, Elk River Watershed Association Meeting  
June 17<sup>th</sup>, Lunch with the Benton County Commissioners  
June 18<sup>th</sup>, Benton SWCD Board Meeting  
June 27<sup>th</sup>, Area IV Meeting – Tour of Ramsey County SWCD  
TBD, MMM RC&D Meeting