

IDAHO SOIL and WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT GENERAL MEETING
USDA Service Center, 83 Highway 95 N, Grangeville, ID 83530 Wednesday January 16, 2009 6:00 A.M.

CALL TO ORDER

6:04 A.M.

Scott Wasem

Scott Wasem called the meeting to order at 6:04. Board members present were Leon Slichter, Tom Gehring, Thomas Seubert, John Frei. Others present were Richard Spencer-NRCS, Stefanie Bowman-IDSWCD, Jessica Wells IASCD. Producers present-Ken Ross

Leon made the motion to appoint Thomas Seubert and John Frei to the Idaho SWCD board. Tom seconded. Motion carried.

MINUTES

6:05 A.M.

Scott Wasem

December 3, 2008-Leon made a motion to approve the minutes with corrections. Tom seconded. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S/BILLS REPORT

6:10 A.M.

Scott Wasem

Scott explained the workings of the treasurer's report and the Idaho SWCD to the new board members. Leon explained the Lower Salmon WAG to Thomas and John. Leon also explained the Grazing Conference and what it is all about to the board.

Tom made a motion to approve treasurer's report and Bills Report as presented. Leon seconded. Motion carried.

Tom made a motion to pay Idaho Ag in the Classroom and Idaho State Forestry Contest. Leon seconded. Motion carried.

**IASCD & ISCC -
Staff Reports-**

7:05 A.M.

Jessica Wells

Scott explained what ISCC and IASCD are to Thomas and John.

Leon explained the procedures of approving and denying contracts to Thomas and John, so that they were aware of how the whole process works.

STOC-4 – Modification will move practice to 2009 and allow the producer to complete his contract.

LAW-08 – Status review

AFO-16 – Status review – Because of personal health issues the producer has sold his cows, they have moved his brothers cows in to his place, so that he doesn't end up out of compliance with his contract. He is planning on purchasing cattle when his health condition changes.

SFCR-10 – Status review

SFCR-08 – Status Review

Leon began explaining what the AFO projects are to the new members. Leon also said that the EPA is attempting to lower CAFO requirements from 1000 head to 25. This could have a huge effect on the cattle producers around this area. Richard said the EPA looks for running water flowing out of or through a feed lot into a nearby water source, such as a stream. This would be a violation of the EPA standards.

TB-03 – Diversion has been completed for a year, but bills were recently submitted. The last portion segment of fence that was planned has been installed and meets standards and specifications. This contract is now complete. \$1,516.32

LAW-10 – Panel fence 258' \$2,322.00.

Ken Ross came to the meeting to discuss payment of his fence. He installed 700' of fence that he stated Bill and Eileen approved with the exception of wire spacing. He stated they looked at the creek distance and said it was okay. Ken installed the remaining footage of fence. A future inspection by Eileen, Bill and Jessica found that the new portion of fence was too close to the creek. (Bill and Eileen admitted at a previous meeting they had not noticed the distance from the creek during the previous inspection). At the December meeting, the fence was rejected, because of the distance from the creek.

Ken talked with Greg Taylor of the Coeur d' Alene Water Resources office. The fence is currently as close as 16' from the high water mark in places. Ken stated that the cattle have worked the banks down for 15 years, so it is hard to determine the actual high water mark. Greg didn't want to give him a written statement saying he could move the creek, so Ken would have to go through the permitting process to request moving the stream. Greg told Ken if he got the exact coordinates as to where the channel and creek actually are, he can determine what the acres of watershed are above that point. They may have a drainage that has several thousand acres in it, but it dries up. They don't base it on the actual creek, but drainage area. Until the application permit comes back, nothing can be done. Greg will review it and pass it on to the Corp of Engineers in Walla Walla. Dwayne Mitchell from the Corp will review as they have jurisdiction over the creek.

Tom questioned rather than move the creek, what about installing rip-rap to keep the creek from the fence. Tom said it would be better to move the creek, because it is really flat and wide. There is a 12" culvert that goes under the crossing. Ken stated that the water has never gone over the crossing, even during the peak of the run-off season.

Leon went over the procedures for signing up for these contracts. He admitted that lack of communication can sometimes end up being part of the problem. Ken was given a set of plans, whether they were clear or not, Leon doesn't know for sure, but the producer is supposed to look at those plans and then sign the contract. Leon asked Richard "where does this put Ken with CSP as far as the regulations through NRCS with the fence". Richard asked Ken if he could discuss the CSP contract with the board. Richard stated there is very little impact for Ken's CSP contract where the fence is concerned, all he needs is cover and controlled access. If cattle are excluded and cover is established, he will meet the requirements for his CSP.

Ken feels that he was misled by Eileen and the program. Ken thought that keeping the cattle away from the creek, 3-4' would be adequate for his contract. Eileen changed the footage from 50' to 35' in writing. Ken assumed that 20' would be a good average, so he went ahead and did it. He also talked with Bill Lillibridge about putting in another fence below the house, but told Bill that he wants Bill to come out and put flags where the fence should be from the high water mark prior to installing any of the new portion of fence. According to Ken, Bill has been up there numerous times and has said things should work, but Bill stated that it wasn't his project, it was Eileen's. It would be an option for Ken to use the south side on the fence just for grazing, instead of using it as a feeding area. The day Tom was there, the cattle were all on the North side of the fence by the water. Tom mentioned that on the South side, in a spot where the fence is 54' from the creek; the area is swampy. Ken can use this as a filter strip, to clean up the swamp.

Scott would like to get the entire board out to look at the project, so that everyone is on the same page. The board can make the final decision of where the fence would be okay at this visit. Leon said he would be willing to go to the property with the rest of the board to look at the issues at hand, and get them taken care of. Ken has concerns over designating the South side as a summer grazing area, he would be stuck, and not be able to feed on it. Leon told him that if he ever has a snow storm when the cattle are on the South side, that he should just feed on the north side and when the snow goes off of it, open the gate up. As long as he never fed over there, he would be fine. Ken wants the board to look at it, that way the board knows exactly what is going on. Jessica reminded Ken and the board that there is a life expectancy of 20 years on the fence and this includes the steel panels. Ken said that he hopes to not be feeding cows in 20 years. Ken signed a statement declaring that he realizes that all fence (panels included) were permanent and they could be spot checked at any time. If the fence was not maintained or if the panels were moved he would be found out of compliance.

The board stated that if Ken is willing to shut off access to the South side of the Creek and just feed on the North side, and just use the South side as a grazing area, we can put an end to the discussion, Ken wouldn't have to move the fence and he could receive payment on the fence. The board will stay in contact with Ken. When the snow has gone off of the field, the board members will look at the issues with the creek and the fence.

TB-08 – Jessica and Eileen inspected more fence. The producer put in a 5 wire fence and a panel fence that does not meet any of the specifications. Eileen and Jessica will not sign off on any of these areas. The producer also installed a 4 wire fence that is interior of another fence. There is also 169' of 4 wire fence that goes out to the corner, to close off the rest of the fence. Eileen will approve the 4 wire fence. The producer built a berm to close to a wet area. There are fence posts that are in the berm, but they are still not deep enough or tall enough. If he is building on natural ground, the fence would be okay, but where he is using rocks to pile up against the post, it won't work. He could be paid this time for 367' of fence.

Leon made a motion to not approve the payment application for TB-08. Tom seconded. Motion carried.

TB-07 – See attached sheets from Jessica. A total of 9152 feet of fence was measured. \$28,744.48. Leon commented that he visited the site and noticed the fence that the producer put around the rock pit has posts that are already tipping

over. The producer needs to go back in and fix the posts that he has already done, to make sure that he follows up with the life expectancy for the contract on his fence.

Leon explained the producer is converting a crop field into a feeding area. This was the new seeding talked about in previous meetings. Does the board want to stop the producer now, to keep him from putting more feeders on the other side, mainly to keep him from ruining the seeding on the other side and losing hay/pasture production? The life of a practice for Pasture and Hay Planting is 10 years. The side that the producer is feeding on now is 18 acres. If the board decides to stop the feeders from being installed on the other side, they would be saving 30 acres of seeding. After reviewing the submitted bills Scott wants a clarification on the hours for the producers backhoe. The producer needs to itemize his costs towards the appropriate cost areas.

The board needs to visit with producer on everything that they have seen so far on his projects, preferably out in the field, where the board can look at it. There is a set of guidelines that we can work within. Leon suggested that the board go out and look at the area where there are issues. He will call the producer and set up an appointment.

Thomas Seubert left the meeting at 8:45.

Grant application- After the first Lower Salmon WAG meeting Jessica talked with one of DEQ's monitoring specialists. He was surprised by the large number of septic pipes that drain direct into creeks. Jessica asked the board if they wanted to add a BMP that would assist these landowners in achieving a better system. The board agrees this would be a good idea. Scott stated "these old homesteads are grandfathered in, so they don't have to do anything, unless an Idaho Health Department person checks them". The board would also like Jessica to put contract labor into the grant, in hopes of securing her position or one like it at the office.

Interested Landowners-

Dale Weeks-has some acres that he has moved cars off of. Possible water management and pasture for 5 horses. He is not a producer. The board would like Jessica and Eileen to determine cost per head.

Lee Spencer-out at Spencer's ranch. The lot with Three mile running through it, right below the barn, crossing, fence, trees/shrubs, off stream watering. Jessica and Eileen have looked at it, but they still need to size options for the culvert. This is in the SFCR and Threemile/Butcher Creek areas. 50 mother cows/head. Proceed and see what a planning deal would look like.

Curt Terhaar- Has 500 acres that he would like to do direct seed on. He is already doing direct seed, but would like to get cost shared for it. The board would like to have the numbers run and see where they are at in obligations.

Does the board want Jessica to run through all of the contracts, to see if they are still interested in receiving cost share. The board suggested to see how much money is left unobligated, and then find out.

NRCS **10:00 A.M.** **Richard Spencer**

Reviewed a portion of the NRCS contracts for the audit. They had to call the selected contract participants if they needed information supplied. NRCS had to establish proof of control on all contracts. Signing authority of partnerships. Had to go through 120 contracts. Nation wide, the NRCS came up with 100 plus million dollars that should have been returned. Most all of those funds were hanging in electronic limbo.

There is a new sign up for EQIP, the deadline will be February 13. This also includes the WHIP program.

Rapid Watershed assessment – will find out the timeline for when the NRCS state team may be able to get the one for the Lower Salmon done.

OLD BUSINESS **10:15 A.M.** **Scott Wasem**
Next meeting will be February 4 at 6:00 A.M.

NEW BUSINESS **10:15 A.M.** **Scott Wasem**
Election of Officers-**Leon made a motion to maintain the same offices Scott Wasem-Chairman, Leon Slichter-Vice Chairman, Tom Gehring-Treasurer, (NEW)John Frei -Secretary. Tom seconded. Motion carried.**

ADJOURN **10:20 A.M.**
NEXT GENERAL MEETING **Wednesday, February 4, 2009 6:00 A.M.**

The Idaho Soil and Water Conservation District may also hold an executive session pursuant to Idaho Code 67-2345.
Note: Order of agenda topics is subject to change.