



Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission

650 W. State St., Room 145 • Boise Idaho 83720

Telephone: 208-332-1790 • Fax: 208-332-1799

www.swc.idaho.gov

IDAHO SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING & TELECONFERENCE

Date and Time:

Wednesday, January 18, 2012

From 8 am to 3 pm MDT

Location:

Soil & Water Conservation Commission

650 West State St, Rm 145, Boise Idaho

AMENDED APPROVED MINUTES

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dick Bronson

Dave Radford

Norman Wright

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE:

Roger Stutzman

Jerry Trebesch

ADVISORS PRESENT:

Karma Bragg, President, IDEA

Bret Rumbeck, Executive Director, IASCD

COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT:

Teri Murrison

Kristin Magruder

Terry Hoebelheinrich

Erin Seaman

Delwyne Trefz

PARTNERS AND GUESTS PRESENT:

Harriet Hensley, Deputy Attorney General

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ITEM #1: WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dick Bronson, Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission (SWC) member at 8:09 a.m. Roll call: Dick Bronson, and Norman Wright present. Roger Stutzman and Jerry Trebesch participated via teleconference. A quorum was present.

ITEM #2: REVIEW AGENDA

Chairman Bronson reviewed the agenda. No items were added.

ITEM #2a: PARTNER REPORTS

Bret Rumbeck, Executive Director, Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts (IASCD), presented the partner report on behalf of the association. IASCD has a new office location in Boise effective December 2011. Mr. Rumbeck provided a report on legislative activities including letters to legislators and the budget committee. The Board of Directors is having a meeting later this week with a focus on reviewing the by-laws. David Ascuena, Division III Director, resigned this winter. His successor declined the position so it is currently open. Discussion ensued about feedback received from districts on the annual conference.

Vice Chairman Dave Radford joined the meeting at 8:16 a.m.

Karma Bragg, President, Idaho District Employees Association (IDEA), presented the partner report. She announced two new directors, Robbie Taylor and Pegi Long. Their board updated the annual report for 2012. They continue to work with district staff on the QuickBooks Online issue as there was information received that costs were increasing and it would be cost-prohibitive to districts. IDEA leadership is looking at options and working with NRCS to see what options are available if districts opt to use the desktop version. The Performance Report training was well received by staff and the reports look excellent this year. IDEA is planning an annual and five-year plan workshop to share resources and ideas for upcoming deadline in March.

The IASCD 2012 Conference will be hosted by Division VI this year. November 26, the Monday after Thanksgiving, is the scheduled start to the conference. A planning committee is formed and making arrangements for hotel and agenda items. IASCD is celebrating 70 years and will be part of the overall theme. Planning directors are meeting in March to coincide with an IASCD board meeting. Discussion ensued on legislative displays planned for this Session on January 26th.

Discussion followed about district employee health benefits. There are only a few employees across the state with health benefits and some receive a stipend for premiums. Commissioner Wright advised that a cooperative of Idaho cities have formed an ICRMP-like insurance plan for their employees and suggested that district employees may be able to participate.

Jeff Burwell, State Conservationist, NRCS, was delayed by the weather. His report was delayed until later in the agenda.

49 Chairman Bronson invited all partners and guests to attend the upcoming legislative committee
50 presentations.

51

52 **ITEM #3: MINUTES**

53

54 Commissioners reviewed the October 12, 2011 teleconference minutes. Commissioner Wright noted
55 the need to amend line 108 from “farms” to “farmed”.

56

57 **Vice Chair Radford moved to approve the October 12, 2011 minutes as amended. Commissioner
58 Wright seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried.**

59

60 Commissioners reviewed the November 9, 2011 teleconference minutes. No amendments were made.

61

62 **Vice Chair Radford moved to approve the November 9, 2011 minutes as presented. Commissioner
63 Wright seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried.**

64

65 Teri Murrison, Commission Administrator, reviewed the November 15th minutes from the listening
66 session held at the 2011 IASCD Annual Conference. A copy of the attendance list was distributed to
67 participants at the meeting.

68

69 Discussed the FY 2013 budget discussion from the session:

- 70 - Protocol for addressing budget items with legislators
- 71 - District compensation for work on RCRDP loan program
- 72 - Transparency
- 73 - Processing loans with faster turnaround

74

75 Strategic Plan discussion from listening session:

- 76 - Process for update scheduled to begin in February with a target date of April or May to present
77 to Commission for review and approval
- 78 - Plan priorities
- 79 - New hires Mason Lefevre and Erin Seaman
- 80 - Request for a method to request technical assistance; incorporated into activities of DSSS
- 81 - Introduced Delwyne Trefz as new District Support and Services Specialist

82

83 Line 232 of minutes to be changed from “Kyle Hawley” to “Kyle Wilson.”

84

85 Comments and feedback included:

- 86 - District capacity building. Delwyne is working on this process and plan.
- 87 - Need plan to address land coming out of CRP in near future.
- 88 - Flood prevention and control activities report from Harriet Hensley, Deputy Attorney General,
89 provided a summary of her research on how districts fit into the statutory history. Vice Chair
90 Radford requested that Harriet find out how many Watershed Improvement Districts are in the
91 state. WIDs have taxing authority where conservation districts do not. There could be some
92 opportunities for districts to work with flood control districts to work on projects. Harriet will
93 also find out which WIDs currently have taxing authority. Conservation districts cannot act as a
94 flood prevention district.

95

96 Line 251 of minutes to be changed from “CRP” to “CREP.”

- 97
98 - Outreach strategy has been developed by Commission for CREP program and will be headed by
99 Chuck Pentzer, Program Specialist.
100 - Assistance to districts to develop more comprehensive five-year plans. This is being addressed
101 by Delwyne in work with districts.
102 - Assist districts with local planning process. Included in Delwyne's work plan.
103

104 **Vice Chair Radford moved to approve November 16, 2011 minutes as amended. Commissioner Wright**
105 **seconded. Commissioner Wright requested the Commission implement a method for districts to**
106 **submit questions prior to listening session in future years. No further discussion. Motion carried.**
107

108 Discussion continued about the Commission's listening session and the value on continuing the practice
109 in future years. Ms. Murrison asked for feedback from partners. Ms. Bragg advised that the session was
110 very helpful and positive. Discussed options for taking questions in advance of the public meeting
111 including division meetings or having districts submit written questions. Commissioners deferred to Ms.
112 Murrison and Mr. Rumbleck to discuss options for moving forward and establishing protocol.
113

114 Jeff Burwell, NRCS State Conservationist, provided the partner report. Good news includes weather
115 (recent precipitation). Bad news has to do with federal budget cuts though NRCS fared relatively well
116 compared to other USDA agencies. FSA is closing offices in Orofino, Marsing, Weiser and Gooding.
117 NRCS is taking over those office leases and hopes to be able to continue to offer services there to
118 producers. Closing soils office in Meridian and previously closed RC&D offices.
119

120 Idaho NRCS took a \$2 million hit in the budget from last fiscal year. The budget for financial assistance is
121 significantly higher than technical assistance. \$62.5 million total agency budget, \$44 million of which is
122 for financial assistance. Looking at organizational structure to run more efficiently and effectively,
123 including centralization of administrative services. There is likely to be consolidation.
124

125 NRCS is focusing on three priorities: 1) get conservation on the ground by continuing to work with the
126 conservation partnership, and maintaining commitment to the Commission and districts; 2) maintaining
127 organizational structure including technical assistance delivery, maintaining a skilled workforce; and 3)
128 create climate where private land conservation thrives and is successful. Need to be able to show
129 measurable results.
130

131 There is \$12 million for general Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding. There will be
132 a streamlined process for applications which should save staff time.
133

134 Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) funding increased to \$4 million primarily to address sage grouse, but it
135 is a long process of approximately 12-18 months. NRCS is hoping to keep processing time down to 12
136 months and hoping for additional funding.
137

138 There is a new water quality initiative to use EQIP to target 303(d) listed streams. He will be meeting
139 with all partners to identify highest priorities including DEQ, ISDA, and the Commission.
140

141 Chairman Bronson requested that the Commission be notified of upcoming meetings with FSA related to
142 the office closings.
143

144 Harriet Hensley discussed flood control districts and the potential for district partnerships with
145 Watershed Improvement Districts (WIDs) as a source of additional resources. She will research existing
146 WIDs, including their taxing authority, and provide that information at a future meeting.

147
148 **ITEM #4: ADMINISTRATORS REPORT**

149
150 Ms. Murrison provided the report on agency activities over the last two months. She has curtailed travel
151 over the winter months in anticipation of weather and increased legislative and administrative activities.

152
153 Governor's FY 2013 Budget Recommendations

154 Ms. Murrison reviewed the Detail Report of the Governor's budget recommendation for the
155 Commission. Total base: \$2,465,000. There are slight adjustments in program maintenance for
156 increased benefit costs for an adjusted amount \$2,469,200. Adjustments for recommended agency line
157 item requests for RCRDP loan program, NRCS TA match grant, and TA cost recovery. Items not
158 recommended include the request for increased NRCS office space and district allocations. Total budget
159 recommendation is \$2,650,100.

160
161 The Commission's budget hearing is scheduled for February 1, 2012 at 8:55 am.

162
163 Discussion on budget analysis to cover the NRCS office space. Staff is working on plan. One option is to
164 discontinue ICRMP payment on behalf of districts totaling \$42,000 annually.

165
166 Discussion on anticipated expenses for RCRDP loan program, technical assistance cost recovery, and the
167 NRCS grant.

168
169 Office Update

170 There has been a need for additional office space for quite some time but with the expansion of the loan
171 program there was a sense of urgency to make it happen sooner rather than later. Expansion has been
172 paid from the loan program and not out of general funds.

173
174 Staff updated the marketing material for the loan program and was used for the outreach conducted by
175 Terry Hoebelheinrich and Brian Reed.

176
177 Next step with loan program is to update the policies and streamline procedures to ready for an
178 increase in volume. Staff plans to conduct a work session with Commissioners Wright and Trebesch to
179 evaluate options and refine recommendations.

180
181 The Department of Administration has a statewide video conferencing system that the Commission
182 plans to utilize for loan processing, public meetings, work groups, and to enable field staff to participate
183 in district board meetings rather than spending so much time on the road.

184
185 The Idaho Statesman recent ran an article on Rural Idaho which prompted IASCD to comment in a Letter
186 to the Editor. Ms. Murrison drafted a response letter from the Commission for review. Commissioner
187 Wright requested adding contact information. There was a recommendation to contact Mr. Barker
188 directly as a follow up prior to sending letter to provide additional context and history of districts in rural
189 Idaho.

190

239
240 Additional talking points include: addressing conservation trends and regulatory pressure to lay the
241 groundwork for discussing coordination and helping partners; discussing major agency changes over the
242 past year including new Commission members, new administrator, new strategic plan, and staffing
243 changes; and continued focus on non-regulatory, voluntary conservation, doing more with less, proving
244 our worth, and strategic plan implementation.

245
246 Commissioner Trebesch rejoined the meeting at approximately 10:25 am.

247
248 Vice Chair Radford stressed the importance of the RCRDP loan program and would like that to be a
249 highlight of the presentations.

250
251 Ms. Murrison will be highlighting programs and services including OnePlan and the potential for
252 statewide conservation reporting. Discussion followed about a statewide conservation certification
253 program.

254
255 **ITEM #5: FY 2012 FINANCIAL REPORT**

256
257 Ms. Murrison provided a report of the December 2011 financials. The RCRDP financial will be addressed
258 under a separate agenda item. The state is 50% through the fiscal year. Fund balances as follows:

- 259
- 260 • Personnel Costs: \$577,460 (\$391,139 expended – 40.38%)
 - 261 ○ Trending low due to consistent vacancies
 - 262 • Operating Expenses: \$44,186 (\$133,599 expended – 75.06%)
 - 263 ○ One time or large expenditures include travel expenses, fuel, SWCAP, ICRMP,
264 administrator moving expenses, all-staff training, coordination training and related
265 expenses
 - 266 ○ Some of these expenses were not anticipated when the budget blueprint was approved
267 last year
 - 268 ○ Despite high percentage of funds expended, the Commission is on track to cover
269 expenses for rest of the fiscal year and can roll down personnel fund or utilize interest
270 from SRF loan fund
 - 271 • Trustee & Benefits: \$9,421 (\$1,093,780 expended – 99.15%)
 - 272 • SRF/DEQ fund: \$25,914

273
274 **Vice Chair Radford moved to accept the December 2011 financial report. Commissioner Wright**
275 **seconded. Further discussion on Commission policy for reimbursing districts that opt into liability**
276 **insurance other than ICRMP. Staff to research and report at next meeting. Motion carried.**

277
278 Discussion over Governor's recommendation for \$45 million in tax cuts or savings.

279
280 **ITEM #7: COMMISSION MEMO ON DRAFT IDAHO WATER PLAN**

281
282 Ms. Murrison provided an overview of the process around the proposed water plan from Idaho
283 Department of Water Resources (IDWR) and the memo drafted for Commission review. Ms. Hensley
284 and Delwyne Trefz, District Support Services Specialist, provided context for this plan.

285

286 Ms. Hensley was assigned to IDWR on the state Water Plan and suggested that the Commission provide
287 comments. This is the first major revision since the 1996 plan. The subcommittee will be meeting in a
288 few weeks to discuss the comments submitted and will be making a recommendation to the full
289 committee.

290
291 Ms. Murrison commented about the importance of being involved in these processes with other
292 agencies.

293
294 Mr. Trefz presented an overview of comments made on the Water Plan. He made it a point to highlight
295 the statutory authorities of the Commission and districts in the overall plan. There was a focus to offer
296 assistance where appropriate and to highlight coordination where possible to have effective delivery of
297 services.

298
299 Discussion over state water uses and policies. It was suggested that the two agencies meet to discuss
300 opportunities to assist each other, trends, and policy issues. Further discussion about water uses.

301
302 Ms. Hensley will report back to the commission on the best format to provide comments to the IDWR
303 subcommittee.

304

305 **ITEM #8: STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

306
307 Ms. Murrison presented an update on the status of the strategic plan implementation. She provided an
308 overview of how staff is breaking down the objectives within their work plans and when deliverables are
309 due. Review of the OWP worksheet which contains all components of the strategic plan divided by team
310 leads Delwyne Trefz, Chuck Pentzer, Bill Lillibridge, and Kristin Magruder. The next spreadsheet breaks
311 down the allocation of hours by staff member for an 18 month period. Each manager will be
312 responsible for their own budgets rather than someone in the Boise office.

313
314 Discussion about the Plan being a living document and using the information to justify decisions for
315 staffing, workload analysis, and budget requests. There was tremendous value noted in seeing the
316 reality of what the entire agency is responsible for.

317
318 Mr. Trefz provided an overview of the planning process and updated the Commission on his activities
319 surrounding the Technical Assistance Work Group. The focus of the work group will be on transparent
320 planning during this process, which includes developing a ranking tool for allocating technical assistance.
321 Target completion date is March 30, 2012. Discussion followed.

322
323 Following the adoption of the ranking tool, Mr. Trefz will be conducting the district needs assessment
324 and is approaching the process to see the big picture and help districts find resources that they may not
325 know about. Beyond that, coordination is a component in his work plan and he will be looking for
326 opportunities to assist districts to implement coordination in a reasonable and thoughtful manner.
327 Discussion followed.

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329 **ITEM #9: OTHER BUSINESS**

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331 There were no other business items for discussion.

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334 **RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND RANGELAND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

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ITEM #10a: FY 2012 RCRDP FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Magruder provided the RCRDP Financial Report. She noted a date error in the third section that should read “Cash as of 12-31-2011” rather than 11-30-2011.

- Balances as of December 31, 2011:
- Principal payments: \$928,194.66
 - Loan interest: \$154,091.16
 - Default/late interest: \$2,612.45
 - Interest Income: \$13,874.55
 - Personnel costs: \$20,030.99 (23.96% expended)
 - Operating expenses: \$34,499.04 (33.96% expended)
 - Loan disbursements: \$218,534.34

After adjustments for 3% contingency, funds approved but not yet disbursed, and loans pending review and approval, there is \$3,146,459.15 available to loan.

Vice Chair Radford moved to approve the December 2011 RCRDP Financial Report as presented. Commissioner Wright seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried.

ITEM #10b: RCRDP STATUS REPORT

There were no other business items for discussion.

ITEM #11: PENDING LOAN BUSINESS

Vice Chair Radford moved to enter into executive session pursuant to Idaho Code § 67-2345(d) for the purpose of considering pending RCRDP loan business only. Commissioner Stutzman seconded. No discussion. Roll call vote was taken with all voting in the affirmative. Motion carried.

The Commission moved into executive session at 12:30 pm after a ten-minute break. Teri Murrison, Terry Hoebelheinrich, Kristin Magruder, Harriet Hensley, Erin Seaman, and Delwyne Trefz were invited to stay.

Executive session ended at 2:09 pm.

Commissioners discussed the disposition of pending RCRDP loan business.

Loan No. 661

- Amount: \$17,575
- Term: 15 years
- Rate: 4%

Conservation Benefit: Water efficiency increased from 50% to 100% annually; soil savings of 3 tons per year.

381 **Vice Chair Radford moved to approve Loan A-661 pursuant to the loan officer recommendation**
382 **including as the application meets criteria for conservation benefit and meets the loan criteria as**
383 **established in IDAPA 60.05.01 and loan policy. Commissioner Wright seconded. No further**
384 **discussion. Motion carried.**

385
386 Loan No. 660

387 Amount: \$33,715
388 Term: 4 years
389 Rate: 2%

390 Conservation Benefit: Water efficiency increased from 36% to 72% annually; soil savings of 150 tons per
391 year (6.53 tons/acre). Directly addresses TMDL 303(d) listed segment and ground water quality
392 protection area. Pollutants addressed: sediment.

393
394 **Commissioner Trebesch moved to approve Loan A-660 pursuant to the loan officer recommendation**
395 **and to give borrower term options of 4 years at 2% or 7 years at 3% as the application meets criteria**
396 **for conservation benefit and meets the loan criteria as established in IDAPA 60.05.01 and loan policy.**
397 **Commissioner Stutzman seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried.**

398
399 Loan No. 658

400 Amount: \$182,275
401 Term: 4 years
402 Rate: 2%

403 Conservation Benefit: Water efficiency increased from 25% to 85% annually; soil savings of 1 ton per
404 year. Indirect impact to 303(d) listed segment.

405
406 **Commissioner Wright moved to approve Loan A-658 pursuant to the loan officer recommendation**
407 **including UCC filing and request review of loan documents by the Attorney General's office as the**
408 **application meets criteria for conservation benefit and meets the loan criteria as established in IDAPA**
409 **60.05.01 and loan policy. Commissioner Trebesch seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried.**

410
411 **At 2:18 pm, Chairman Bronson adjourned the meeting.**

412
413 Respectfully submitted,

414
415 Roger Stutzman
416 Commissioner and Secretary,
417 Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission



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ITEM #5

TO: Chairman Bronson and Commissioners Radford, Stutzman, Wright, and Trebesch
FROM: Teri Murrison, Administrator
DATE: Feb. 13, 2011
RE: FY 2012 Financial Report

General Fund

Balances as of January 31, 2012:

Cash

- Budgeted: \$ 2,249,799
- Received to date: \$ 16,118 (adjusted for liabilities)
- Expended: \$ 1,694,444 (75.32% expended)
- Remaining: \$ 571,483

Personnel

- Budgeted: \$ 968,599
- Expended: \$ 460,615 (47.55% expended)
- Remaining: \$ 507,984

Operating

- Budgeted: \$ 178,000
- Expended: \$ 136,582 (76.73% expended - up just over 1% from 12/31/11 - 75.32%)
- Remaining: \$ 41,203

Trustee and Benefits

- Budgeted: \$ 1,103,200
- Expended: \$ 1,093,780 (99.15% expended)
- Remaining: \$ 9,420

Technical Assistance fund (\$20,000 receivables budgeted, none received)

Professional Services fund

- Began year with \$1,450, have received \$2,848 to date.
- Expended: 0
- Cash balance: \$4,299



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RCRDP Dedicated Fund

Balances as of January 31, 2012:

Loan balance

- Beginning loan balance: \$ 6,995,621
- Principal payments: \$ 1,033,486
- Loans disbursed and payments made to date \$ 255,840
- Actual loan balance \$ 6,217,974

Cash balance

Beginning cash balance: \$2,984,699

Total receipts to date: \$ 1,033,486 (*incl. suspense, adjusted for liabilities*)

- Loan interest: \$ 173,120
- Cash interest: \$ 17,003
- Loan disbursements: \$255,840
- Expended: \$ 81,136
- Actual cash balance: \$ 3,871,331
- Personnel costs: \$ 83,600 budgeted, \$ 25,509 expended, \$ 58,091 remaining (30.51% expended)
- Operating expenses: \$ 101,600 budgeted, \$ 55,628 expended, \$45,972 remaining (54.75% expended)

Revolving Loan Fund balance (*due to a single loan from DEQ*)

- Beginning cash: \$13,208
- Total receipts to date: \$44,972
- Total loan interest: \$10,298
- Cash interest: \$150
- Loan disbursements: \$42,693 (payment to DEQ)
- Current balance: \$25,935

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Accept the following:

- a. January 2012 General Fund Financial Report
- b. January 2012 RCRDP Financial Report

Attachments:

SWC REPORT SUMMARY for JAN 2012 (58%)

ITEM #5

GENERAL FUND		PERSONNEL			OPERATING			TRUSTEE & BENEFITS			CASH			
FY11	INDEX	EXPENSE thru		BALANCE	EXPENSE Thru		BALANCE	EXPENSE		BALANCE	PLUS TOTAL			CASH
		BUDGET	End of Current Month		BUDGET	End of Current Month		BUDGET	Thru End of Current Month		BEG CASH AT 7/1/11	REC TO DATE	LESS TOTAL EXP TO DATE	
	7101					(215)					0	0	(215)	215
	7111 MANAGEMENT BOARD	1,692	2,012	(320)	3,957	3,569	388	0	0	0	5,649	16,118	5,581	16,186
	7201 ADMIN & FIELD STAFF	877,599	420,009	457,590	155,056	126,729	28,327	0	0	0	1,032,655	0	546,739	485,916
	7202 TEMPS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	7310 DISTRICT ALLOCATIONS	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,053,200	1,053,200	(0)	1,053,200	0	1,053,200	(0)
	7320 WQPA WATER QUALITY	0	0	0	0	0	0	50,000	40,579	9,421	50,000	0	44,047	5,953
	7350 CREP	89,308	38,593	50,715	18,987	6,499	12,488	0	0	0	108,295	0	45,092	63,203
	TOTAL GENERAL FUND 0001	968,599	460,615	507,984	178,000	136,582	41,203	1,103,200	1,093,780	9,420	2,249,799	16,118	1,694,444	571,473
				47.55%			76.73%			99.15%				75.32%
	7315 SWC TECH ASSISTANCE	0	0	0	20,000	0	20,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL FUND 0348	0	0	0	20,000	0	20,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	7325 SWC PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	0	0	0	40,000	0	40,000	0	0	0	1,450	2,848	0	4,299
	TOTAL FUND 0450	0	0	0	40,000	0	40,000	0	0	0	1,450	2,848	0	4,299

DEDICATED FUND		PERSONNEL			OPERATING			CASH						
FY11	INDEX	EXPENSE thru		BALANCE	EXPENSE Thru		BALANCE	BEG CASH AT 7/1/11	PLUS TOTAL REC TO DATE	PLUS TOTAL INTEREST TO DATE	PLUS TOTAL CASH INTEREST TO DATE	LESS LOAN DISBURSEMENTS	LESS TOTAL EXP TO DATE	CASH BALANCE End of Current
		BUDGET	End of Current Month		BUDGET	End of Current Month								
	7351 RCRDP LOAN ADMINISTRATION	83,600	25,509	58,091	101,600	55,628	45,972	2,984,699	1,033,486	173,120	17,003	255,840	81,136	3,871,331
	TOTAL RCRDP ADMIN 0522-01	83,600	25,509	58,091	101,600	55,628	45,972	2,984,699	1,033,486	173,120	17,003	255,840	81,136	3,871,331
				30.51%			54.75%							
	7361 REVOLVING LOAN - DEQ	0	0	0	30,000	0	30,000	13,208	44,972	10,298	150	42,693	0	25,935
	TOTAL DEQ LOAN 0529-16	0	0	0	30,000	0	30,000	13,208	44,972	10,298	150	42,693	0	25,935
							0.00%							

LOAN PROGRAMS		CASH BALANCE			
FY11	INDEX	BEG LOAN	LESS TOTAL	PLUS TOTAL	ACTUAL
		BALANCE AT 7/1/10	PRINCIPAL REC'D TO DATE	LOANS DISBURSED / PYMNTS MADE TO DATE	LOAN BALANCE End of Current Month
	7351 RCRDP LOAN ADMINISTRATION	6,995,621	1,033,486	255,840	6,217,974
	TOTAL RCRDP ADMIN 0522-01	6,995,621	1,033,486	255,840	6,217,974
	7361 REVOLVING LOAN - DEQ	803,146	44,972	0	758,174
	TOTAL DEQ LOAN 0529-16	803,146	44,972	0	758,174



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ITEM #6

TO: Chairman Bronson and Commissioners Radford, Stutzman, Wright, and Trebesch
FROM: Teri Murrison, Administrator
DATE: Feb. 13, 2011
RE: Administrator's Report

Legislative Presentations Update

To date, the following presentations have been made to legislative committees:

- House Agricultural Affairs – District Allocation Rule (passed Committee), Conservation Commission Annual Report,
- Senate Agricultural Affairs – District Allocation Rule (passed Committee), Conservation Commission Annual Report, Confirmation Hearings for Commissioner Trebesch and Wright (confirmed by vote of Senate,)
- Senate Resources and Environment – Commission Annual Report , and
- Joint Financial Appropriation Committee (JFAC) – presentation of Governor's Recommended Budget.

Several requests have been made to schedule an Annual Report presentation to the House Resources and Environment Committee, however due to the lateness in the session and the fact that the Conservation Commission is not required to present an annual report, we may need to try again next year.

Overall, presentations went quite well with a number of legislators commending the Conservation Commission and conservation districts for working together this year. The JFAC presentation elicited similar comments. Questions were asked by legislators about the increase in the NRCS office and IT support which was not included in the Governor's Recommended Budget. Staff subsequently met with the legislative and DFM analysts to discuss options, however there was no revision to the Governor's Recommended Budget. JFAC will set the Conservation Commission budget at its meeting on March 6th at 8:00 am.

Strategic Plan Update

The update of the Strategic Plan is scheduled to begin in mid-March. By that time, the Overall Work Plan and deliverables schedule should be completed. Staff requests the Chair appoints up to two Commissioners to participate in the workgroup. We will also request participation from IASCD, IDEA, districts, and conservation partners. Final Update recommendations will be presented for your consideration at the April or May meeting.



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Personnel Update

Interviews were conducted on February 14th for a Water Quality Resource Conservationist to replace Delwyne Trefz in Division 3 (Marsing or near there). We hope to announce the outcome at your meeting.

FY 2013 NRCS Office/IT Support Fees and District ICRMP Premiums

At the JFAC hearing, we were asked how we plan to accommodate a \$37,000 increase in NRCS office space and IT support fees that was not reflected in the Governor's Recommended Budget. The response was that we will have to cut Operating expenses, possibly by reducing the number of staff co-located with NRCS and by not paying districts' ICRMP insurance premiums in FY 2013.

NRCS Office Space and IT Support: we have preliminarily evaluated staffing/office locations and there are at least several non-essential co-locations. While it is a great benefit to share office space with NRCS in terms of sharing equipment, office space, resources, maintaining relationships, and advancing on the ground conservation, it is not mission critical for all field staff. We'll continue to examine this option after JFAC conducts our budget setting hearing (likely March 6th).

Payment of ICRMP Premiums: Because our Operating Fund is small (\$178,000), the \$42,000 ICRMP payment amounts to ¼ of our total Operating budget, without a yet-to-be-identified alternative funding of some sort, your Administrator recommends not paying districts' ICRMP premiums in FY 2013. The Operating fund supports all personnel activities related to district support, our programs, and administration. The only reason we will end the current year within a balanced Operating fund is that there have been an unusual amount of one time Personnel cost savings this year that we plan to roll down. Although it has been the practice in recent years to pass cost savings down to the districts, these are mission-critical resources.

Historically, it's been well-documented in Minutes and newsletters that the Commission has elected to pay ICRMP premiums (twice) on a one-time basis only. In preparation for your discussion, I have talked with a majority of district administrators to make sure they realize the payment was one-time and to insure that they have budgeted for ICRMP premiums (\$850 per district) next year. So far all have said they can or will budget for the premium, and have acknowledged that they (and their Boards) realize it was not to be an ongoing Conservation Commission expenditure. A number have expressed gratitude, as well.

Change to Minutes Format

As you know, staff has traditionally produced detailed summary minutes to provide meeting recap information for those unable to attend Conservation Commission meetings. While this has been useful, accurate recording of dialogue is difficult, discussion can be opinion and does not constitute official action, and detailed summary minutes are subject to editorial discretion.



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With the combination of teleconferencing and live audio streaming to permit wider public participation, our heavy staff workload, and our ability to archive recordings of the meetings for easy public access for review on demand, we propose beginning with the February 21, 2012 meeting to switch our Minutes format to recording official actions (including requested verbatim statements). Staff appreciates feedback on the proposed change to the Minutes format.

Watershed Improvement Districts

As requested by Vice Chair Radford relative to discussion at your last meeting about flood prevention and control activities and district jurisdiction/involvement in those activities, Counsel Harriet Hensley provided the attached list of active Water Improvement Districts (WIDs). Conceptually, districts could contract with these Watershed Improvement Districts to accomplish on the ground flood control and prevention projects.

In order to exercise taxing authority, WIDs must submit a proposed project to the Director of the Idaho Department of Water Resources, the Director must hold public hearing, and the WID must have the benefitted property appraised. There is an opportunity to appeal the approval of project or determination of benefits and assessments to district court, before assessments are entered as tax liens.

All watershed improvement districts have taxing authority but may not have exercised it. If Commissioners wish, staff can further investigate by contacting individual WIDs on the list.

IDWR draft Water Plan Update

We are meeting with IDWR staff this week to discuss the attached comments on the Draft Water Plan Update. We'll provide an update on the outcomes at your meeting. The comments have not been submitted yet. The meeting will be an opportunity to develop an ongoing coordinated relationship with IDWR.

Joint Hearing on Sage-grouse

A joint hearing was held by the Senate and House Environment and Resources Committees to hear the Governor's plan for developing a conservation plan for Sage-grouse. Administrator Nate Fisher of the Office of Species Conservation (OSC) will guide preparation of the plan over the next four months and has formed a large stakeholder group. We have requested involvement to the Governor's office and OSC.

Rocky Barker, journalist for the Idaho Statesman, covered the hearing. His account can be read at: <http://www.idahostatesman.com/2012/02/14/1993296/idaho-pushes-for-its-own-planto.html#storylink=cpy>.

In 2010, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) decided that listing Sage-grouse as a threatened species was warranted, but of less priority than protecting other species. Under a litigation settlement, the USFWS has until 2015 to review that decision.



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Significantly, the USFWS has advised that voluntary efforts by landowners to improve sage grouse habitat is not enough to preclude listing and has said repeatedly that regulatory mechanisms must be included in the state plan. There is considerable interest from legislators in being involved and they will likely designate two representatives to participate.

Although USFWS has said voluntary efforts will not be enough, there is clearly a place for voluntary action and therefore, for district and Commission involvement. Further, planned enhancements to OnePlan could be a valuable planning and reporting tool to document the success of Idaho's efforts.

Telework Week

Telework Week is a nationwide effort to promote telecommuting during the week of March 5-9 (see attached flyer). We will encourage staff who can telecommute to consider participating if their workload and scheduling permits.

ACTION: For information

Attachments:

- List of Watershed Improvement Districts
- Draft Staff memo to IDWR on Draft Water Plan Update
- Telework Week flyer

District Type	District #	District Name	Tax Levy Yr	Tax Levy	Active	County
220 - Watershed	0090	DEEP CREEK WATERSHED	2012	0	TRUE	LATAH
220 - Watershed	0080	HAYDEN LAKE WATERSHED	2012	0	TRUE	KOOTENAI
220 - Watershed	0060	LITTLE LOST RIVER WATERSHED	2012	0	TRUE	BUTTE
220 - Watershed	0100	MOODY CREEK WATERSHED	2012	0	TRUE	MADISON
220 - Watershed	0050	ROBERTS KETTLE BUTTE WATERSHED	2012	0	TRUE	JEFF/BONNEV
220 - Watershed	0010	ROCK CREEK WATERSHED	2012	0	TRUE	BENEWAH
220 - Watershed	0110	SUCCOR CREEK WATERSHED	2012	0	TRUE	OWYHEE
220 - Watershed	0030	UPPER HANGMAN WATERSHED	2012	0	TRUE	GOODING
220 - Watershed	0040	UPPER MOCTILEME WATERSHED	2012	0	TRUE	BENEWAH
220 - Watershed	0020	UPPER SHEEP CREEK WATERSHED	2012	0	TRUE	BENEWAH



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ITEM #6 Attachment

MEMO

TO: IDWR Water Plan Subcommittee
FROM: Dick Bronson, Chairman
DATE: January 9, 2012
RE: Comments re Conservation element of Draft Water Plan

The Commission appreciates the opportunity to provide input to the Subcommittee in its important work to update the Idaho Water Plan. To provide context for our specific comments below, it will be helpful to refer to Idaho Code § 22-27.

Within that Section, the Legislature states it's in the best interest of the state of Idaho:

“(3)(c) That soil conservation districts, as governmental subdivisions, and the state soil and water conservation commission, as a state agency, are the primary entities to provide assistance to private landowners and land users in the conservation, sustainment, improvement and enhancement of Idaho's natural resources; ... and

(e) That soil conservation districts and the state soil and water conservation commission lead nonregulatory efforts to conserve, sustain, improve and enhance Idaho's private and state lands and to provide assistance to private landowners and land users to plan, develop and implement conservation plans addressing soil, water, air, plant and animal resources...”

The Commission and Idaho's 50 locally led conservation districts are nonregulatory and work closely with regulatory agencies to coordinate voluntary conservation of multiple resources, including water. Upon review, it appears that portions of the Draft should be made consistent with Idaho Code § 22-27.

We have highlighted some of the sections of the Draft where the roles of the Commission and local conservation districts should be referenced. We encourage the Subcommittee and IDWR to consider revising the Draft's policies and implementation strategies as specified and as is otherwise necessary to attain consistency with statute.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to weigh in. Please let me know if we can help further.

The following are specific comments:

POLICY 2A – WATER USE EFFICIENCY

Insert the following statement as second paragraph of the Discussion section:

The Soil and Water Conservation Commission and local conservation districts are the primary entities authorized to provide assistance to private landowners and land users in the conservation of Idaho's natural resources, including the state's water resources. Idaho Code §§ 22-2716. It is in the best interest of the state of Idaho to establish policies for cooperative working relationships between the Board, local soil conservation districts, the state Soil and Water Conservation Commission, local, state and federal agencies and public and private groups to plan, develop and implement conservation goals and initiatives. Idaho Code § 22-2716(3).



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POLICY 2B – FEDERALLY LISTED SPECIES AND STATE SPECIES OF GREATEST CONSERVATION NEED

Include the following bullet item in list of Implementation Strategies:

“Coordinate with the Office of Species Conservation, Soil and Water Conservation Commission and local conservation districts in providing assistance to private landowners and land users to develop and implement integrated water, soil, habitat, and species conservation plans.”

POLICY 2D – STATE PROTECTED RIVER SYSTEM

Revise first sentence of second paragraph to read:

“Although rivers can be protected under the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, it is the policy of the Idaho Water Resource Board to protect streams and rivers through the Comprehensive State Water Planning process...”

POLICY 2E – RIPARIAN HABITAT AND WETLANDS

Insert the following statements after the last sentence of the second paragraph of the Discussion section:

“The Soil and Water Conservation Commission is the designated agency for the planning and implementation of treatments to protect and improve water quality in watersheds impacted by agricultural and grazing activities (Idaho Code § 39-3601 et. seq.). The Soil and Water Conservation Commission and local conservation districts are the State entities with authority to develop and implement comprehensive, non-regulatory, locally-led conservation strategies to maintain, improve, and enhance Idaho’s riparian habitats and wetlands (Idaho Code § 22-2716).”

2F – STREAM CHANNEL REHABILITATION

Add the following statement to the Discussion section:

“The Soil and Water Conservation Commission and local conservation districts are the primary entities for planning and implementing voluntary, non-regulatory practices to remediate past stream channel damage and to prevent further damage caused by agricultural or grazing activities (Idaho Code § 22-2716).”

Add the following bullet to Implementation Strategies:

- Coordinate planning (including inventory and analyses), prioritization, and implementation activities with soil conservation districts and the Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission.



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2H – FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

Insert the following statement after the fifth sentence of the Discussion section:

“Watershed Improvement Districts have authority to develop comprehensive plans, levy assessments and construct, operate, and maintain structures for the prevention of flood damage and the conservation, development, utilization and disposal of water in the watersheds of this state (Idaho Code § 42-3701, et. seq.). The Soil and Water Conservation Commission is the designated agency to oversee creation of Watershed Improvement Districts throughout the state (Idaho Code § 42-3705).”

2I- FLOOD DAMAGE REDUCTION LEVEE REGULATION

Add the following statement to the list of Implementation Strategies (see Code sections below):

“Coordinate with the Soil and Water Conservation Commission and local conservation districts during development of a state levee safety program in order to provide that local economic, social and environmental concerns are addressed during safety program development. See Idaho Code §§ 22-2722 et al.

6A – HABITAT CONSERVATION PLANS

Add the following to the list of Implementation Strategies:

“Coordinate with the Soil and Water Conservation Commission and local conservation districts during the development and implementation of habitat conservation projects and plans.”

PAGE 45 – PACIFIC COAST SALMON RESTORATION FUND

Add the following to the list of Implementation Strategies:

“Coordinate with local conservation districts during the development and implementation of projects to improve instream flows, increase the quantity and quality of fish habitat, and contribute to the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the state and its citizens.”

TELEWORK WEEK

MARCH 5-9, 2012



Pledge to Telework

Join us for Telework Week, a nationwide effort to encourage agencies, organizations, and individuals to pledge to telework on March 5-9, 2012. Sign up now and telework during the week of March 5-9, 2012.

Sign up now, it's free to pledge.

Telework is a win-win opportunity for agencies, organizations, employees, and the environment. Telework supports:

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- Sustainability - *Executive Order 13514*
- Business continuity
- Improved productivity
- Personnel recruitment and retention
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ITEM #7

TO: Chairman Bronson and Commissioners Radford, Stutzman, Wright, and Trebesch
FROM: Teri Murrison, Administrator
DATE: Feb. 13, 2011
RE: IASCD Division Meetings Schedule, Commissioner Representation

The Spring 2012 IASCD Division meetings will be held as follows:

Division	Date	Time	Location	Hosting District	Presenting Staff	Commissioner Representing
I	Thurs., Mar. 8	9:30 am	Kootenai Nat'l Wildlife Refuge, Bonners Ferry area	Boundary	Teri Delwyne	
II	Fri., Mar. 9	1-5 pm	TBA, Moscow	Latah	Teri Delwyne	
III	Tues., Feb 28	9:45 am – 3:10 pm	Ashley Inn, Cascade	Valley	Teri Delwyne	
IV	Tues., Mar. 13	9:30 am	Pasta Palace, Buhl	Balanced Rock	Teri Delwyne	
V	Thurs., Mar. 22	11:00 am	TBA, Pocatello	Central Bingham	Teri Delwyne	
VI	Weds., Mar. 21	9:30 am	TBA, Salmon	Lemhi	Teri Delwyne	

The Conservation Commission has requested a half an hour on each agenda to allow for a Commissioner to speak briefly, give an overview of Delwyne's progress with the workgroup and related activities, and conduct a mini listening session to hear district concerns in each Division.

Please review your calendars for availability so that the Chairman can designate an official Commissioner representative at each meeting, if possible.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: For review and designate Commissioner representation at Division meetings



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ITEM #8

TO: Chairman Bronson and Commissioners Radford, Stutzman, Wright, and Trebesch
FROM: Teri Murrison, Administrator
DATE: Feb. 13, 2011
RE: Commission Coordination Resolution to assist districts to work with federal agencies

As you know, it is within legislative intent and Idaho statute that the Conservation Commission works to further the coordinated planning and management of voluntary, locally led, and non-regulatory conservation activities of local, state, and federal government agencies.

While Idaho's soil and water conservation districts are units of local government and are charged with planning and implementing voluntary conservation projects that benefit and balance the interests of the environment and production agriculture, not all districts have been able to successfully engage federal agencies. Nor have they been able to advocate for consistency between local and federal plans (mandated in the National Environmental Planning Act), despite the fact that federal natural resources and land management agencies are required by various statutes and rules to coordinate with them.

The Conservation Commission is empowered by Idaho Title 22, Chapter 27 and by federal statutes and rules to coordinate on issues under its jurisdiction with federal agencies (with the exception of Endangered Species Act issues, which are reserved to the Office of Species Conservation).

Attached is a draft resolution that affirms the Commission's commitment to work collaboratively, cooperatively, and/or otherwise when necessary to assist soil and water conservation districts to participate with federal agencies in conservation planning and management decision-making processes in Idaho.

Harriet Hensley will be present at your meeting to answer any questions about the legal foundation.

ACTION: Approve Commission Coordination Resolution

Attachments:

- Draft Commission Coordination Resolution