

**Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District**  
**February 18, 2009**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**

Directors present: Steve Stierwalt, Eleanor Blackmon, Lennie Heiser, Joe Rothermel, and Eric Suits.  
Staff present: Bruce Stickers and Renee Weitekamp.

Meeting was called to order at 5:27 p.m. on Wednesday, February 18, 2009.

Joe Rothermel made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2009 meeting. Lennie Heiser seconded, motion carried. Eric Suits made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 30, 2009 Annual Meeting. Lennie Heiser seconded, motion carried.

Eleanor Blackmon made the motion to approve the financial reports for February 2009. Joe Rothermel seconded, motion carried.

**Old Business**

*Annual Meeting* – The Board enjoyed sitting amongst the guests and then going to the head table for the meeting. After some discussion, the board decided to change the registration next year in an attempt to get a more accurate count of the number of attendees. One idea is to have a sign in sheet at each table.

*St. Joseph Wetland Winter Maintenance Project* – The FECON cutter was rented and ran one day before the machine broke down. Hopefully, it will be repaired and up and running soon.

*Annexation of the St. Joseph Wetland* – The board is open to the annexation concept, as long as the Illinois Department of Natural Resources approves. The board would like either IDNR or someone else review the annexation agreement on behalf of the CCSWCD. The Village of St. Joseph provided the district with all the ordinances they could find that may impact the district. In addition to addressing the weed and burning ordinances, clauses will be added in the annexation agreement addressing the tree and sign ordinances. Eric Suits made a motion to send the annexation agreement to IDNR for review and approval. The final draft of the annexation agreement shall be reviewed by either IDNR or a third party on behalf of the CCSWCD. Eleanor seconded, motion carried.

*Access to FSA's name and address database* – Staff will work on a resolution to present at the February Land Use Council Meeting.

*St. Joseph Wetland Committee Appointments* – Eleanor Blackmon made a motion to appoint Suzanne Smith to the St. Joseph Wetland Committee. Eric Suits seconded, motion carried.

**New Business**

*CPP* – The first and second quarter allocations, totaling \$6,540.00, have been received.

*County Board Thank You* – After discussion, the board decided to make a personalized thank you using a group photo. The one page summary and a copy of the annual meeting program book will also be sent to the county board.

*Financial Support for Salt Fork Gaging Station* – The Water Quality Sub-committee is working to secure funding for two gaging stations on the Salt Fork. Letters were sent to area municipalities, drainage districts, etc requesting financial support. To date, the City of Urbana pledged \$1000, the City of Champaign pledged \$4000, and the UCSD will commit funds if others participate. In addition,

the UCSD does the lab analysis work as an in kind contribution. These gaging stations can provide valuable baseline data. Water quality data is necessary for computing volume and concentrations. At the last Salt Fork Implementation meeting, Tom Berns reported talking to a couple of drainage districts support the efforts, but have no funds to contribute. The CCSWCD board feels it is important to contact the drainage districts again and if they are not able to make a small contribution, perhaps letters of support can be obtained. No individual can pay for all this sampling, but it is essential in measuring water quality, and this can help our more prepared for the future. The board would like to send a letter to Tim Johnson to update him on the project. Eleanor Blackmon made a motion to contribute \$500 to support the gaging stations. Lennie Heiser seconded, motion carried. The district will personally contact the Champaign County Farm Bureau and ask for support as well.

*Soil & Water Stewardship Week* – Staff will let area schools and churches know the soil and water stewardship materials are available for purchase. If anyone would like to purchase materials, they can submit their order to the district, and the district will place one large order. The board will pay the shipping charges. Staff received approval to purchase one sample pack and to work on plans for poster and photo contests.

*St. Joseph Wetland Restoration Plan* – A plan for the portion of the wetland south of Route 150 is underway. The plan will incorporate a design to filter stormwater coming into the area from the Village of St. Joseph. At this time, the exact cost for the plan has not been determined, the design work has been donated, but some charges for engineering drawings will be incurred.

*Green Living Expo* – This new event, sponsored in part by the News-Gazette, will be held on Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup>. The event is being heavily advertised on the radio and in newspaper. The district will be participating in an effort to promote rain barrels, rain gardens, and introduce the district to a potentially new audience. The display will be a joint effort with the City of Champaign. The board directed staff to look into a booth and the upcoming home show.

*Contribution Agreement* – The district may have an opportunity to help NRCS accomplish their goals and earn money for it through a contribution agreement. The agreement is for work done for the CRP program and the district needs to submit the proposed plan of work by Friday. According to FSA, 155 contracts will be expiring September 30, 2009, which means there is potential for the district to help with CRP work. Eric Suits made a motion to submit a plan of work and enter into a contribution agreement if NRCS makes one available. Lennie Heiser seconded, motion carried.

*CRP* – With a lot of filter strips expiring again this year, the district would like to be proactive and put together a promotional plan in an effort to keep filter strips along our streams and rivers.

*Mahomet Aquifer Consortium* – MAC sent a letter asking for financial support since state funding was lost. After discussion, the board decided the project is important, but at this time, the district will not be providing any financial support.

**D.C. Report** - is attached.

Kevin discussed the EQIP special project called Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP), the contract audits that have been going on and the media contact sheet he provided the board. In an effort to promote NRCS and the office, staff may look into articles in the Ag Leader and on the WILL radio show program.

**A.C. Report** - is attached.

The district sales are underway and orders are coming in for aquatic plants, fish, trees and rain barrels.

**R.C. Report** – is attached.

Bruce has been attending wind farm meetings and tours. Right now there are potentially 3 active ones in Champaign County. Staff is working with the RC&D to host electronic recycling pick-ups in St. Joseph and Mahomet. The IDNR, U of I Extension, City of Champaign and the CCSWCD are working on two upcoming pond meetings.

**Committee Updates** –

Barnhart – The committee would like to move forward on plans to construct a primitive grassed parking lot.

**Other -**

Due to unstable funding, the board will not fill the watershed coordinator position at this time.

The Marketing Taskforce (AISWCD) will be sending the first of four mailings to legislators within the next couple of weeks. The first mailing is a card containing soil packets with a message that no matter what the use, soil is important to all of us. The second mailing is an actual water faucet with a message attached asking what would happen if the water were not clean or safe when you turned on the faucet. A follow-up letter and a then newsletter will complete the mailings. Plans are underway for a website that contains project information submitted by the different counties. A possible fifth step is taking students' thoughts from the Soil and Water Stewardship week to legislators.

The board would like to send a congratulatory letter to Marc Miller for his appointment as Acting Director of the IDNR.

The Champaign County SWCD Board will hold a board meeting on Thursday, March 26, 2009 at 5:00 p.m.

Joe Rothermel moved to adjourn the meeting. Eric Suits seconded, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:02 P.M.

Minutes prepared by Renee Weitekamp for Eric Suits, Secretary  
Champaign County SWCD

December 8, 2008

Subject: **SALT FORK RIVER WATERSHED PLAN  
FUNDING FOR STREAM FLOW GAGES**

Dear

In May of 2007, with funding provided by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) and with additional assistance provided by the Salt Fork Technical Advisory Committee, USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts, a Watershed Implementation Plan for the Upper Salt Fork of the Vermilion River was finalized. This followed sixteen years of meetings and debate about the watershed, which led to a Comprehensive Plan. A copy of that plan may be obtained at the Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District office or from their web site at <http://www.ccswcd.com/fileupload> under Salt Fork Project Information.

In developing the Implementation Plan, the mission of the Salt Fork Steering Committee was to develop a scientifically sound strategy to implement cost-effective practices and educational programs sufficient to help assure that all waters of the Salt Fork will meet the needs of future generations. In doing so, the Committee recognized the role of the Salt Fork in the ecosystem, the economy, recreational activities, and local livelihoods and has recommendations to protect and enhance these functions.

Following completion of the Comprehensive Plan, an Implementation Committee was formed to carry it out. This committee is now actively working and has begun accumulating baseline water quality data at six locations within the watershed every two weeks. A web site (<http://saltfork.nres.uiuc.edu>) has been established to allow public access to that data. The Urbana & Champaign Sanitary District (UCSD) and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences (NRES) are providing sample collection, sample analysis, and web site development and maintenance through in-kind assistance.

In order to utilize this data to its maximum potential, the water quality data needs to be combined with water quantity data from continuous flow monitoring gaging stations typically operated and maintained by the United States Geological Survey (USGS). Currently there are two such gaging stations located in the plan area – one on the Boneyard Creek in the campus area and another north of St. Joseph on the north branch of the Salt Fork. However, funding for the gaging station north of St. Joseph ran out on October 1, 2008. It is the desire of the Implementation Committee to find funding to keep that gaging station on line and add an additional gaging station on the Saline Branch.

With quality and quantity data, loading contributions from storm water runoff, agricultural runoff and drainage, and wastewater treatment plants can be more accurately defined. The success of best management practices and educational programs to reduce the loads from each of those sources can also be more effectively assessed. Having this type of monitoring data in place may improve the ability to obtain grants from other state and federal sources to assist in the implementation of best management practices within the watershed in both the urban areas and the agricultural areas.

The annual cost to operate and maintain one of these gaging stations is \$12,250 per year, some of which might be available from USGS matching funds. Funding for the two gaging stations described in this letter could potentially require \$24,500 per year (approximately 25 shares at \$1,000 each), if there are no matching funds from USGS. The Implementation Committee believes that your organization is a stakeholder in the water quality and quantity issues related to the Salt Fork River Watershed. The data being generated by this effort may be of benefit to you in evaluating any water pollution control, or water conservation regulations or initiatives that you are currently facing or may face in the future.

The UCSD and UIUC NRES are already making substantial contributions to this effort, and we are asking your organization to consider a yearly contribution of one or more shares at \$1,000 per share to help fund the existing flow monitoring gage on the north branch of the Salt Fork and the proposed new one on the Saline Branch. The list of stakeholders to whom this letter is being sent is attached for your information. The Implementation Committee is hopeful that all of the organizations on the list will see the value of this effort and choose to contribute to the funding. Contributions should be sent to the Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District, 2110 W. Park Court, Ste C, Champaign, IL 61821.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any of the individuals listed below. We are also available to meet with you at your convenience to discuss this request in more detail. Thank you for considering this request, and we hope that we can count on your participation in this important effort related to the future of the Salt Fork River Watershed.

Very truly yours,

Eleanor Blackmon, Chair  
Implementation Committee  
City of Champaign/CCSWCD Board  
217-403-4710  
[Eleanor.Blackmon@ci.champaign.il.us](mailto:Eleanor.Blackmon@ci.champaign.il.us)

Tim Bachman, Chair  
Water Quality Subcommittee  
Urbana & Champaign Sanitary District  
217-367-3409 Ext. 221  
[tbachman@u-csd.com](mailto:tbachman@u-csd.com)

Bruce Stickers  
Champaign County SWCD  
217-352-3536 Ext. 116  
[Bruce.Stickers@il.nacdn.net](mailto:Bruce.Stickers@il.nacdn.net)

Cc – Douglas J. Yeskis, Director  
USGS Illinois Water Science Center

**SALT FORK RIVER WATERSHED PLAN  
FUNDING FOR STREAM FLOW GAGES  
STAKEHOLDERS**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Roland White	City of Champaign
Bill Gray	City of Urbana
Mike Little	UCSD
Bruce Sandahl	Village of Rantoul
B.J. Hackler	Village of St. Joseph
John W. Finn	Village of Sidney
Larry Pridemore	Village of Sidney
Dan Olson	Champaign County Forest Preserve District
Brad Uken	Champaign County Farm Bureau
Mack Weckel	Saline Branch Drainage District
Lloyde Esry	St. Joseph Drainage District No. 3
Joseph Irle	Beaver Lake Drainage District
Kent Krukewitt	Drainage District #1 Town of Sidney
Darrin Flessner	Upper Salt Fork Drainage District
Russell Buhr	Spoon River Drainage District
Ray Aden	Union DD Stanton & Ogden Twp
Glynnis Collins & Stacy James	Prairie Rivers
Steve Stierwalt	Champaign County Soil & Water Conservation District
Keith Erickson, P.E.	University of Illinois
Eliana Brown, MS, CPESC	University of Illinois

Monthly Board Report  
Bruce Stickers  
Resource Conservationist  
February 2009

***Items that need board action:***

- ◆ The Salt Fork Committee would like to know if the SWCD Board would contribute \$1,000 toward the gauging station project for the river.

***Items for your information:***

***Water Quality***

Letters were sent out seeking funding pledges for the Salt Fork gauging stations. So far Urbana has promised \$1,000 per year and Champaign will participate, but an exact amount has not been determined. It may be more than the \$1,000 from Urbana. USGS thinks they can come up with matching funds if we can come up with half the cost (about \$12,000 per year) for 2 stations.

The St. Joseph Village Board is drawing up the annexation agreement and should have something to look at before our meeting. The key is looking at all the ordinances that may affect our operation, i.e. mowing weeds and burning.

The have heard no response on the FREC grant through the University of Illinois, according to Fabian Fernandez they have met, but funding is not final, so they don't know where the cutoff will be. Some people have been notified they are not being funded, but not us.

I met with Alan Plocher from the Illinois Natural History Survey and Doug Eppich from Waterflow Consultants to start the planning work for the wetland. Doug will be drawing up a concept plan that we can use to determine costs and apply for grants.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service sent us the grant paperwork and we are getting \$1,500 for removal of silver maple and willow trees. We have rented the Fecon cutter for the week of February 16<sup>th</sup> to do the work. Joe and Steve will be the operators with Lennie and Bruce as backups.

The USEPA is pushing the IEPA to declare all the waters in Illinois impaired for nitrates. This could add a lot of pressure on agriculture to reduce their share of the nitrate load in streams.

***Soil Erosion control***

We completed no 22.02a requests last month.

***Farmland Protection***

Wind Farm siting is becoming a major issue. We have a number of people ask questions about it at the Midwest Ag Expo. The county is attempting to put together the zoning requirements, the first ZBA meeting on it will be 2/12. I took a Farm Bureau tour of the Twin Grove site in Mclean County on 2/7 to gain more information. Several county board members and zoning people attended.

***Water Management***

***Wildlife Habitat***

***Education, Natural Resource Data, Public Information, and Participation***

The 5:45 a.m. show this month is on rain barrels.

We signed up to display at the Greener Living Expo February 28<sup>th</sup> to promote rain barrels and rain gardens. It will be at the News-Gazette distribution center on Apollo Drive in northeast Champaign.

I attended several meetings/conferences to keep up with new information in our field.

Renee Weitekamp  
Board Report  
February 2009

Items that need action from the board:

Water Quality

Soil Erosion

Prime Farmland Preservation

Water Management

Wildlife Habitat

- Tree Sale Mailing

Education & Public Information

- Annual Meeting planning, final budget, thank yous, election materials, recap sent to paper, etc.
- Envirothon. To date, 6 teams from three schools in Champaign County have confirmed they are participating.
- The regional education organization is hosting career days for all the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in the area. Bruce and I are taking turns presenting Agriculture and Natural Resources career information to the students. (carry over from last report)
- Soil and Water Stewardship Week – started putting together ideas and list of materials.
- Attended Earth Partners meeting.
- Put together a presentation for a Brownie troop (18, 5-7 year olds) on water.
- Midwest Ag Expo – prepared display for Gordyville, helped set up and helped in the booth for a morning.
- Website – prepared updated pdf files for fish, tree, aquatic plant and rain barrel sales. Worked on annual meeting recap for latest news page, worked with PAQ on changing the website to include aquatic plants and rain barrels on the for sale page. Worked with ePay to set up accepting payments for aquatic plants and rain barrels.

Watershed Management

- Attended Salt Fork meeting on February 5<sup>th</sup>.

District Operations

- Completed the 1096 tax forms and the W-3 to send to the IRS.
- Received ePay training. Mr. Lindus from the State Treasurer's office came over to provide this training.

Projects in the upcoming week

- Preparing display for the Greener Living Expo
- Preparing brochures for Pond Meetings in conjunction with Extension and IDNR.
- Preparing proposal for a Contribution Agreement with NRCS.
- Will be attending my first ISWCDEA meeting on February 11<sup>th</sup> in Springfield.