

Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District
October 30, 2009
Board Meeting Minutes

Directors present: Joe Rothermel, Lennie Heiser, and Eric Suits.

Staff present: Bruce Stickers and Renee Weitekamp.

Natural Resource Conservation Service Staff present: Kevin Donoho.

Meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. on Friday, October 30, 2009.

Lennie Heiser made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2009 board meeting. Eric Suits seconded, motion carried.

Eric Suits made the motion to approve the financial reports for October 2009. Lennie Heiser seconded, motion carried.

Old Business

Annual Plan of Work – While discussing Water Management Initiatives, two new goals were proposed, including the promotion of Drainage Water Management and support and work with MS4 group. No new goals or action items and no changes were suggested for the Wildlife Habitat Initiatives. Discussion on the remaining categories will continue at the next meeting.

Annual Meeting – After discussion, the board decided to invite a representative from Invenergy to be the guest speaker. Steve Stierwalt will personally invite Dan Schaefer, as he is the Outstanding Friend of Conservation Award Recipient. Staff will draft an invitation, the wording for the award and the sponsor letter. These will all be sent by email to the board for comments and approval.

Access to FSA's name and address database – No discussion took place.

St. Joseph Wetland Restoration Plan – A plan is being developed; staff has identified three potential sources of funding that will be further investigated.

Strip-till Soil Testing Invoice – Dan Schaefer has found a couple sponsors and will continue to look for contributions.

Insurance – Nothing new.

Fall Strip-till Plans – Kevin Donoho discussed several available programs, including CSP.

New Business

CPP – NRCS and SWCD staff have been in contact with the Area Engineer on the Reinhart Project. The Area Engineer has requested some preliminary maps and calculations. The SWCD staff prepared the maps and NRCS will be working on the preliminary watershed calculations.

NACD Membership – Following discussion, the overall consensus is to support the NACD and pay the yearly membership; however, the board would like to wait for a few months in hopes of receiving some FY10 operations money first. Lennie Heiser made a motion to table the discussion until the next meeting. Eric Suits seconded, motion carried.

D.C. Report - is attached.

A.C. Report - is attached.

With the CRP reenrollments nearly complete, staff would like to alter the plan of work for the contribution agreement with NRCS. The monies will remain the same, but the work products will be slightly altered. The AISWCD has recently started a monthly Legislative Newsletter.

R.C. Report – is attached.

Results from the transect survey that was performed by all SWCD's in the state this spring were recently released. Staff prepared a short report showing soil loss and corn and bean tillage systems for Champaign and neighboring counties. A U of I graduate student, Ariane Peralta, has been using the St. Joseph Wetland to study how microorganisms break down pollutants for her Doctoral Dissertation. She is applying for a grant from the National Science Foundation; the grant includes money for educational outreach. Ariane is interested in using this for kiosk signage at the wetland. Another U of I class used the site for their wetland delineation project. Prior to visiting the wetland, Bruce met with them to discuss the overall project.

Committee Updates –

Salt Fork –The next meeting is scheduled for November 5th.

Associate Director Kenneth Kesler and Bruce Stickers took two County Board members on a tour of the county. Overall, the tour went well; tour highlights including seeing Homer Lake and the St. Joseph Wetland. Bruce and Kenneth felt the county board members learned a lot about the county and the SWCD. The Board expressed their appreciation to Kenneth and Bruce for organizing and conducting the tour.

LUC meeting – Unless a county proposes an item for new business, the LUC meeting will likely be postponed until the next quarterly board meeting. Vermilion County will be the host.

FREC Grant – Fabian has been working on the grant proposal, which is almost finished. He will submit the proposal by the November 1st grant deadline.

Other

Director Eleanor Blackmon was awarded the Outstanding Civil Engineering Achievement Award for her work for the City of Champaign's Scott Park Project.

The Champaign County SWCD Board will hold the next board meeting on Thursday, December 3, 2009 at 5:00 p.m.

Eric Suits moved to adjourn the meeting. Lennie Heiser seconded, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:10 A.M.

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

Items that need action from the board:

Water Quality

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Soil Erosion

- CRP waterway plans as part of our contribution agreement.

Prime Farmland Preservation

Water Management

Wildlife Habitat

-

Education & Public Information

- Updated the ISWCDEA Website to include information from Summer Conference and registration information for the upcoming Winter Training.
- Updated the CCSWCD website – posted meeting minutes, updated the fish sale pdf and sent to PAQ.
- Created a Drainage District Map for Allison (Mr. Cottrell's office?).
- Mark David with the U of I was awarded a CREES grant from the USDA for a project in the Salt Fork. Bruce and I met with Courtney Flint and Mallory regarding this project. Afterwards, we provided Mallory Drainage District information and contact information for contractors and fertilizer dealers in the area.
- Assisted Robbie Berg, Earthpartners, with a conservation tour of Champaign for visiting Environmental Educators.
- Updated contact information for local teachers. I would like to send a letter about the Envirothon very soon.

Watershed Management

District Operations

- Fabian, U of I, has nearly 600 points across the state he would like soil data for. He sent me the coordinates of the points and I've been downloading the counties' soil data and using GIS to match the points with the soil information.
- Registered Bruce and I for Winter Training in Springfield on December 1 & 2.

Monthly Board Report
Bruce Stickers
Resource Conservationist
October 2009

Items that need board action:

Items for your information:

Water Quality

The USDA Mississippi River Basin Initiative was announced and it includes the Salt Fork watershed in Champaign and Vermilion County as being areas of special interest. We anticipate them announcing a request for proposals to go out in mid-November with a 45-day time limit. Cindy Johnston will be taking the information to the Vermilion County SWCD Board to see their interest. This is a great opportunity, but the workload issues need to be addressed.

Soil Erosion control

The IEPA was invoiced for 10 soil erosion inspections completed by Mike Hirschi.

The special project for CPP for the Briar Cliff subdivision in Mahomet was submitted last month, but we have not heard anything on funding being released. This is a \$10,000 project (\$6,000 cost share).

Farmland Protection

Water Management

Wildlife Habitat

We helped the Champaign Park District plant 5 acres of habitat on the Boulder Ridge park area on Staley Road. An additional 10 acres of native grasses will be dormant seeded this fall.

Education, Natural Resource Data, Public Information, and Participation

The 5:40 a.m. show this month featured rain gardens.

The U of I submitted an article to the Journal of Sustainable Agriculture on wetlands and it included a case study on our wetland.

Renee and I took 5 environmental educators on a tour as part of a conference they had here in Champaign. Robbie Berg of Earth Partners arranged the program. We visited a shallow water area, filter strip and streambank stabilization project.

Al Kurtz and Al Nudo from the Champaign County Board were taken on a tour of conservation projects, the Barnhart Prairie and the wetland.

The first phase of the USDA CREES grant with Mark David involves notifying people in the watershed (Salt Fork north of St. Joseph). Renee and I met with Courtney Flint and Mallory for the U of I to help them get started. Part of their work involves determining attitudes about conservation projects and what it takes to encourage them to take action on water quality issues.