EAGLE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

PO Box 360 Eagle, CO 81631 ~ 970.343.0333

Monthly Board Meeting Minutes April 7, 2020

5:00pm Online Zoom Meeting

**Meeting called to order at 5:06pm**

**Supervisors Present:** Ken, Wendy, Scott J, Shawn, Scott S, and Jay

**Supervisors Absent:** Clayton

**Guests:** Doug Riggins, Derrick Wylie, Denyse Schrenker

**Approval of Minutes** Ken made a motion to approve minutes, seconded by Shawnapproved by all present board members.

**Roll Call Reports:** Board member miles & hours spent on conservation starting with the last regular meeting held March 11, 2020

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **BOARD MEMBER** | **HOURS** | **MILES** |
| Scott Jones | 40 | 0 |
| Scott Schlosser | 20 | 10 |
| Wendy Sacks | 2 | 25 |
| Clayton Gerard | - | - |
| Shawn Bruckman | 9 | 0 |
| Jay Taylor | 6 | 7 |
| Ken Marchetti | 4 | 0 |

**Treasurer’s Report:**

Alpine Checking Account balance: $22,792.90

Money Market Account balance: $30,652.36

**Topics to Discuss:**

*Soil health presentation from Derrick Wyle with NRCS-* most soil health analysis is done on site not generalized. 4 pillars of health; live root in ground at all times; keeping soil covered; diversity; limit disturbance; additionally, integrating animals into the system. Fields that have been left unattended for a long period time tend to lose diversity. There are some tests to determine the soil health level, it’s a simple test that doesn’t’ tell you things like the structure or water holding capacity. Shawn asked how we can encourage homeowners to get a soil health test like the Hainy Test and how do they read and understand those test results. The Hainy test is the defacto test on the market for soil health testing, it measures the microbial respiration in the soil vs just a chemical test which doesn’t tell you the whole story. The Hainy test is the most common test that Derrick uses, however it is lacking in areas so using things like and infiltration ring can help you figure out the overall health of the soil. This test does give the landowner the ideal cover crops for their soil, i.e certain % of legumes vs % of grasses, etc. Derrick recommended that our District could do a cost-share program to cover 50% of the cost of the test, Derrick said he can help decipher the results. Shawn asked about other tests landowners could use that might serve them better than a Hainy test. A PLFA- not super helpful on it’s own but can be a great addition to the Hainy test- however this test doesn’t really help landowners on deciding changes to make management decisions, probably more helpful for someone that wants to show that certain changes they’ve made had X affect, something that is tracked over time. Ultimately it was decided that there really isn’t one all encompassing test and what test a landowner uses will depend on what their goals are. Derrick mentioned he doesn’t’ have the time to do soil tests for individuals but if we get enough folks interested he would be willing to do a tutorial one day that multiple folks could attend, then the landowners would be responsible for completing and sending off their tests. Mapping and keeping records are highly recommended since it can greatly help folks make better decisions, like should I fertilize? Forage tests are helpful too since it will tell you the quality of crop which is a good indicator of your soil health. Scott S had an idea of doing a soil workshop with a pit test at the Brush Creek Ranch and Open Space in coordination with NRCS, the County and CSU ext, pick a spot to test year after year one with traditional ag practices vs composting and the difference between soil health over the years, the board is tentatively thinking this could happen late August. Shawn brought up the Soil Health Coalition group and what they’re working on specifically in the science and practice group within the coalition. They’re trying to create a baseline map to identify holes to then do demonstration projects and where information is lacking, Shawn invited Derrick to join the collaboration to help aid with helping landowners understand the data from tests.

*Weed cost-share-* The committee deemed the Cost-Share program important $2,000 from noxious weed fund and $3,000 from the US private state forestry fund. So there is even more funding for the cost-share grant now which is great because the overall grant didn’t receive the amount of $ that was asked for. We went over the changes Doug made to our preexisting cost share app to make sure everyone is ok with the application requirements. Ken made a motion to approve the changes, seconded by Wendy all present board members approved, Doug will send the updated application for board review. Scott S did want an exception for landowners to do their own mechanical removal and not have to hire labor and figure out a way to reimburse them for their labor. Doug can give an estimate of how many hours will be required of manual labor during the site visit.

*Election*- SD forms, Courtney will send the SD-12 form to Scott J to sign through DocuSign then submit to DOLA. SD-11 form was printed in the Valley Enterprise and will be filed in our election records.

*Mill Levy-* discussion on how to form strategic alliances, the getting PR support from them so more folks know who we are. Create a presentation and an elevator pitch, Shawn will create a presentation to present to the board at our next meeting. Courtney will ask Stephen J is the CACD grant would work for this and reach out to Nikki Brinson with CSCB to see if she knows of any grants.

There was a brief discussion on COVID-19 and there’s a possibility that summer events will get cancelled like the Rodeo and Fair. Scott S mentioned that we should keep doing online meetings instead of in person until things settle down, give people the option of doing in person and/or online. Ken is ok with being the Zoom meeting host. The board discussed the District their own Zoom account to keep this as an option.

Rancon partners- Jay said he called and finally got ahold of Stephanie Mitchell, she said the notice was prematurely sent so there’s nothing to protest at the moment, it’s still a ways out. Stephanie will be in touch with Jay as the application moves down the pipeline.

**NRCS Report:** EQIP deadline is April 10th. Soil Conservationist Kathleen Night quit, they don’t know if or when they’ll replace her. They have made offers to a range conservationist and engineer and will hopefully get to replace her. We are at 102% normal snowpack, today is the peak so it’s good to be just above average. Civil Rights Agreement, Derrick is sending the agreement to be signed by the board.

**CSU Ext Update:** CSU’s soil lab is not really operating at this time due to COVID-19 so she’s sending folks to other organizations. She’s not allowed to have any in person training or site visits until end of May for now but that could change. She’s still able to answer questions just not do anything in person.

**Mail Review:** Colorado Outdoors Magazine

**Next Meeting Date: 5/13/20**

**Adjourn: 7:24pm**

**Notes taken by: Courtney Grant (District Manager)**