



IDAHO SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

SPECIAL MEETING NOTICE & AGENDA

Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission
December 10, 2020, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. MT

Location: Idaho Water Center, 322 E Front St, Suite 560, Conference Room, Boise
TELECONFERENCE # 1-877-820-7831 Passcode: 922837

[ZOOM Meeting Link](#)

Zoom Meeting ID: 988 8913 4195 Zoom Password: 373084

*In order to ensure compliance with social distancing requirements at the meeting, we ask that any person planning on attending the meeting in person provide twenty-four (24) hour notice to Crystal Rosen at (208) 332-1790. Pursuant to the city of Boise’s Public Health Emergency Order 20-10, persons attending the meeting in person are required to wear face covering that completely cover their nose and mouth.

Members of the public may address any item on the Agenda during consideration of that item. Those wishing to comment on any agenda item are requested to so indicate on the sign-in sheet in advance. Copies of agenda items, staff reports and/or written documentation relating to items of business on the agenda are on file in the office of the Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission in Boise. Upon request, copies can be emailed and will also be available for review at the meeting.

The Commission will occasionally convene in Executive Session, pursuant to Idaho Code § 74-206(1). Executive Session is closed to the public.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT COMPLIANCE

The meeting will be held in facilities that meet the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you require special accommodations to attend, participate in, or understand the meeting, please contact the Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission at (208) 332-1790 or Info@swc.idaho.gov so advance arrangements can be made.

1.	WELCOME, SELF-INTRODUCTIONS, AND ROLL CALL	Chairman Wright
2.	PARTNER REPORTS (information only)	
* 3.	AGENDA REVIEW (potential action item) The Agenda may be amended by formal Board action, if necessary, at the meeting. If so, a motion that states the reason for the amendment and the good faith reason the item was not included in the original agenda will be made and approved by the Board.	Chairman Wright
POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS		
# 4.	DISCUSSION OF DRAFT COMMISSION PRELIMINARY OPTIONS FOR CHANGE ACTION: For information and possible action.	Murrison
ADJOURN <i>The next Regular Commission Meeting will be on January 21, 2021, at 10:00 AM MT in Boise, Idaho.</i>		

(*) Action Item

(#) Attachment

ACTION: Staff recommended action for Commission consideration

Thursday, Dec. 10, 2020 Meeting Agenda

Date of Notice: Dec 7, 2020



**SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION
COMMISSION**

H. Norman Wright
Chairman

Cathy Roemer
Vice Chairman

Erik Olson
Secretary

Gerald Trebesch
Commissioner

Wendy Pratt
Commissioner

Teri Murrison
Administrator

MEMO

**TO: CHAIRMAN WRIGHT AND COMMISSIONERS
ROEMER, OLSON, TREBESCH, AND PRATT**
FROM: TERI MURRISON, ADMINISTRATOR
DATE: DECEMBER 1, 2020
**RE: DISCUSSION OF DRAFT COMMISSION PRELIMINARY OPTIONS FOR
CHANGE**

At a June 2020 District meeting a number of supervisors present expressed the desire that the Commission should “change” the way it operates. Although frustrations were detailed over the Commission’s lawsuit with the Franklin District and several options were mentioned at the meeting (among them dissolving the Commission, removing the local match formula requirement, and changing Commissioner appointments from the current process to one where Districts would appoint Commissioners), a clear consensus on desired changes was not determined at that meeting. Nor was a majority of Districts present to support dissolving the Commission.

To ensure any changes proposed reflected the will of a majority of Districts, the Commission immediately began trying to determine what changes were desired. Over the past six months we have consulted with multiple District supervisors and staff through a survey (deployed in person at District meetings across the state and online to all District supervisors and Boards) and in many individual conversations. The survey results can be found [HERE](#).

The overall takeaway from the survey was that there is not strong support for dissolving the Commission, but District supervisors do support a number of reforms that can be made (some have already been made) by the Commission, and a few which may only be made by the Legislature.

Follow up on survey responses was conducted by Commissioners to District Board Chairs in November and early December. What we learned led us to the development of the attached Draft ISWCC Options for Change which will be distributed to Districts for further discussion.

The development of these options was begun by staff prior to the IASCD meeting in November where 31 of 32 Districts present voted to recommend keeping the Commission while exploring potential changes. Now that the IASCD subcommittee has been directed to examine potential changes rather than dissolution of the Commission we look forward to discussing additional potential changes that group may identify at a meeting in mid-January.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: For information and possible action.

ATTACHMENTS: Draft ISWCC Preliminary Options for Change

DRAFT ISWCC PRELIMINARY OPTIONS FOR CHANGE*

November 30, 2020

Green shading indicates Legislative action required

District Desired Changes	Identified Potential Action(s)	Responsible	Comments
POTENTIAL CHANGES THAT DON'T REQUIRE LEGISLATIVE ACTION			
Include more District perspectives in decision making	Establish nonvoting Advisory Board	ISWCC Board, Boise	Include NRCS State Conservationist, representative of UI CALS, one or more District representative, and a nonprofit/stakeholder representative. Already in statute, item on 12/10 Board meeting to discuss
Rebuild trust in Board/Boise, interact more	Establish strong, ongoing relationships with District Chairs (min 2x/yr)	ISWCC Board	Chair, Board members began contacting (in mid Nov.) all District Chairs to discuss Change Survey responses and identify further changes desired, in person by division <u>when COVID/budget allows</u>
	Attend more District meetings to observe and listen	Board, Boise staff	Zoom now, in person when COVID/budget allows
Work closely with Districts @ staff level	ISWCC attend all monthly District meetings	Field staff	Hours to come from discretionary allocations to field staff, not Technical Assistance Allowcation Awards (Zoom now, in person when COVID/budget allows)
	Rehire vacant TRS2 district support position to respond to District req, develop webinar orientation for new supervisors and admins, increase training , update online resources, outreach and education on roles/responsibilities, requirements	TRS2, Boise staff	Website enhanced 10/20, will add in person training COVID/staffing/budget permitting, webinar orientation to be completed by 6/21, In person/online outreach to assist Districts with more training, providing information and documentation of District required planning, reporting, technical assistance, and funding requests.
Build strong relationship with IASCD, other Partners	Promote better understanding of Partner roles and responsibilities	Board, Boise staff	Clarified information on the roles of local, state, and federal partners, nonprofit advocacy groups (Done 10/2020), will continue work on this
	Work more closely to determine Legislative education and outreach strategies and outcomes.	Board, Administrator, IASCD	In past, this has been a shared goal of ISWCC and IASCD.
	Increase interactions with Governor and Legislature to build awareness of Partnership	Board, Administrator	In process

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District Desired Changes	Identified Potential Action(s)	Responsible	Comments
Communicate with Districts more effectively	Continue monthly staff updates to Districts	Boise/field staff	Current practice
	Shorten reports at IASCD Division meetings when possible, utilize graphic presentations more, avoid lengthy memos whenever possible	Boise staff	In process
	Reevaluate District reporting requirements necessary to comply with intent of Legislature, Statute, and Rule	Boise staff	In process
Flexibility in Technical Assistance Allocations	Facilitate transfer of TA from project to project	Boise staff, Board	Process has been simplified by providing discretionary hours to field staff for unanticipated projects and for TA Award change process to transfer hours to another project: District requests (requires Board action) transfer to another project, email Commission the request, and if resources are available, the transfer of hours to another project can be made within a day or two (Done. ~2015)
Increase Outreach on Behalf of Districts More, Advocate	Feature individual Districts and projects in newsletter in addition to regular project-focused content (<i>in progress</i>)	Administrator, contractor	Initiated 12/2020
District Input on ISWCC Changes			
ISWCC purchase Zoom license to allow ISWCC employees to attend meetings remotely, "...the District sees nothing cumbersome or difficult in completing the reports currently required by the ISWCC (including match reporting). The Board feels it is important to have a reporting requirement and we are happy to do so. I would also mention that we use the Annual and 5 Year Plan and the Performance Report for other reasons (Commissioners, Legislators, General Public, and Grant Writing). {We were} thrilled to note that the priorities in our Annual and 5 Year Plan matched up perfectly with the NRCS Local Working Group priorities for their program that were identified this fall. This is not by accident, rather we believe we have a good feel for our local landowners' needs. We believe Districts should take the opportunity to compare the two as they write their plans for next year. Our office would continue to prepare these two reports even if they were not a requirement.	Custer		

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District Desired Changes	Identified Potential Action(s)	Responsible	Comments
POTENTIAL CHANGES REQUIRING LEGISLATIVE ACTION			
Funding for project implementation	Utilize \$500,000/year of Resource Conservation and Rangeland Development Program dedicated funding to reactivate Water Quality Program for Agriculture	Administrator/ Board/Districts and Legislature, Governor	This would provide cost share for project implementation through Districts, focus loan program marketing on conservation-minded borrowers to increase conservation loans from fund. Minor changes to Statute are already drafted, previous Rules can be adopted and made temporary by Governor's Office through 2022 Legislative Session, engage in Negotiated Rulemaking (4/2021-10/21) to simplify and streamline them in 2022 Legislative session.
	Change Trustee and Benefit funding statute	Legislature, Governor	Regardless of vehicle to change, initiate robust and fully representative outreach to eliminate (or keep as revised) local match formula and determine majority District support before making Legislative changes to District funding (1/2021-6/2021, propose agency legislation in 2022 session to accomplish)
	Seek a full 2:1 state match to local matching funds		
	Eliminate match funding and replace with equal distribution, tiered distribution, or other		
	Work with Districts to determine additional strategies including: seek additional General Fund for WQPA cost share, for grants, and incentives	Board, staff, Legislature, Governor	In process, develop further recommendations for 2022 Legislative Session
Increase District capacity through providing more ISWCC technical assistance	Increase conservation on the ground (funding, staff) to ISWCC for additional District support. Investigate feasibility of adding new positions to compensate for the 3+ positions that also work in other ISWCC programs - CREP, TMDLs, and Ground Water.	Boise staff, Board, Legislature, Governor	ISWCC's field staff numbers are not sufficient to serve District needs. About 1/2 of all field staff hours are dedicated to working in CREP, Ground Water, and TMDL programs. To dedicate 100% of all currently appropriated positions would take an additional 6,729 staff hours annually. Need to determine support before proceeding

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District Desired Changes	Identified Potential Action(s)	Responsible	Comments
Reduce loan program bureaucracy	Streamline RCRDP – Initiate District outreach to determine what RCRDP requirements should be streamlined in Rule	Staff, Board, Districts, Legislature, Governor	Could begin outreach in 1/2021-6/2021) initiate Rule change if feasible in 2022 session to accomplish