



# Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission

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## IDAHO SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING & TELECONFERENCE

**Date and Time:**

Thursday, May 18, 2023  
10: 02 AM – 12:23 PM MT

**Location:**

322 E. Front St., Suite 560  
Boise, Idaho 83702

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### MINUTES

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**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Erik Olson (Chair) (Zoom)  
Karen Sharpnack (Secretary) (Zoom)  
Joan Cloonan (Zoom)  
Blake Hollingsworth (Zoom)

Wendy Pratt (Vice-Chair) (Zoom)  
Mitch Silvers  
Richard Savage (Zoom)

**COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT:**

Delwyne Trefz  
Melonie Ziegler  
Joe Peterson  
Jenna Ditzel  
Dustin Diaz (Zoom)  
Meghan Brooksher (Zoom)

Crystal Rosen  
Loretta Strickland  
Brenda Charles  
Terry Hoebelheinrich  
Bill Lillibridge (Zoom)

**PARTNERS AND GUESTS PRESENT:**

David Perkins, OAG  
Devin Fielding, IASCD (Zoom)  
Curtis Elke, NRCS (Zoom)  
Alex Williamson, LSO (Zoom)

Kyle Rooks, IASCD  
Darren, Damon, Gov. Office (Zoom)  
Mindi Banks, NRCS (Zoom)

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**ITEM #1: WELCOME AND ROLL CALL****PRESENTED BY: CHAIRMAN OLSON**

Chairman Olson called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM.

Roll call: Chairman Erik Olson, Commissioners Wendy Pratt, Joan Cloonan, Karen Sharpnack, Richard Savage, Mitch Silvers, and Blake Hollingsworth were present.

**ITEM #2: AGENDA REVIEW****PRESENTED BY: CHAIRMAN OLSON**

Action: None taken.

### **ITEM #3: PARTNER REPORTS**

#### **PRESENTED BY: CHAIRMAN OLSON**

Curtis Elke – Provided NRCS Report. Curtis gave a brief overview of his history with NRCS to introduce himself to new Commissioners. Curtis addressed ongoing staffing issues. NRCS currently has 150 people on staff and stated that the goal is to add 75 more over 2 years to bring total staffing to 225. Curtis also touched on Climate Smart progress and offered to share the draft Strategy Plan they are developing with the Administrator. He also advised the Board that NRCS Chief Crosby would be in Boise from the 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> of June.

Kyle Rooks – Provided IASCD Report. Kyle stated that IASCD is primarily focused on moving the Climate Smart grant program with U of I to the next stage in order to begin getting funds allocated.

Devin Fielding – added to IASCD Report. Devin added that the IASCD Board moved their June meeting to June 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>. The move was due to some tournaments in Boise the week of the original meeting dates.

Nick Peak – Provided EPA Report. Nick focused his report on the April 12, 2023 rule that updated the definition of Waters of the United States (WOTUS) for 24 states. Idaho is one of the 24 affected states.

Action: None taken

### **ITEM #4: MINUTES**

#### **PRESENTED BY: CHAIRMAN OLSON**

Commissioners Cloonan and Sharpnack expressed gratitude for the changes made to minutes.

Action: Commissioner Cloonan made a motion to *approve the April 18, 2023, minutes as presented*. Commissioner Hollingsworth seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

### **ITEM #5: ELECT COMMISSION TREASURER**

#### **PRESENTED BY: CHAIRMAN OLSON**

A brief explanation was given by Commissioner Sharpnack to clarify why a Treasurer seat was being added to the Board Officers. She stated she was more comfortable having the fiscal duties separated from the Secretary position since she does not have the type of background that lends to a well versed background in agency financial details.

Action: Commissioner Silvers made a motion to *split the duties of Secretary and Treasurer going forward and to have staff define duties more clearly after the meeting*. Commissioner Sharpnack seconded the nomination. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Action: Commissioner Sharpnack made a motion to *nominate Blake Hollingsworth as Board Treasurer*. Commissioner Silvers seconded the nomination. No other nominations were made. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**ITEM #6: STRICKEN FROM AGENDA**

**ITEM #7: WQPA FY2023 PROJECT UPDATE**

**PRESENTED BY: LORETTA STRICKLAND**

Mrs. Strickland reviewed the information covered in her memo. At the time of the meeting the distributed funds had not changed.

Action: Commissioner Cloonan made a motion to *approve directing staff to encumber \$2278.96 reverted from completed projects if approved by DFM*. Commissioner Silvers seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Action: Commissioner Cloonan made a motion to *approve directing staff to encumber any additional reverted funds from FY 2023 WQPA for use in the next round of WQPA if allowed by DFM*. Commissioner Pratt seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**ITEM #8: REPORTS**

**PRESENTED BY: COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF**

Dustin Diaz – Reported that there was a field day for one of the WQPA projects in his area. The field day is named after the project area, “Clover Field Day,” and is taking place on June 20, 2023, at 10:00 AM. Commissioners Sharpnack and Hollingsworth both indicated they would be interested in attending.

Crystal Rosen – Reported that she would be leaving the Commission for a position with the Idaho Industrial Commission.

Action: None taken.

**ITEM #9: FISCAL REPORT**

**PRESENTED BY: MELONIE ZIEGLER**

Ms. Ziegler reviewed the budget to actuals for the month of April 2023. She gave a brief review of our current standing, estimated funds available for year end spend down, and advised of the expected early implementation of annual CEC pay raises.

Action: None taken.

**ITEM #10: FY 2024 CONSERVATION DISTRICT FUNDING REQUESTS**

**PRESENTED BY: LORETTA STRICKLAND**

Mrs. Strickland went over the history and purpose of the District Budget Hearing process. She then reviewed the three requests that were submitted. There were no districts present at the meeting to give a verbal request.

Action: None taken.

**ITEM #11: ENVIROTHON REPORT**

**PRESENTED BY: DUSTIN DIAZ**

Mr. Diaz gave a brief account of his experience with Envirothon. He explained the events and stations and how the teams of students listen or watch presentations then take tests on the information that they learn. The first place team gets to go to the National Event later in the year which is being held in Nova Scotia this year.

Action: None taken.

**ITEM #12: RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND RANGELAND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM UPDATE**

**PRESENTED BY: TERRY HOEBELHEINRICH**

Mr. Hoebelheinrich reviewed the RCRDP loan inquiry and application information for this Fiscal Year to date. He also gave a brief explanation of the current interest rate information and explained the Commission's policy on reviewing and setting rates no less than once a year.

Action: None taken.

**ITEM #13: ENGINEERING REPORT**

**PRESENTED BY: BILL LILLIBRIDGE**

Mr. Lillibridge reviewed his plan for the commission to continue to provide engineering support to the districts with the Commission's inability to fill the vacant engineering position in southeast Idaho. That position is being reclassified as a Natural Resources Conservationist. He also reviewed a table attached to his report that covered district projects requiring his engineering assistance.

Action: None taken.

**ITEM #14: ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

**PRESENTED BY: DELWYNE TREFZ**

Mr. Trefz reported in more detail on the Commission's vacant positions, including the recent hiring of Jenna Ditzel for the recently vacated northern Idaho NRC position. He also clarified the plan of filling the southeast Idaho position since the reclassification had been approved that morning. Mr. Trefz then reviewed the memo from the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) stating that the agreements between the OAG and Districts will not be renewed at the end of June.

Action: None taken.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:23 PM. The next Commission Meeting will be held on June 22, 2023, in Boise.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Sharpnack, Secretary