

CENTRAL PLATTE NRD

Board Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2021

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Mick Reynolds called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. He reported that the NRD abides by the Open Meetings Act in conducting business and said that a copy of the Open Meetings Act was displayed on the south wall of the conference room, that the Board reserves the right to change the order of an item on the agenda, and some items on the agenda are subject to closed session.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ATTENDANCE: Board members present were:

LeRoy Arends	Dwayne Margritz	Mick Reynolds
Lon Bohn	Charles Maser	Jay Richeson
Alicia Haussler	Jerry Milner	Steve Sheen
Ryan Kegley	Keith Ostermeier	Ed Stoltenberg
Brian Keiser	Doug Reeves	Deb VanMatre
Ed Kyes	Marvion Reichert	Jerry Wiese

Excused Absences: Jim Bendfeldt, Tom Downey and Barry Obermiller

Staff present: Lyndon Vogt – General Manager, Jesse Mintken – Assistant Manager, Kelly Cole – Administrative Assistant, Courtney Widup – Water Resources Technician, Brody Vorderstrasse – Communications Assistant, Tricia Dudley – Water Quality Programs Specialist, Brandi Flyr – Hydrologist, Marcia Lee – Information/Education Specialist, Morgan Wrich – Precision Conservation Specialist, Dan Clement – Water Resources Specialist

Others present: Joe Krolikowski – NRCS District Conservationist

MEETING NOTICES: Chairman Reynolds reported that the notices of the meeting had been published in the Grand Island Independent and the news release was provided to other media outlets in the District.

MEETING MINUTES: Chairman Reynolds noted a correction to the meeting minutes. Under the Natural Resources Commission report, the date was incorrectly typed. The date should have said December 15 for the next meeting of the Natural Resources Commission.

Alicia Haussler made the motion to approve the October board meeting minutes with the date correction. Doug Reeves seconded the motion. All board members present, voting by roll call vote, were in favor, except Brian Keiser, Marvion Reichert, and Jerry Wiese who abstained. Motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OTHER BUSINESS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS:

Chairman Reynolds asked if there were any announcements or suggestions for future meetings. There were none.

PUBLIC FORUM: Chairman Reynolds asked if anyone wanted to address the board on any item not included on the agenda. There were none.

EXCUSED ABSENCES: Chairman Reynolds reported that Jim Bendfeldt, Tom Downey and Barry Obermiller requested to be excused from the board meeting.

Alicia Haussler made the motion to approve the absences as requested. Marvion Reichert seconded the motion. All board members present, voting by roll call vote, were in favor. Motion carried.

NRCS REPORT: Joe Krolikowski, NRCS District Conservationist, reported on RCPP Agreement for the NE Soil Carbon Project (see enclosed).

SUBDISTRICT BOUNDARY MODIFICATIONS: Lyndon Vogt, General Manager, reported that the Executive Committee met earlier today and reviewed the boundary modifications. The executive committee presented the modifications they are recommending, which keeps each current director in their same district.

Marvion Reichert made a motion to approve the subdistrict boundary modifications as presented. Deb VanMatre seconded the motion. All board members present, voting by roll call vote, were in favor. Motion carried.

PROGRAMS COMMITTEE REPORT: Doug Reeves, chairman, reported that the Programs Committee had met earlier today and reviewed an Outdoor Classroom Application for Centura High School. Centura High School is requesting \$2,000 to install a windbreak with trees and shrubs on the south end and west side of the football field/track. This outdoor classroom will provide students the opportunity to understand concepts of science, math, art and specifically landscaping and agriculture.

Doug Reeves made a motion to approve the \$2,000 Outdoor Classroom Application to Centura High School. Alicia Haussler seconded the motion. All board members present, voting by roll call vote, were in favor. Motion carried.

Reeves also reported that the Nebraska Forest Service Tree Grant is still in the works. If approved this grant will give landowners an additional 25% cost share, totaling 75% cost share, to install windbreaks within the Central Platte NRD. Once more information is available, we will let the board know.

CONSERVATION COLLABORATION COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT: Lyndon Vogt, General Manager, reported that we have an agreement with Rainwater Basin Joint Venture (RWB JV) that currently pays 100% of 3 full-time employees with the NRCS office and 74% of the Communication Assistants position at the Central Platte NRD

(CPNRD pays remaining 26%). Amendment #3 would allow Central Platte NRD to hire a 5th employee as a Burn Plan Specialist at no cost to us.

Marvion Reichert made a motion to approve the Conservation Collaboration Cooperative Agreement, Amendment #3, with the RWBJV that would allow CPNRD to hire a Burn Plan Specialist. Lon Bohn seconded the motion. All board members present, voting by roll call vote, were in favor. Motion carried.

BOARD OFFICER NOMINATING COMMITTEE TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BOARD SECRETARY AND TREASURER:

Chairman Reynolds reported that the district's Bylaws require the election of a three-member Board Officer Nominating Committee at the November board meeting with a report to be made in December and the election of board secretary and treasurer to be held in January. The Bylaws also state that board officers can only serve two consecutive, two-year terms in the same office. Keith Ostermeier would be eligible to serve another two-year term as treasurer, but Deb VanMatre has served two consecutive two-year terms as secretary so would not be eligible to serve in that office.

Following a brief discussion Jerry Wiese made the motion to elect Ryan Kegley, Charles Maser and Ed Stoltenberg to serve as the Board Office Nominating Committee. Marvion Reichert seconded the motion. All board members present, voting by roll call vote, were in favor except Ryan Kegley, Charles Maser and Ed Stoltenberg who abstained. Motion carried.

MANAGERS REPORT: Lyndon Vogt, General Manager, reviewed the managers' report.

Vogt reported that LR 23 was introduced at the last legislative session, which is a study to ensure that the NRD's are fulfilling their set responsibilities. All 23 NRD's got a request for some very detailed information. These reports were submitted to the Natural Resources Committee. A hearing will be held on Friday, December 3, 2021, to ensure that the NRD's are fulfilling their duties. Three or four NRD's have been requested to come in and testify, CPNRD is not one of them.

Currently we have three violators. Central Platte NRD plans to meet with legal counsel to discuss the use of the infrared photography to enforce Cease & Desist orders.

COST SHARE PROGRAMS: Applications –Kelly Cole, Administrative Assistant, reported that we have received cost share applications for the following programs: Well Decommissioning (see enclosed). She said the applicants are in compliance with the District's rules and regulations, funds are available, and she recommended they be approved.

Marvion Reichert made the motion to approve the cost share applications as reported. Jay Richeson seconded the motion. All board members present, voting by roll call vote, were

in favor. Motion carried.

2021-2031 COMPREHENSIVE RESOURCES MASTER PLAN: Marcia Lee, Information/Education Specialist, provided a draft of District's proposed 2021-2031 Master Plan on Drop Box, with changes noted in red. The comprehensive plan provides a broad framework for the efficient and orderly development and management of natural resources. The Plan is required to be updated every ten years. The board is asked to review the updates and consider approval of the Plan at the December board meeting.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Lyndon Vogt, General Manager, reported that the November Financial report will be considered at the December board meeting, due to an early meeting.

NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF RESOURCES DISTRICT: Lyndon Vogt, General Manager, reported for Jim Bendfeldt as he was representing NARD at the Farm Bureau Policy Committee on Natural Resources.

Bendfeldt reported that NARD is currently discussing the eventuality of what may ensue in the next legislative session regarding nitrate use in Nebraska. The NARD Foundation donated \$5,000 to FFA and \$3,000 to the NE Ag Youth Institute. NARD also entered into an agreement with Executive Travel companies to distribute tree's funded by their donation to all Districts beginning with an initial \$50,000 statewide. NARD also reviewed and discussed minor changes to the retirement fund investments.

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION: Mick Reynolds reported that the Natural Resources Commission will meet on December 15th to approve projects.

UPCOMING EVENTS: Chairman Reynolds reviewed the upcoming events.
Next Board Meeting – Scheduled for the afternoon of Thursday, December 16. Details to follow.

OTHER BUSINESS: Morgan Wrich, Precision Conservation Specialist, reported that she has met with several growers and has started signing them up to implement cover crops post-harvest in Dawson County. Wrich said reports showing how well producers are meeting carbon sequestration goals will be available next year.

ADJOURN: Chairman Reynolds adjourned the board meeting at 2:34 p.m.

United States Department Of Agriculture


Natural Resources Conservation Service
Grand Island Field Office
703 S Webb Rd., Suite B
Grand Island, NE 68803
Phone (308) 395-8586 (Ext. 3)

<http://www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov>

November 16, 2021

Central Platte NRD
215 North Kaufman Avenue
Grand Island, NE 68803

November Report to CPNRD

Please find attached a News Release for the Nebraska Soil Carbon Project from the Nebraska United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The signup for this program is ongoing, applicants who wish to be considered for FY22 funds have until December 17, 2021 to complete an application. This is a competitive program, so applications will be funded by using a ranking system.

This project provides financial incentives to producers who utilize key conservation practices in central Nebraska. Farmers can adopt soil health practices--including cover crops, no-till, and diverse crop rotations that store carbon in the soil. The stored carbon is utilized by private companies to help reach their goals around sustainability. Depending on the practices implemented, producers could earn up to \$45 per acre each year.

After reading this News Release, if producers are interested and want to find out more about this program and how it could be applied to their operation. They should call their local NRCS office to discuss this program in more detail, and possibly complete and application before the cutoff.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Joe Krolkowski

Joe Krolkowski
District Conservationist

Attachments: Soil Carbon Signup 2021 Press Release

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CPNRD CONTACT: COURTNEY WIDUP (308) 385-6282 widup@cpnrd.org

UBBNRD CONTACT: JOHN BUSH (402) 362-6601 jbush@upperbigblue.org

Funds Available to Help Producers Add Soil Carbon Conservation Practices

(NEBRASKA) - Producers in the Central Platte and Upper Big Blue Natural Resources Districts (NRDs) are encouraged to enroll their acres in the new Nebraska Soil Carbon Project.

This project provides greater financial incentives to producers who utilize key conservation practices in central Nebraska. Farmers can adopt soil health practices--including cover crops, no-till, and diverse crop rotations that store carbon in the soil. The stored carbon is utilized by private companies to help reach their goals around sustainability. Depending on the practices implemented, producers earn up to \$45 per acre each year.

The goal is to have about 100 producers install these soil health practices on 100,000 acres of farmland over the next five years. The expectation to enroll 20,000 acres in the first year across the two NRDs was successfully met, reaching over 23,000 acres with a new conservation practice in place. With the intention of matching this same number of acres during our second round of enrollment, we encourage farmers to apply at their local NRCS office for implementing practices during the Fall of 2022. Applications must be submitted by Friday, December 17, 2021.

The Nebraska Soil Carbon Project is a collaboration between the two NRDs, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), The Nature Conservancy, Ecosystem Services Market Consortium, Cargill, Target, and McDonald's. The Nature Conservancy manages the new program and is investing \$8 million for farmers to implement these practices over the next few years.

Increasing cropland soil carbon has multiple benefits for the producer and the environment including more stable yields, improved nutrient availability and water holding capacity, and climate stabilization. Private companies are looking for ways to decrease their carbon footprint and Nebraska's growers can provide these benefits by improving their farming operations as they implement soil health practices. Markets to link these soil carbon buyers and suppliers gives companies a way to meet part of their greenhouse gas reduction goals while supporting farmers who are implementing conservation practices.

The payments producers will receive through our carbon market pilot project are tied to the practices implemented on the acres, not the carbon outcomes, to reduce the amount of risk involved for producers. Colorado State University is providing scientific support through this project.

The project is estimated to store the equivalent of 150,000 metric tons of CO₂ while enhancing Nebraska's soil and linking producers to new carbon payment opportunities.

Beyond the financial incentives and soil health improvements, involved producers will have the opportunity to:

- Share conservation stories with a larger audience via field days, media spots, and short videos relating to the project.
- Attend training events with local and national leaders in soil health, agronomy, and related topics.

- Receive a report on the new practice's soil carbon and water quality outcomes. Those that are interested in going deeper may also opt-in for a detailed report on the practice's financial return on investment.

Producers will receive year-round assistance from the NRDs, NRCS, and The Nature Conservancy staff, who will provide support for paperwork/application processes and soil health practice management.

There is no gross income or acre enrollment cap for NRCS payments, but producers are encouraged to enroll a reasonable number of acres given their operation size and soil health experience. More acres can be submitted for enrollment in subsequent years of the program.

Payments are for new soil health acres only, however a measurable improvement of an existing practice could count (such as moving from strip till to no till) if it aligns with the NRCS's standards.

Interested in adding conservation practices to your acres?

Central Platte NRD: Visit [https://www.cpnrd.org/land management/soil health](https://www.cpnrd.org/land-management/soil-health) to get started today or contact Courtney Widup at (308) 385-6282 or widup@cpnrd.org.

Upper Big Blue NRD: Visit <https://www.upperbigblue.org/programs/groundwater-quality/nebraska-soil-carbon-project> to get started today or contact John Bush at (402) 362-6601 jbush@upperbigblue.org.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

CENTRAL PLATTE NRD
Cost Share
Thursday, November 18, 2021

WELL DECOMMISSIONING COST SHARE PROGRAM	\$	500.00
Cheryl Maurer – Dawson	\$	500.00
Total	\$	500.00