



Pima Natural Resource Conservation District  
NRCS Plant Materials Center  
3241 N. Romero Road  
Tucson, AZ 85705

March 21, 2017

## Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Cindy Coping at 1:01 PM.

In attendance were Cindy Coping Chairman, Jim Chilton, Pat King, Drew McGibbon, Jonathan DuHamel, and Becky Hightower Program Administrator. Also in attendance were Kristen Egen NRCS, Brett Myers NRCS Intern, Jeff Heffelfinger AZ Game and Fish, Al Eiden AZ Game and Fish, and Felix Sandoval.

**Financial Report:** Jonathan moved to receive the financials. Drew seconded the motion. All ayes. No nays, the motion was carried.

**Bills:** Pat moved to approve Becky's invoice for February of \$500. Drew seconded the motion. All ayes. No nays, the motion was carried.

Pat moved to approve Mary Darling's invoice. Drew seconded the motion. All ayes. No nays, the motion was carried.

**Minutes:** Pat moved to approve the minutes from January with corrections. Jonathan seconded the motion. All ayes. No nays, the motion was carried.

**Healthy Lands Initiative Planning:** Jim attended the meeting in Oracle with Winkelman and Reddington NRCDs. He explained money is available from the Bureau of Land Management for all purposes including brush management. For Pima NRCD there might be an opportunity for the Altar Valley Conservation Alliance some allowance through Pima NRCD. We need to make a proposal to AACD as to what we would like to do with the money. There is also a possibility of EQIP money being available. Steve Barker is asking for proposals which will be ranked and decided what money goes to which section first. He advised that the more people or associations involved, the better. If Altar Valley partners with the Fire District and others it would increase the opportunity for funding. The first phase of funding in Arizona is being used for juniper removal. The next phase of money will go to South East Arizona for brush removal. The third year will be in the North West of Arizona and the 4th year possible Winkelman and Pima. Jim suggested inviting Steve Barker at one of our meetings since he is very knowledgeable in how to obtain funds.

Cindy read an email from Steve Barker explaining the ranking and partnership of funding. It basically comes down to ranking and pools of staff available to get the work done.

Kristen asked to have a local workgroup at the next meeting to plan on how to use funds. She explained she has 21 applications but most are wanting water preservation. The group agreed on meeting next month.

**Mexican Wolf Genetics Study update:** Jim has not heard from Dr. Rob Ramey and is concerned Pima NRCDC has not received a bill from him. He will call and try to get an Update.

**Wolf 10(j) rule litigation status update:** Cindy explained the briefs were supposed to be filed and the judge has ordered oral arguments. So now we are just waiting.

**Plant Guide Sales:** Cindy stated she gave samples to Coronado in Sabino Canyon but hasn't hear from them.

**US Border Patrol in Altar Valley:** Pat has not followed up with them so nothing new.

**Public records request update:** Cindy talked to Jerry Penrod, Ron Thompson took tissue samples from the pelt of a jaguar. He said they were concerned it was related to the one killed in 1964 but the data proved otherwise. I will ask Mary Darling if we should FOIA the Game and Fish for original records they have.

**Jaguar Recovery Update:** Cindy explained that the deadline for comment was Monday. Ours were sent to Game and Fish and we added two of their comments in ours. Dennis Parker referenced each study that Fish and Wildlife is relying on and said the conclusion had been based on an overstated amount of jaguars. The reliable information rebutted that stating there had only been a few.

**Jaguar DNA Study:** Cindy stated she had tried to get a sample of a jaguar tooth from a Jaguar hunter as Dr. Ramey said it could be used. Have not been able to contact Jerry yet but will keep trying.

**Farm Bill:** Al Eiden spoke to the group about the farm bill and how all 50 states are involved with conservation programs for implementing it. He stated they want to have wild life initiatives but need the capacity to do it. According to the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the 2018 Farm Bill gives them an opportunity to improve these programs as well as increase the benefits to farmers and ranchers.

#### **Reports:**

**NRCS: See below**

#### **Supervisors:**

**Pat:** Coronado RC&D report:

The group will probably exist for two more years until we complete our current grants. We have a grant in Graham, Greenlee and Cochise counties spraying invasive weeds. The RC&D would appreciate the Pima NRCD's support for the next two years at which time we will close our 501 C3.

The Alliance finished a report on the Altar Wash and we have a number of good projects moving forward. AVCA has asked to look at gabien structures in the wash. Pima county flood control is doing some studies on how much and what areas are eroding. Pima NRCD could look at these outcomes and use this information for long range planning and funding.

**Jim:** There is a movement to delist the Southwest Willow Flycatcher which has been determined by DNA. The strategy of CSAR is not to file a suite immediately and wait to see what the Trump administration is going to do. The Stewards of Liberty have filed a petition to delist the yellow billed cuckoo and are looking for plaintiffs with standing. Cindy stated we have filed comments on that and should see if it is filed in Congress.

The next meeting will be April 25 starting with the workgroup meeting at 10 am and the regular meeting at 1:00 pm.

Jim moved to adjourn the meeting. Jonathan seconded the motion. All ayes, no nays the motion was carried. Meeting was adjourned at 3:01 pm.



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

**Natural  
Resources  
Conservation  
Service**

3241 N Romero Rd  
Tucson, AZ 85745  
Telephone 520-292-2999  
Fax Number 855-848-4339

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**Pima NRCD**  
March 21, 2017

### **NRCS Tucson FO Monthly Report**

#### **1. CONSERVATION PLANNING (Farm and Ranch)**

<b>Ongoing</b>	<b>Date Plan Requested</b>	<b>Status</b>
1. Dobbs Butte	10/2013	Plan complete

2. Juan Lopez

2016

Need to follow up

<b>Completed &amp; for district review</b>	<b>Date Plan Completed</b>	<b>Status</b>
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None

## **2. FARM BILL PROGRAMS**

### **EQIP** (Environmental Quality Incentive Program)

3 active contracts in the District. 5 new applications with 4 being funded. Working on contract files now. The next ranking window is May 5<sup>th</sup>, however, we will be out of money with several not funded. Spending over \$750,000 on 12 contracts in the field office which is the most in a long while. Local Work Group meeting is by Mid-May. Date set for April 25<sup>th</sup> at 10 am at conf room.

### **CSP** (Conservation Stewardship Program)

1 active contract. No new applicants in Pima NRCD

### **RCPP**

None in Pima District right now. Deadline for pre-proposals is April 21<sup>st</sup>.

## **3. FIELD OFFICE OPERATIONS & MANAGEMENT**

No changes in staff or operations

## **3. CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES/EVENTS**

None known

**Submitted by: Kristen Egen, DC Tucson FO**

