



Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

**MASWCD MINUTES  
Regular Meeting  
USDA Service Center  
Jefferson City, Missouri  
May 10, 2011**

**President**

STEVE RADCLIFF  
NACD Board Member  
P. O. Box 571  
Chillicothe, MO 64601  
(660) 247-1255  
[stevenr@greenhills.net](mailto:stevenr@greenhills.net)

**1st Vice President**

KENNY LOVELACE  
2605 County Road 325  
Palmyra, MO 63461  
(573) 769-4544  
[kennyll@centurytel.net](mailto:kennyll@centurytel.net)

**2nd Vice-President**

BEVERLY DOMETROCH  
Alternate NACD Member  
2670 Highway 240  
Fayette, MO 65248  
(660) 248-2645

**3rd Vice-President**

BRUCE BIERMANN  
1529 Sunset Blvd.  
Mound City, MO 64470  
(660) 442-5262

**Past President**

FRED FELDMANN  
Route 1, Box 62  
Richards, MO 64778  
(417) 966-7289  
[fredswcd@live.com](mailto:fredswcd@live.com)

**AREA DIRECTORS**

**Area I**

BRUCE BIERMANN  
1529 Sunset Blvd.  
Mound City, MO 64470  
(660) 442-5262

**Area II**

TOM LAMBERT  
15214 123<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Pattonburg, MO 64670  
(660) 367-2448

**Area III**

KENNY LOVELACE  
2605 County Road 325  
Palmyra, MO 63461  
(573) 769-4544

**Area IV**

BEVERLY DOMETROCH  
2670 Highway 240  
Fayette, MO 65248  
(660) 248-2645

**Area V**

GEORGE ENGELBACH  
3489 Linhorst Road  
Hillsboro, MO 63050  
(636) 475-6328

**Area VI**

BEN GORDEN  
2282 E. 460<sup>th</sup> Road  
Half Way, MO 65663  
(417) 445-2596

**Area VII**

DAN GREESON  
29 Pin Oak Road  
Eldon, MO 65206  
(573) 392-3208

**Area VIII**

MIKE KELLEY  
RR 1 Box 211A  
Ellsinore, MO 63937  
(573) 322-5725

**Executive Director**

PEGGY LEMONS  
1209 Biscayne Drive  
Jefferson City, MO 65109  
(573) 893-6790 or 893-5188  
[peggyl@maswcd.net](mailto:peggyl@maswcd.net)

**Treasurer**

DAVID DIX  
PO Box 756  
Eminence, MO 65466  
(573) 226-3787  
[davidix@socket.net](mailto:davidix@socket.net)

**Present**

Steve Radcliff, President  
Tom Lambert, Area II  
Kenny Lovelace, Area III  
Beverly Dometroch, Area IV  
George Engelbach, Area V  
Ben Gorden, Area VI Director  
Dan Greeson, Area VII  
Mike Kelley, Area VIII  
David Dix, Treasurer  
Peggy Lemons, Executive Director

J. R. Flores, NRCS State Conservationist  
Mari Gifford, NRCS  
Bryan Hopkins, DNR SWCP Director  
Bill Wilson, DNR Soil & Water Program  
Clint Dalbom, MDC  
David Hale, Area VI Alternate  
Richard Hoelscher, St. Louis SWCD  
Sandy Hutchison, Employees Association

**Not Present**

Fred Feldmann, Past President  
Bruce Biermann, Area I

President Steve Radcliff welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Introductions were made around the room. Quorum established by roll call.

The minutes from the March 2, 2011 meeting and the February 16, 2011, and March 7, 2011 conference calls were approved as presented. Motion for approval made by Beverly Dometroch, Tom Lambert seconded. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

A treasurer report was given by David Dix. 92 Districts have paid their MASWCD dues in full and 1 has paid partial dues. Two areas are paid at 100%. There are 21 districts who still owe state dues. Kenny Lovelace motioned the report be approved and filed for audit. George Engelbach seconded. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

**MDC Report:** Clint Dalbom is the MDC liaison replacing John Knudsen. He has worked previously in the West Plains and Houston area. He stated he had helped work on the elk introduction. There are now 34 elk in the pen at Peck Ranch. He said they ended up with more cows than they wanted (originally wanted a 3-1 ratio but actually ended up with a 2-1 ratio).

**NRCS Report:** J. R. Flores asked Mari Gifford to do a short presentation on the state resource assessment they are currently doing. The purpose of the assessment is to identify and document the extent and geographical distribution of potential resource concerns within the state. There are 9 major resource categories and 31 natural resource concerns. They are focusing on 5 land uses / areas – crop, range, pasture, forest, and other associate ag land. Bryan Hopkins stated that DNR is looking at the same type of information. In the future the funding may be targeted to these categories. When asked how the two studies are going to compare and what can be accomplished with all the analysis information, J. R. stated that the assessment will identify which resource concerns are priority, where funding may need to be and where staff needs to be located. They are asking for input from their partners. NRCS has identified their top 3 concerns on a matrix that will be given to partners, asking for information to be returned to NRCS as quickly as possible, their report is due by June 1. J. R. also stated that the Elsberry Plant Materials Center is having a field day and their study on miscanthus will part of that field day. There are two areas in Missouri approved for BCAP (biomass crop assistance program). One area covers 30 counties in Missouri and 9 counties in Kansas. The other area is central Missouri that MFA Oil is leading. J. R. briefly mentioned the SWAT (strategic watershed action team) that involves DNR and NRCS and will have some funding for hiring staff for project areas. The staff will most likely be SWCD employees. He stated that the budget had finally been approved, there is no funding for the RC&D program. The 8 offices in Missouri are being shut down, also the water quality office in southwest Missouri will be shut down due to no watershed funding. This means 25 NRCS employees that were tied to the RC&D and watershed funding will have to figure out how to continue to pay them.

**Commission Report:** Bryan Hopkins stated the Commission Meeting tomorrow should be a short meeting. He stated it has been an interesting legislative season this year, he had a lot of discussions with legislators about the salary document MASWCD had provided. Bryan indicated he felt the figures on the document were not correct (too high for Program Staff and too low for District salaries). He said the legislators are also wanting to know about work being done in the districts, he is seeing clear expectations on moving forward on performance-based programs. Bryan Hopkins stated that DNR would not be doing Area Meetings this year, they would most likely be busy with performance expectations meetings with the districts. He stated we are half way through the SALT projects, we are looking at almost flat revenues this year, at the most will be 2% increase. When asked about the work group meeting, Bryan stated he feels the cross training has advantages of all staff understanding what goes on in the field, also provides the opportunity for districts to continue operations during employee turnover, and provides for long-term continued operations during turnover and not approved to replace employees. He stated they are working with a couple of districts now on sharing employees to see how it will work. The decisions on how to manage the time of the employee should be a board decision. When asked about districts that are not receiving funding for a full-time technician, Bryan stated it is not cost-effective to have 2 full time people when they have never spent all their cost share.

**Employee Association Report:** Sandy Hutchison stated she attended the work group meeting and that she had recently sent out her notes from the meeting. She had received a lot of comments back on the report of the presentation of the employee sharing that was given at the work group. She said it seems to work for them, but she had talked to another district that is sharing and it is not working for them. She suggested we need to

go back to the annual report to capture the number of people newsletters are mailed to, not just the number of times a newsletter is sent. Bryan stated the Program Office needs to be providing some level of reporting to the districts as to how they relate to the other districts and they need to provide assistance to districts that need help to be in a better position of providing service to landowners. Sandy stated the next meeting for the Employees Association Board will be May 25 and they will have some audit training at the meeting.

**Old Business:** A budget for 2011 for MASWCD was reviewed and approved. Motion for approval made by Tom Lambert, Kenny Lovelace seconded. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

The Board reviewed the Education Seminar held in March. The cost of the donuts and coffee seemed extremely high and they discussed other options for next year. It was stressed that they need to continue to visit with their legislators through-out the year.

The recent DNR work group meeting was discussed. A copy of the flow chart that was presented at the work group was distributed along with the notes Sandy had made available.

The committee working on a new Memorandum of Understanding for the Districts and NRCS and the Commission has met 3 times and is working on revisions to the current MOU. A copy of the proposed changes from DNR and NRCS were reviewed. Steve Radcliff asked for the Board members to get their comments back to him or Peggy.

The Commission meeting tomorrow will be live-streamed on the Internet. Steve Radcliff reviewed the responses he had received on the time-sheet issue that he presented at the last Commission meeting. He also stated that Kenny Lovelace had given a short presentation on the need for communication and working out our problems at the Commission meeting that he felt provided some good information, however, it was not captured in the minutes for the Commission meeting.

**New Business:** The area meetings for 2011 were discussed. A motion was made by Tom Lambert to have MASWCD be in charge of the area meetings this year, set the agenda, time and location. George Engelbach seconded this motion. Motion carried unanimously (7-0). There was discussion of whether to have a joint meeting with the Employees Association or not. It was decided it was up to each Area Director to hold their meeting as they saw fit for their area. A motion was made by Mike Kelley to provide \$450 for area meeting costs per area. Beverly Dometorch seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously (7-0). Sandy stated she would bring this up at her meeting on May 25 to see how they felt about joint meetings.

The Training Conference will be November 28-30 at Tan-Tar-A. There was some concern about the meals at the conference due to the new per diem policy by the state. DNR has committed to sponsor the supervisor cost for the training conference. Bill Wilson stated that if the meal costs were paid at the time of the registration, whether separately or in one registration fee, they would be allowed at the meal cost charged. If meals are paid for separately at a later date than the registration is paid, then the meals will be subject to the per diem rates. After further discussion it was decided to offer a package registration price that includes all meals, prepaid meal options, a one-day registration for Tuesday which includes the meals, on-site meals, and registration without meals. There will be late

registration fees this year. A motion was made by Kenny Lovelace to have late fees of \$25 for registration and \$5 per meal. Dan Greeson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously (7-0). The entertainment for the banquet was discussed. Beverly Dometrorch motioned to have the Main Street Opry group come back this year and do their country show. Tom Lambert seconded. Motion carried unanimously (7-0). The board also discussed a barcode scanning program for registration and tracking attendance at the various workshops and meetings. Information from one company was reviewed. The start-up cost for this would run approximately \$6,000 with yearly costs after that of about \$750 per year. It was suggested to check with the Missouri School Board Association to see what company they use for their barcode scanning at conferences. Mike Kelley motioned to continue to pursue further information on the barcode scanning. Beverly Dometrorch seconded. Motion carried unanimously (7-0). Beverly Dometrorch stated she had heard comments wanting lapel pins given at the conference. Ideas for workshops were discussed. The opening session speaker was discussed, it was suggested to see if we could get USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack, or Senator Roy Blunt, or Missouri Ruralist editor Jerilyn Johnson.

The speech contest will be sponsored again this year. The topic for 2011 was discussed. Ben Gorden motioned to use the stewardship theme – Forests for People, More than you can Imagine. Dan Greeson seconded. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

There is a legislative meeting for NACD scheduled for July in Washington, DC. Normally MASWCD sends 3 people to this meeting. Peggy indicated she will not be able to go due to the travel for Canon Envirothon overlapping with this meeting. Steve Radcliff and Beverly Dometrorch plan to attend as board member and alternate. Kenny Lovelace stated he could attend. There is a stipend available from the North Central Region for sending a new person to a meeting. Dan Greeson said he would be interested in attending and he would be eligible for the stipend. The meeting is July 16-19.

**AREA Reports:** Bruce Biermann was not in attendance.

Tom Lambert stated he had been contacting districts trying to get them to pay their state dues. They are saying they don't have the money. He said it is pretty dry but they are getting a lot of dirt work done.

Kenny Lovelace stated he had nothing further to report.

Beverly Dometrorch said her area is wet and dry in sections. She has been attending board meetings in her districts. Everyone is waiting to see what DNR is going to do or change. Their concerns are loss of control, salaries, the technician roll, DNR blocking Internet sites such as the NRCS sharepoint drive, and DNR dining with the Commissioners and complaining about districts having food at their board meetings. Her district had an Arbor Day program with MDC donating the trees, NRCS went to the schools to help with the program.

George Engelbach stated he doesn't have anything planted yet, it is too wet. He mentioned a \$100 million lawsuit settlement that may provide something for 3 counties. He said maybe the Commission will say something about it tomorrow.

Ben Gorden said the water is about right in his area, lots of grass. He had received a letter from a county that was upset about a rude phone call from Director Hopkins, but

they are mostly upset about the loss of control. He had received a letter of grievance against DNR, but the district wishes to remain anonymous due to fear of retaliation. He stated he was not sure that there was anything we could do with something anonymously.

Dan Greeson stated the water had been positive for his area. He has not been hearing complaints. His area seems to have missed the storms and floods.

Mike Kelley said his area had received 27.4 inches of rain, there was water everywhere. Things are basically at a standstill.

**Correspondence:** None.

**Other Business:** Steve Radcliff suggested each of the Area Directors get a nomination for the teacher award and the cooperator award this year. The call for resolutions will need to be sent out in the first part of June. Hopes are to have registration for the Training Conference on-line in early September.

The date for the next regular meeting will be in September. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m. Motion for adjournment made by Mike Kelley, Kenny Lovelace seconded. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Respectfully submitted,

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Peggy Lemons, Executive Director

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Steve Radcliff, President