

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

OFFICE OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION
STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

May 24, 2022
1:15 PM

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY
VETERANS AUDITORIUM
5825 FLORIDA BOULEVARD
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

PROCEEDINGS/MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Garber called the regular monthly Soil & Water Conservation Commission Meeting to order at 1:15 P.M. Mr. Jason Nolde gave the invocation and Mr. Steve Horvath lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called by Ms. LaClasha "Clay" Alexander.

Members and Alternate Members present:

Mr. Earl Garber, Chairman, Area IV
Mr. Steve Horvath, Vice-Chairman, Area V
Mr. Jason Nolde, LACD President, Member
Mr. Reggie Skains, Area I Member
Mr. Ed Yerger, Area II Member
Mr. Ed Giering, Area III Alternate Member
Mr. Brad Spicer, LDAF Alternate Member
Dr. Michael Salassi, LSU AgCenter, Member

Members Absent:

Southern University Agricultural Center Representative
Mr. Ruben Dautat, Secretary-Treasurer, Area III

A quorum was present.

Others Present:

Mr. Chad Kacir, NRCS State Conservationist
Ms. LaClasha "Clay" Alexander, LDAF-OSWC
Mr. Joey Breaux, LDAF-OSWC/ Director

Public Comments

Chairman Garber asked if there were any comments from the public and there were none.

Approval of the Agenda

Chairman Garber called for a motion to approve the May 24, 2022 SSWCC agenda.

Motion by: Mr. Brad Spicer

Seconded by: Mr. Jason Nolde

Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of the minutes

Chairman Garber called for a motion to approve the April 19, 2022 SSWCC minutes.

Motion by: Mr. Reggie Skains

Seconded by: Mr. Brad Spicer

Motion passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NRCS/OSWC Farm Bill Cooperative Agreement- Mr. Joey Breaux, LDAF-OSWC/ Director, SSWCC

Mr. Breaux said April's Farm Bill drawdown was \$46,547. The total remaining balance for FY 21-22 is \$193,427. The contract has 5 months remaining, but we expect districts to expend that total prior to the end of the federal fiscal year in September. 18 districts have maxed out their farm bill allocations and these districts continued reporting farm bill activities indicating 3,823 farm bill hours and \$153,479 beyond their allocations.

Legislative Regular Session/State Funding- Mr. Joey Breaux, LDAF-OSWC/ Director, SSWCC

Mr. Breaux said HB 762- Louisiana Outdoors Forever Program is currently waiting for full Legislative approval. The bill was submitted by Con. Jerome "Zee" Zeringue and would give Louisiana its first Conservation funding program. HB 406 which is the companion bill to HB 762 has already gotten approved and includes \$10,000,000 the LA Outdoors Forever Program when it becomes law. HCR 18 which creates the Feral Hog Management Advisory Task Force has also been approved. The approval includes members from the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, the Soil & water Conservation Commission, the LA Farm Bureau Federation, and the LA Forestry Association, each of which will be appointed by Commissioner Strain. The task force will sunset on March 1, 2027.

New Business

NRCS State Conservationist Report- Mr. Chad Kacir, NRCS State Conservationist

Mr. Kacir said NRCS is beginning to fund their EQIP contracts. So far, they have obligated 15% of the 24 million dollars they have to distribute. A lot of producers seem a bit hesitant to sign EQIP contracts due to the costs of goods and services as well as lack of availability. NRCS hopes to have 80% of its EQIP funds obligated by June. They are also working to finish evaluating CSP applications. They have received 450 applications and will fund 100 applications with the \$11 million allocated to CSP. NRCS is currently in the Agreement to Purchase stage with the WRE agreements. This process helps them to choose the cropland best suited for conversion back to wetlands. They will fund approximately 25-35 easements at a cost of approximately \$15-20 million. Cleanup for Hurricane Laura and Delta has been completed with a total of \$2 million in damages. There are also 10 watersheds applications under review. 1 watershed from Southern University has been funded costing \$7 million. NRCS has advertised for an additional 15-16 Soil Conservationists positions.

LSU AgCenter Center Report- Dr. Michael Salassi, LSU AgCenter

Dr. Salassi said they recently hired a Rice Agronomist and a quantitative geneticist at the Rice Station. LSU is also advertising for another quantitative geneticist to be housed on campus in the Agronomy department. This position studies data and can determine which varieties to emphasize. Dr. Salassi said they will soon advertise for a Sweet Potato Pathologist who will replace Dr. Chris Clark who plans to retire.

Dr. Salassi also wanted to announce some upcoming events:

- May 31, 2022- Agriculture Prescribed Burn class- Abbeville Extension Office- 5:30 PM- 7:30 PM
- June 25, 2022- Louisiana Farm Bureau Commodity Conference
- June 29, 2022- Rice Field Day- H. Rouse Caffee Rice Research Station

Dr. Salassi said that concluded his report.

Supervisor Resignations/ Appointments / Reappointments

Chairman Garber said there were two district supervisors that did not meet the board meeting attendance requirements in the past year. He said we have received letters from Mr. Gary Greene, Dorcheat SWCD, and Mr. Michael Elliott, West Carroll SWCD, along with supporting letters from each district board suggesting the absences were justified and they are requesting the attendance requirements be waived.

Chairman Garber said if there were no comments, he would call for a motion to waive the attendance requirements from Mr. Gary Greene, Dorcheat SWCD, and Mr. Michael Elliott, West Carroll SWCD.

Motion by: Mr. Reggie Skains
Seconded by: Mr. Jason Nolde
Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Garber said there are 2 resignations this month: Rapides SWCD, Mr. Larry Gillespie, effective May 11, 2022 and Tangipahoa-St. Helena SWCD, Mr. Hubert Yarborough effective May 12, 2022. Mr. Yarborough was up for re-election this year.

Chairman Garber said if there were no comments, he would call for a motion to approve the resignations from Rapides SWCD, Mr. Larry Gillespie, effective May 11, 2022 and Tangipahoa-St. Helena SWCD, Mr. Hubert Yarborough effective May 12, 2022.

Motion by: Mr. Brad Spicer
Seconded by: Mr. Ed Yerger
Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Garber said there are 7 reappointments this month:

- Mr. Earl Garber, Acadia SWCD, appointed position, effective June 11, 2022- June 11, 2025
- Dr. Thomas Vitrano, Crescent SWCD, appointed position, effective June 21, 2022-June 21, 2025
- Mr. Bruce Watts, Gulf Coast SWCD, appointed position, effective June 11, 2022- June 11, 2025
- Mr. Andre Danos, Lafourche-Terrebonne SWCD, appointed position, effective June 11, 2022- June 11, 2025
- Mr. Sidney Evans, Natchitoches SWCD, appointed position, effective June 26, 2022- June 26, 2025
- Mr. Lawrence "Larry" Rousselle, Plaquemines SWCD, appointed position, effective May 28, 2022- May 28, 2025
- Ms. Chandra Chauvin, St. Mary SWCD, appointed position, effective June 25, 2022- June 25, 2025

Chairman Garber said if there were no comments, he would call for a motion to approve these reappointments:

- Mr. Earl Garber, Acadia SWCD, appointed position, effective June 11, 2022- June 11, 2025
- Dr. Thomas Vitrano, Crescent SWCD, appointed position, effective June 21, 2022-June 21, 2025
- Mr. Bruce Watts, Gulf Coast SWCD, appointed position, effective June 11, 2022- June 11, 2025
- Mr. Andre Danos, Lafourche-Terrebonne SWCD, appointed position, effective June 11, 2022- June 11, 2025
- Mr. Sidney Evans, Natchitoches SWCD, appointed position, effective June 26, 2022- June 26, 2025
- Mr. Lawrence "Larry" Rousselle, Plaquemines SWCD, appointed position, effective May 28, 2022- May 28, 2025
- Ms. Chandra Chauvin, St. Mary SWCD, appointed position, effective June 25, 2022- June 25, 2025

Motion by: Mr. Reggie Skains
Seconded by: Mr. Steve Horvath
Motion passed unanimously.

District Supervisor Election- June 11, 2022

Chairman Garber said there are 38 candidates that had no opposition for the 2022 Supervisors Election. He said the term of office for the candidates would start July 1, 2022 and expire June 30, 2025.

District	Mr./Ms.	Name	Term Exp
Acadia	Mr.	Glenn Simon	06/30/2025
Allen	Mr.	Ronnie Sonnier	06/30/2025
Avoyelles	Mr.	Dirk Dupuy	06/30/2025
Bodcau	Mr.	William Bart Dobson	06/30/2025
Boeuf River	Mr.	Christopher Brian Johnson	06/30/2025
Calcasieu	Mr.	Wesley Coffman	06/30/2025

Capital	Mr.	Anthony Butler	06/30/2025
Catahoula	Mr.	Jeramy Slade	06/30/2025
D'arbonne	Mr.	Stephen Wade	06/30/2025
Dorcheat	Mr.	Gary Greene	06/30/2025
Dugdemonia	Mr.	J. Paul Johns Jr.	06/30/2025
East Carroll	Mr.	George Larry Sanderson	06/30/2025
Feliciana	Mr.	Jeffrey Gardner	06/30/2025
Grant	Mr.	Richard Bonner	06/30/2025
Gulf Coast	Mr.	Louie Barbe III	06/30/2025
Iberia	Mr.	Guy Viator	06/30/2025
Jefferson Davis	Mr.	Eric Brown	06/30/2025
Lafayette	Mr.	Ronous Duhon	06/30/2025
Lafourche-Terrebonne	Mr.	Randy Toups	06/30/2025
LaSalle	Mr.	Twyman Appleby	06/30/2025
Lower Delta	Mr.	Stacy Allee	06/30/2025
Madison	Mr.	Darryl Ellerbee	06/30/2025
Morehouse	Mr.	Antwain Downs	06/30/2025
Natchitoches	Mr.	James Wagley	06/30/2025
New River	Mr.	Leroy J. Laiche Jr.	06/30/2025
Northeast	Mr.	Edward Peters	06/30/2025
Plaquemines	Mr.	Earl Armstrong	06/30/2025
Rapides	Mr.	Edwin Lashney III	06/30/2025
Red River	Mr.	Jolly Nash	06/30/2025
Sabine	Mr.	Thomas C. Pearce	06/30/2025
Saline	Mr.	John W. Hays	06/30/2025
St. Landry	Mr.	Ike Boudreaux	06/30/2025
St. Martin	Mr.	Mark Simon	06/30/2025
St. Mary	Mr.	Rickey P. Bourque II	06/30/2025
Tensas-Concordia	Mr.	Jon William Hardwick Jr.	06/30/2025
Upper Delta	Mr.	Donald Schexnayder	06/30/2025
Vermilion	Mr.	Sherrill Sagrera	06/30/2025
West Carroll	Mr.	Michael Blake Elliott	06/30/2025

Chairman Garber said if there were no comments, he would call for a motion to approve the elected supervisors listed.

Motion by: Mr. Reggie Skains

Seconded by: Mr. Steve Horvath

Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Garber said that Bogue-Chitto SWCD will have an election on June 11, 2022 that will include Mr. Mark Magee and Mr. Edward Statham. The following candidates did not submit a petition or were disqualified by their Registrar of Voters:

1. Mr. Jacob Rumbaugh-Caddo SWCD
2. Mr. Henry Schlorf- Crescent SWCD
3. Mr. Jeremy Evans -DeSoto SWCD
4. Mr. Ike Moorein- Evangeline SWCD

These candidates will continue to serve on their boards until their terms expire on June 30, 2022.

Correspondence/Articles:

Articles

- Obituary: Mr. Pedro Angelle, Past Supervisor for St. Martin SWCD
- Efficient production technique for a novel 'green' fertilizer
- ESMC Partners with the Conservation Innovation Fund to Create Innovative Water, Carbon, and Biodiversity Credit Opportunities in the Mid-Atlantic
- Study looks at role soil organic carbon plays in improving soil health, reducing drought

OTHER BUSINESS

Area Reports- Area III- Mr. Ed Giering

Chairman Garber asked Mr. Ed Giering to review the Area III's report. Mr. Giering reviewed the highlights from Area III (attached)

Chairman Garber thanked Mr. Giering for his presentation and said that he liked the template that Mr. Giering used to present the information he received from each district. He asked the Commission for their thoughts on using this template from now on for their area presentations. Mr. Breaux said it is a great template and that we should add a few columns that would show partnerships as well as cooperative agreements. The Commission agreed that they would now use the new template with the additions Mr. Breaux suggested. Chairman Garber asked who the next volunteer would be to give their area report. Mr. Steve Horvath volunteered and said that he would present Area V's report at the next meeting.

Next Meeting

Chairman Garber said the next State Commission Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 28, 2022 at 1:15 PM in the Veterans Memorial Auditorium, 5825 Florida Boulevard, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806.

Adjournment

Chairman Garber said if there was no other business or comments from the public or Commission members, He will accept a motion to adjourn.

Motion: Mr. Brad Spicer made a motion to adjourn at 3:15 P.M. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ed Giering and passed unanimously.



/s/ _____
Mr. Earl Garber, Chairman, State Soil and Water Conservation Commission

Louisiana Soil & Water Conservation Districts - Area III

District	Parishes	On Going Projects	Pending Projects	Outreach/Education Effort	Meetings Attended
Rapides	Rapides	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Contract with Louisiana National Guard to provide technical assistance at Cp Beauregard and Cp Minden. Work with NRCS implementing Farm Bill 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dist Sec assisted with the production of the Louisiana Women in Agriculture in Alexandria, LA - Focusing on educating women farmers and ranchers in the Agriculture Field--including tour of Inglewood Organic Farm Dist Tech made presentation to 5th graders of general information on soils and on the importance soil health. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Chairman & Dist Sec attended South Central Region meeting. Chairman & Dist Sec attended the LACD Annual Meeting in Baton Rouge
Natchitoches	Natchitoches	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Feral swine eradication control program employing two trappers (700 swine 1st qtr 2022) and 15 traps. (1275 swine removed July 21 - March 22). Enrolled 69 land owners and 56,000 acres in the annual aerial gunny program with APHS. Eradicated 292 swine. Annual Tree sale - March 2022 On going No-till Grain Drill rental program. Cooperative Agreement with Cane River Lake Commission--providing education and technical assistance to improve water quality and control erosion utilizing BMPs, cover crop, residue management and feral swine control in CR Watershed. Cooperative agreement with US Forest Service to provide aerial (drone) monitoring of forest damage. Work with NRCS implementing Farm Bill 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> In Discussions with Northwestern State University for a Cooperative Agreement to gather tracking data for feral swine movement. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Provides information and education on a continuing basis through field days, printed information and public presentations within the watershed to land owners and land users. Supporting project WET in Natchitoches Parish 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dist Sec attended Louisiana Women in Agriculture in April 2022 Chairman, Vice Chairman & Dist Sec attended the LACD Annual Meeting in Baton Rouge

Louisiana Soil & Water Conservation Districts - Area III

District	Parishes	On Going Projects	Pending Projects	Outreach/Education Effort	Meetings Attended
LaSalle Sad Note: Mr. Sammy Franklin (40 yr Chair LSWCD) passed in Jan 2022	LaSalle	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feral Swine eradication program with two Pig Brig traps rental program. 2. On going Lime Spreader rental program. 3. Cooperative Agreement with Catahoula SWCD hired a Targeted Watershed Technician. 4. Wrapping up Hemphill Creek 319 Watershed Program 5. Annual Seedling sale January 2022 6. Work with NRCS implementing Farm Bill 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Applied for a multipurpose grant to do septic tank pump outs along Hemphill Creek Watershed. Hope to hold "sign ups" soon. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Three Board members & Dist Sec attended LACD in Baton Rouge. 2. Mrs. Tonda Masters is new VP of LACDE
Catahoula	Catahoula	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Applied to Friends of NACD for grant to fund purchase of trees for an Annual Tree sale. 2. Annual Tree sale Mar 2022 3. Donated trees to Service League and Parish Schools and provided technical assistance during planting. 4. Work with NRCS implementing Farm Bill. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hosted Annual LACD Poster Contest. 	
Dugdeмона	Winn, Jackson & Caldwell	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feral swine eradication control program employing two trappers and 15 traps. (900 swine removed July 21 - March 22) 2. Purchased a no-till grain drill for a rental program. 3. Dugdeмона SWCD hired a Targeted Watershed Technician. 4. Wrapping up Hemphill Creek 319 Watershed Program 5. Annual Tree sale Feb 2022 6. Work with NRCS implementing Farm Bill. 7. Cooperative Agreement with US Forest Service to trap within one mile of boundary of Kisatchie National Forest in Winn Ph. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Targeted Watershed Technician & two trappers made a presentation to a local high school. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chairman, two board members, Dist Sec & two Dist Technicians attended LACD in Baton Rouge.

Louisiana Soil & Water Conservation Districts - Area III

District	Parishes	On Going Projects	Pending Projects	Outreach/Education Effort	Meetings Attended
Avoyelles	Avoyelles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted a Locally Led Conservation Meeting to determine priorities for District Work with NRCS implementing Farm Bill - including 61 active EQIP, 40 active CSP and 28 active WRE-ACEP contracts. In addition, FO received 94 EQIP, 34 CSP and 28 WRE-ACEP requests for assistance. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 43 EQIP apps are eligible and 20 CSP apps are pending. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Chairman, _____ board members & Dist Sec attended LACD Annual Meeting in Baton Rouge
Allen	Allen	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted Annual Tree Sale Have a rental Swine Trap Work with NRCS implementing Farm Bill 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Participated in the Allen Parish Fair. Hosted the Annual Quad Parish Forestry Contest Volunteered with 4H events in Allen and Vernon Parish during the year. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Chairman, board member, Dist Sec & Targeted Watershed Technician attended LACD Annual Meeting in Baton Rouge. Dist Sec attended 2022 Louisiana Women in Ag Conference
Grant	Grant	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Feral swine eradication control program employing one trapper 10 Jager Pro and 2 Pig Brig traps. (Average removal 120 per month) GSWCD hired a Targeted Watershed Technician. Work with NRCS implementing Farm Bill. 			

Louisiana Soil & Water Conservation Districts - Area III

District	Parishes	On Going Projects	Pending Projects	Outreach/Education Effort	Meetings Attended
Calcasieu	Calcasieu	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Met with local State Representatives, State Senator and Mayor to discuss Ag issues. 2. Annual Tree Sale January 2022. 3. Work with NRCS implementing Farm Bill. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dist Sec participated in 4H-Forestry Adventure Day Camp In July 21. 2. Dist Sec participated Beauregard 4H Engineering Field Day 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dist Sec attended LACDE Summer meeting - training for new secretaries 2. Dist Sec Attended South Central Regional Employees meeting in Arkansas Aug 2021. 3. Dist Sec attended LA Women in Ag Conference Apr 2022. 4. Vice Chairman, _____ board members & Dist Sec attended LACD Annual meeting in Baton Rouge. 5. _____ Attended NACD Annual meeting Feb 2022