

**LOCAL WORK GROUP
MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 28, 2017
1:00pm
BURLEY FIELD OFFICE**

Attending: Richard Kunau, Carolyn Firth, Megan Heward, Mark Webb, Russ Suchan, Brian Kossman, Madi Patterson, Sharon Hardy-Mills, Kathy Poulton, David Mabey

1. **Call to Order:** Richard Kunau called the meeting to order at 1:10pm
2. **Elections:** Richard opened the floor for elections. Mark Webb nominated Brian Kossman as Chairman for 1 year effective immediately. Russ Suchan seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Mark nominated Kathy Poulton as Vice Chairman for 1 year effective immediately. Russ seconded. Motion carried 9 to 1. Elections closed. The Group discussed forming a committee with a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Supervisors. The Group will hold elections again at the Fall 2018 meeting.
3. **Set Date(s) for Upcoming LWG Meeting(s):** David Mabey explained to the group that in April or May of every year NRCS will know what contracts got awarded/ the projects that received funding. There will be one meeting to review those contracts and one to make changes. David could send out an email summary of those meetings for the committee to review. He suggested holding two LWG meetings. Richard Kunau motioned to hold a LWG Teleconference on **Wednesday, May 2nd 2018 at 1pm**. Russ seconded. Motion carried unanimously. David will send out an e-mail summary beforehand. David suggested moving the fall meeting up to the end of September. Brian suggested first week in November. September conflicts with harvest. Mark W suggested November 6, 2018, at 1:00pm. Mark motioned to set the meeting date. Richard seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
4. **Previous Minutes and Worksheet:** The group reviewed last year's minutes. Start time is missing in the minutes. Add start time 10 am. Richard motioned to approve minutes as amended. Mark seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
5. **Overview of LWG Goals, Expectations, and Purpose:** David explained that the purpose of the group. Potential members could be extension agents, DEQ, commissioners etc. All applications compete within the division. LWG decisions will be weighed against the other LWG decisions in the division. It has been suggested that we have a division wide working group. LWG decisions determine how we want the funding spent and where. The group discussed elections, the need for a quorum, and splitting the meeting into two separate events to help with time constraints.
6. **Review of New Items to the 2018 Worksheet:** David Mabey explained the differences in the worksheet from last year to this year. Last year's resource concerns were Water Quality, Water Quantity, and Plant Condition/Soil Health. 2018 selections must be made from the list in the worksheet. David showed where our resource concern selections appear in the application ranking summary handout. Water Quantity has changed to Insufficient Water. Plant Condition/ Soil Health could go to Soil Quality Degradation, Soil Erosion, or Degraded Plant Condition, but there can only be 4 resource concerns selected. Dave explained the fund pools. Soil Erosion and Soil Quality Degradation will cover both range and cropland. Degraded Plant Condition suits range.
7. **Follow the Worksheet to determine**
 - a. **EQIP Priority Resource Concerns:** Brian Kossman suggested Water Quality, Insufficient Water, Soil Erosion, and Degraded Plant Condition as the resource concerns. Cropland would fit the top three resource concerns. Keeping Degraded Plant Condition would allow range applicants more points in the ranking systems. Dave expressed the need for soil health to be a resource concern. David discussed the

concerns with combining resource concerns between counties and division wide. David suggested adding Soil Quality as a 5th. Brian's concern is that range would not be represented without Degraded Plant Condition. The group discussed how to give range projects a fighting chance. The group discussed issues such as sage grouse, erosion, aquifer depletion, high nitrates, etc. The group discussed landowner scenarios and where they would fit in the chosen resource concerns. **Russ Suchan motioned to make Water Quality Degradation, Insufficient Water, Soil Erosion, Degraded Plant Condition, Soil Quality Degradation (to continuing fostering better soil health) the 2018 resource concerns. Mark W seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

- b. **EQIP Local Ranking Questions:** The group reviewed NRCS 2017 Program Summary Sheet presented by Dave. The group reviewed ranking questions from last year. The group discussed first time sprinkler applications that may come in and how they could not compete with the bigger operations that can upgrade their system with advanced technology. Brian suggested an additional question to cover leaky ditches and canals. The group discussed adding a question to cover flood irrigation to sprinkler upgrades. State Issue questions 17 covers flood to sprinkler or drip. The group discussed the need to help smaller farmers. Dave gave an example question from Cache Valley, **“Is this your first irrigation improvement project?”** The question was tied it to the land owner. Brian voiced that there are already programs that will help beginning farmers. The group discussed combining questions 2 and 3 and removing 4. Question 5 is addressed under Local issues. Question 6 is addressed in the Local, State, and National Issue Questions in multiple questions. Kathy asked about pollinators. Pollinators are covered under national and local questions. **Richard motioned to approve questions as: 1. Irrigated Crop, Range, Pasture: Will the planned practice implement water and energy saving technology through the implementation of monitoring equipment, flow meters, variable speed drives, variable irrigation, LESA, LEPA, drip systems, or advanced technology to increase application efficiency? 2. Dry Crop, Irrigated Crop, Range, Pasture: Are you in a nitrate priority area, and will you implement best management practices to decrease nitrate infiltration? 3. Irrigated Crop, Pasture: Is this the first irrigation improvement on this land that has been cost shared with NRCS within 20 years, including pipeline? Russ seconded, motion carried unanimously.**
- c. **Recommendation for Distribution of EQIP Division Funds:** Reviewed last year's decisions. Dave suggestion that the group potentially over-allocated Range. The group discussed sacrificing same range to go to pasture. Discussed dry cropland. There have been no applications since Dave started. Kathy suggested leaving the door open. Dave said if we do not use all funding under one section, we can move leftover funds to cover other areas. Russ was in favor of putting more in irrigated cropland. Dave take 5 from range and put into irrigated pasture. **Kathy motioned to divide the fund pools as Dry Cropland 5%, Irrigated Cropland-Hay 80%, Irrigated Pasture 5%, Range-Pasture-Grazed Forest 10%, and Forest 0%. Richard seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**
- d. **CSP Local Ranking Questions- Combined with New Enhancements item.**
8. **CSP New Enhancements:** David Mabey explained that CSP enhancements correlate with EQIP practices. CSP no longer has questions such as the ones submitted last year. We will readdress New Enhancements / CSP at a later meeting. The CSP ranking questions should be left blank this year. There will be further guidance next year.

Adjourn: Russ motioned to adjourn, Richard seconded. 3:56pm