

Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

May 19, 2025 | 9:00 AM

300 Sower Boulevard, Room #216, Frankfort KY 40601

Zoom Conference ID: 845 5362 3580 Password: SWCC

In Attendance for SWCC: Mr. Danny Shipley, Chair; Ms. Denise Hoffman; Mr. Lenville Martin; Mr. Don Overbey; Mr. Bill Harned; Mr. Jeff Rice; and Mr. Keith Tingle.

Others Present: Mr. Jay Nelson, Division of Conservation; Ms. Johnna McHugh, Division of Conservation; Mr. Brandon Howard, Kentucky Department of Forestry; Ms. Kathleen Saunier, Energy and Environment Cabinet; Ms. Crystal Renfro, Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts; Mr. Eric Allness, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS); Ms. Dawn Baase, Department for Natural Resources; Ms. Penny Warwick, Kentucky Association of Conservation District Employees Organization; Ms. Chelsea Durbin, Division of Conservation; Ms. Melinda Murphy, Division of Conservation; and Mr. Jeff Gravitt, Division of Conservation.

Quorum was met.

Call to Order and Introduction: Mr. Danny Shipley

SWCC/KACD Joint Minutes from February 5, 2025, Meeting and the SWCC Minutes from April 22, 2025, Special Called Meeting: A motion to approve the meeting minutes was made by Mr. Lenville Martin. Mr. Bill Harned seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

Agency Reports

- **Division of Conservation:** Mr. Jay Nelson discussed the recent historic flooding in Kentucky. He also described the \$5 million in allocated funds for NRCS program match for dam rehabilitation, and that he had consulted with EEC legal staff and upper management on the potential use of this funding for dam repair projects as a result of this flood event. As a result of that effort, he stated that the funds could be used for assisting local sponsors for the federal (NRCS) Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP), which is a 75% federal and 25% local sponsor match. These funds can be utilized to assist local watershed conservancy districts on their portion of the 25% required match.

Mr. Jay Nelson informed the Commission that the Division hosted the Envirothon at the FFA camp in Breckinridge County.

Ms. Johnna McHugh asked the Commission to allow her to send out DIGS information to the districts before the next Commission meeting. The Commission approved by consensus agreement.

- Division of Forestry: Mr. Brandon Howard discussed the following:
 - Spring fire season came to an end with 549 fires and over 11,000 acres that burned across the state.
 - Personnel update (145 in total).
 - Legislative update on House Bill 640; its purpose was to prevent the spread of invasive, non-native plant species, such as Bradford (Callery) Pear.
 - Bradford Pear/Callery Pear issues.
 - Division of Forestry helping Western/Central Kentucky after recent tornadoes.
- Natural Resources Conservation Service: Mr. Eric Allness discussed the following:
 - NRCS helping Western/Central Kentucky after recent tornadoes.
 - Discussed Emergency Watershed Protection Program.
 - The possible reorganization of USDA.
 - NRCS is currently on hold obligating upwards of \$40 million dollars' worth of EQIP funding.
 - Conservation Stewardship Program: Deadline for submissions is May 30, 2025.
- Farm Service Agency: Not attended.
- Department for Natural Resources: Not attended
- Kentucky Department of Agriculture: Not attended
- University of Kentucky, CAFE: Not attended.
- KACD: Ms. Crystal Renfro discussed the following:
 - KACD Southeast Convention to be held on August 2-6 in Louisville KY at the Crowne Plaza.
 - Keynote speaker Mr. Matt Lohr (Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry in Virginia).
 - Junior boards.
 - KACD and NRCS partnership affiliate program agreement.
 - KACD meeting with congressional leaders to discuss the new Farm Bill.
 - KACD lifetime membership (and lifetime member pin).
- KACDE: Ms. Penny Warwick discussed the following:
 - Upcoming KACDE annual Meeting.
 - KACDE helps with KACD convention.
 - Thanked everyone for hard work on Envirothon.
 - Asked Mr. Jay Nelson if DOC could hold more training.

SWCC Correspondence: Mr. Jay Nelson discussed the following:

- Carroll County requested permission to divert funds from the dead animal grant to fund a new county-wide invasive species program.
- Marshall County requested permission to divert funds from the dead animal grant to fund the installation of a greenhouse for the purpose of educating students.
- Butler County requested permission to divert funds from an environmental grant for the building of bat boxes over to the building of bird houses.

A motion to approve the above three counties was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Ms. Denise Hoffman. **Motion carried.**

- Crittenden, Fleming, and Calloway Counties asked the Commission to reinstate the *Kentucky Cost Share Program* applications for projects that didn't file extensions by the deadline. Ms. Johnna McHugh and Ms. Melinda Murphy informed the Commission that all attempts had been made to notify all parties involved of the upcoming deadline. No response was made to correct the matter. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Keith Tingle asked Mr. Jay Nelson to send out a correspondence explaining the "how" and "why" of the decision and a reminder of the deadline for all applications.

Equipment Report: Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the report with copies distributed.

- **Equipment Loan Statement Operations:** Ms. Johnna McHugh provided an overview of the Equipment Loan State of Operations with copies of report distributed to all board members. Mr. Keith Tingle made a motion to approve the report as stated. Mr. Lenville Martin seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**
- **Approval of Equipment Loan Requests:** None to report.

Conservation District Supervisors: Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the requests with copies distributed.

- **Approval of vacancy petitions:** Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the following requests:
 - Campbell County:
 - Christy Geiman to fulfill the unexpired term of Susan Ortlieb-Turner (2028) (2 total petitions received)
 - Amy Downton to fulfill unexpired term of Kevin McCormick (2026) (2 total petitions received)
 - Elliott County:
 - Joseph Adkins to fulfill the unexpired term of Kenneth Skaggs (2028) (1 petition received)
 - Fayette County:
 - Jeremy Faulk to fulfill unexpired term of Lynn Roche-Phillips (2028) (2 total petitions received)
 - Aaron Clark to fulfill the unexpired term of Robert Lofton (2026) (2 total petitions received)
 - Hopkins County:
 - Gigi Smith to fulfill unexpired term (2028) (1 petition received)
 - Marshall County:
 - Lauren Gibson to fulfill unexpired term (2028) (1 petition received)
 - Martin County:
 - Terry Spence to fulfill unexpired term (2028) (1 petition received)
 - North Logan County:
 - Bradford Hall to fulfill the unexpired term of Connor Williams (2026) (1 petition received)
 - Trimble County:
 - Zachary Ellis to fulfill unexpired term (2028) (2 total petitions received)
 - Frank Heveline to fulfill unexpired term (2028) (2 total petitions received)
 - Whitley County:
 - Marvin Lee Bryant to fulfill the unexpired term of Lee Edd Sears (2028) (1 petition received)

A motion to approve the above vacancy petition was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Ms. Denise Hoffman. **Motion carried.**

- Incentive Pay for Supervisors: Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the following requests:
 - Anderson County:
 - Roy Toney – KACD convention, at least 8 ten-minute trainings
 - Don Sayre – KACD convention, at least 8 ten-minute trainings
 - Mike Wilson – KACD convention, at least 8 ten-minute trainings
 - Alayna Jacobs – KACD convention, at least 8 ten-minute trainings
 - Barren County
 - Kenneth Edwards – KACD convention, Area 3 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Charles Embry – Area 3 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings
 - Donald Wilson – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Jackie Nuckols – KACD convention, Area 3 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Floyd Ray Jones – Area 3 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Jerry Reed – Area 3 meeting, DOC virtual training
 - Carroll County:
 - David Rowlett – KACD convention, Area 5 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings, NACD SE meeting, DOC virtual training
 - Joe Raisor – Area 5 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Billie Hotfil – Area 5 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Mike Kelley – Area 5 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Bobby Gibson – Area 5 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Gail Becraft – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Hancock County:
 - Gary Long – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Loyd P Ray, Jr. – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Stephen Ogle – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Dennis Johnson – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Joseph Hagman – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Anthony Johnson – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Daniel Emmick – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Montgomery County:
 - Danny Montgomery - KACD convention, Area 8 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Robert Amburgey - Area 8 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Linda Webb - KACD convention, Area 8 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings
 - Shannon White - KACD convention, Area 8 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings

- Mike Gabbard - KACD convention, Area 8 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
- John Gabbard - KACD convention, Area 8 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings
- Barry McCoy - KACD convention, Area 8 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
- Pulaski County:
 - Marty Wilson - Area 7 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings
 - Lyndon Woods - Area 7 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings
 - Rodney Dick - Area 7 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings
 - Will Bingham - Area 7 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings
 - Tim Tarter - Area 7 meeting, at least 8 ten-minute trainings
- Robertson County:
 - Danny Case – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - William Grant Paynter – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Dwaine Miller – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - James Brumagen – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Benny Renner – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Harley Flack – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Gerry Becker – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training

A motion to approve the above Incentive Per Diem Requests was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and was seconded by Mr. Keith Tingle. **Motion carried.**

Agriculture District Program: Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the report with copies distributed to attendees. Five (5) new petitions were presented to the Commission for consideration for a total of 1,238.28 acres.

1. Boone County: (Petition No. 008-18): 54.85 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**
2. Bourbon County: (Petition No. 009-14): 226.00 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Mr. Keith Tingle. **Motion carried.**
3. Carter County: (Petition No. 022-06): 154.17 acres. Motion to approve was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and was seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Motion carried.**
4. Franklin County: (Petition No. 037-12): 175.94 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**
5. Shelby County: (Petition No. 106-10): 627.32 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Ms. Denise Hoffman. **Motion carried.**

17 Agricultural districts have been submitted to the commission for five-year recertification for a total of 7,823.651 acres.

COUNTY	PETITION	ACRES
Henry County	052-03	773.63
Henry County	052-04	307.08
Henry County	052-10	292.60
Henry County	052-12	509.80
Henry County	052-15	80.14
Henry County	052-16	712.94
Henry County	052-20	565.90
Henry County	052-21	365.12
Henry County	052-22	342.60
Jefferson County	056-02	126.03
Jefferson County	056-03	230.88
LaRue County	062-02	1364.66
LaRue County	062-04	332.50
LaRue County	062-05	256.50
LaRue County	062-06	1089.80
LaRue County	062-11	265.97
Mercer County	084-09	207.50

A motion to approve the above 17 recertifications was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Motion carried.**

Old Business:

- Direct Aid: Mr. Jay Nelson informed the Commission that all the Direct Aid funds have been spent.
- Environmental Grants: Mr. Jay Nelson informed the Commission that this will be addressed at the next Commission meeting.

New Business:

- Watershed Conservancy Districts EWP Application Process: Mr. Jay Nelson updated the Commission on the EWP match funding and presented the Commission the proposed Watershed Funding Application for EWP Rehab/Repair. Mr. Jay Nelson said there would be a virtual training on this process and the application on May 27. Mr. Jay Nelson asked the Commission for their approval to move forward with the application presented. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Lenville Martin and was seconded by Mr. Keith Tingle. **Motion carried.**

- State Cost Share: Mr. Jay Nelson discussed the eForm system and current application system with the Commission. Mr. Jay Nelson stated that due to an issue within the program/software, 6 applications were not scored. When these 6 were found and scored, 2 scored high enough that they should have been approved with the cut-off approved by the Commission. This seems to have been a one-time occurrence after investigation of previous years. Mr. Jay Nelson asked the Commission to approve the two applications that were left out due to program/software issues. A motion to approve was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and was seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Motion carried.**

Adjourn:

A motion to adjourn the SWCC meeting was made by Mr. Lenville Martin and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

Next SWCC meeting is August 2, 2025.