## Land, Water & Conservation Division: Advisory Committee Minutes Lynches River County Park Environmental Education Center Florence, SC Monday, August 19, 2019

**Present:** Bill Simpson

Dean Moss James McLeod Marvin Davant

\*by phone\* Webb Smathers

Staff: Ken Rentiers Brooke Myres Chris Workman

Tyler Brown Deanne Myrick Amanda Strickland

Guests: Sterling Sadler, James Lynch & Eddie McCutcheon, Florence Conservation District

Jennifer Majors, Lynches River Park and Matthew Anderson, NRCS

*Call to Order/Welcome:* The **August 19, 2019** meeting was called to order by Chairman William Simpson at 10:39am. In compliance with provisions of Section 30-4-80(e) (Freedom of Information Act), notification of this meeting was posted in public places.

**Chairman Simpson** welcomed and thanked all for attending; thanked the Florence Conservation District for hosting the meeting; commended them for the outstanding example of conservation education at the Center; then opened for comments.

Sterling Sadler provided information and history of the Park; the Environmental Education Center; and expanded on what the mission has become and what they hope to accomplish in the future.

**Chairman asked for consideration of minutes as presented from April 25**<sup>th</sup> **meeting**; motion to approve minutes as typed brought by McLeod, motion to second by Moss; all in favor and motion passed. Chairman called on Ken Rentiers for Deputy Director's Report.

## Deputy Director's Report; Ken Rentiers:

- Conservation Districts Monthly Report highlights the work being done by Florence and counterparts throughout SC; is useful, interesting and impressive; copies available here; this goes to DNR Board each month. Thank you for what you do.
- Commended Conservation Districts staff for their work including what's done in the field;
   delivering on the Farm Bill Programs and education.
- Currently half of the counties in SC have been designated in drought conditions.
- Emergency Management Division, State of SC performed a "Drought Simulation: Tabletop drought round table" discussion and processes ready to implement in the event of a severe drought; 12 agencies represented, including DNR; severe drought map studies and other vital information was presented and discussed in this "drill" of 'what would happen/ response' scenarios.

- Archeology, Heritage Trust Division: artifacts pulled from recent Pockey/Botany Bay Native American Shell Rings.
- Aquatic nuisance: water hyacinth Cooper River, Black River and Waccamaw River; also alligator weed in Black River.
- Hydrology: geologic survey; PPAC (Planning Process Advisory Committee)/ State Water Plan:
   progress on setting up framework to guide each river basin in SC including: surface water and
   ground water assessments; 50 year forecast of water needs; each basin advisory council to work
   with local stakeholders and science moving forward; pilot project funded at \$1.3 million to begin
   with Edisto for policy recommendations based on good science and local input. \$500,000 each
   additional year for water data and wise water resource management in SC.
- Maps available/ handouts of geology of SC coast.
- Q: McLeod: Have gauges been placed? A: This Friday is placement day of gauges at \$15,000/gauge.
- Back to PPAC: over a year: water professionals at the table monthly meetings; outcome: 100
  pages framework includes 2 years of basin councils throughout the state; briefing the Governor,
  who was very engaged and supportive; met for over 2 hours in productive & encouraging
  meeting.

## Chairman called on Conservation Districts Program Manager's Report; Tyler Brown:

- Introduction of Chris Workman as Program Manager, Watershed Districts (which fall under local Conservation Districts Boards).
- Chris Workman's report included handout (see attachment 1) information on watersheds.
- Introduction of Brooke Myres as Program Manager, whose report included handout (see attachment 2) information on current projects.
- Introduction of Amanda Strickland in Florence area, who is in the field working NRCS
  partnership and updated all of recently hired Program Coordinator in Aiken area: Josh
  Boatwright.
- Tyler expanded on media outreach efforts highlighting Walther Farms in Aiken County and Cotton Hills Farms in McCormick County and their positive efforts in conservation.
- Next committee meeting will be in February 2020 at the Annual Partnership Conference in Charleston.
- Updates on work in progress for a "Memorandum of Agreement" between partners: Conservation Districts; NRCS and DNR to devise language that suits all.
- Feral Hog Pilot Program includes Newberry County: small population/problems versus Hampton County: large population/problems. Proposals for program due today.
- Commissioner Edmunds of York County in Conservation Districts Hall of Fame.
- Applications for Fiscal Year 2020 aid to districts processing smoothly.
- Legislative Breakfast on State House grounds Thurs, May 7, 2019.

**Chairman Simpson: New Business:** to include consideration of slate of Commissioners recommended for appointment/reappointment. McLeod motioned to move to Executive Session, seconded by Moss, motion carried.

Chairman Simpson: Executive Session begins following dismissal of all non-voting persons in attendance at 11:40am.

**Executive Session**: Motion made by McLeod to return to regular session to proceed to voting, seconded by Moss; motion passed to return to regular session.

**Regular Session:** Returned to regular session at 11:45am followed by a motion from Moss to approve entire slate of appointees and re-appointees, seconded by McLeod with all in favor and entire slate approved unanimously; motion passed.

**Chairman Simpson Closing:** Following positive comments regarding face-to-face meetings quarterly at unique places around the state and thanks to Florence/Lynches Park for hosting and lunch; if no further comments, Chair recommends closing the meeting. Following some discussion among members; and motion to adjourn by McLeod, seconded by Moss, motion carried and Chairman Simpson declared the meeting adjourned at 11:50am.