

Bonner Soil and Water Conservation District

Meeting Minutes



Date: Tuesday, March 3, 2026
Time: 1:00 pm Meeting
Place: CREC Conference Room, 130 McGhee Rd., Suite 220, Sandpoint ID 83864

Attendance

Board members: Dale Van Stone, BSWCD; Jeff Connolly, BSWCD; Rick Watt, BSWCD; Harry Menser, BSWCD; Chris Elliott, BSWCD.
Others: Kyle Lunsford, NRCS; Megan Parnell, BCFB; Sarah Garcia, BSWCD; Julie Lakatos, BSWCD.
Zoom: Bill Lilibridge, ISWCC.

The meeting was called to order at 1:01 pm by Chairman Dale Van Stone.

- A) Agenda Amendments:** [Idaho Code § 74-204(4)(b) and (c)] Agenda changes include consolidating financials as one action item, adding Natural Resources Camp as an item, and consolidated Spring Division Meeting actions items into one. *Motion to approve updated agenda by Rick, seconded by Jeff. Motion carried.*
- B)**
1. **February 2026 Meeting Minutes**
Motion to approve February 2026 Meeting Minutes by Rick, seconded by Harry. Motion carried.
 2. **Financials**
 - a. **January 2026:** Sarah getting ready to send out PSP invoicing to sister districts. SAM renewal held up the Umbrella grant processing due to required address change verification process taking over 6 weeks. Molly's subaward starts in June and her funding will be received in July or August. Her funding is getting fully restored after possible consideration for reduction by the state. *Motion to approve January 2026 Financial Reports by Jeff, seconded by Rick. Motion carried.*
 - b. **Dalke storage rental fee for Water Festival:** Clarification of a previously approved motion to be put in the minutes. *Motion to stipulate that the Water Festival will pay for 50% of storage unit #63 at Dalke Storage utilized to store all event materials made by Rick, seconded by Jeff. Motion carried.*
- C) Agency/Grant & Guest Reports**
1. **Farm Bureau - Megan Parnell:** Agriculture Ambassador program is underway, which teaches students how to have discussion with congressional delegates. BC Farm Bureau scholarship is due March 6th. Eligible age of student is 17-22 yrs and Farm Bureau membership is required. Chris mentioned they are working on another scholarship for trade careers. There are 50 lb. boxes of potatoes coming up from southern Idaho to distribute to food banks.
 - a. **Natural Resource Camp scholarship:** Discussion to adjust last month's motion

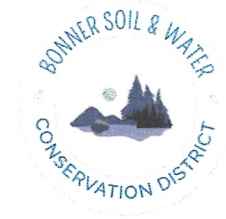
to add Farm Bureau assistance in covering cost - FB to pay for tuition and BSWCD to pay for travel costs. *Motion to adjust last month's approved motion by combining scholarship opportunities with BC Farm Bureau to provide a scholarship for the tuition (\$310 each) and Bonner SWCD to provide a scholarship for the travel costs (\$310 each) of up to two students to the Natural Resources Camp by Jeff, seconded by Rick. Motion carried.*

2. **SWCC – Bill Lillibridge:** North Idaho natural resource conservationist position has closed with a good pool of candidates; interviews will be conducted in the next couple weeks. State budgets are facing 5-7% reduction; all districts will receive less money from the commission. DEQ in Division I reduced their monitoring budget by 73%, which has a cascade of issues with other procedures in which there will be data that will never get back. The matter of moving the Commission under the Department of Water Resources is progressing through the legislature and expected to be passed.
3. **NRCS - Kyle Lunsford:** For Team 1, Nick is back at Sandpoint, and Cindy is in Boundary. RaeAnn Dubais is new Acting State Conservationist. There are 70 eligible EQIP applications in Bonner County and 19 in Boundary County. Some may be changed to the CSP program if landowners accept. The ranking deadline has been pushed back to May 14th. Ranking questions is not decided yet. Reducing funding pools from team areas to 5 funding pools throughout the state as directed by national. Archeologist position possibly opening up.
4. **Water Festival:** Recent steering committee meeting covered logistics, PR and 30th Anniversary.

D) District Business

1. **CDA Books:** Discussion on recent and past service. There have been ongoing challenges including delayed financial reports and tax payment issues. District received management reports for December and January at the beginning of March. The IRS sent a notice that payroll taxes had been paid late and CDA Books did not know why. BSWCD incurred an additional \$1,000 in audit costs due to delays from CDA Books not submitting paperwork in a timely manner. Jim suggested creating a detailed scope of work and decision analysis matrix for selecting a new provider. The district will continue with CDA Books through the end of the fiscal year for transparency. *Motion to pursue options for new bookkeeping services by Rick, seconded by Jeff. Motion carried.*
2. **Audit draft:** Rick noted that the auditor was frustrated with having to frequently contact CDA Books. Sarah noted there were no material deficiencies identified in the audit. The board discussed the cost of the audit (\$8200). *Motion approved to accept the audit draft and pay the invoice by Chris, seconded by Jeff. Motion carried.*
3. **BSWCD Policies:** New draft policies for BSWCD specifically related to grant tracking, accounting and document retention were reviewed and discussed. Sarah provided background on each policy and noted that written policies and procedures for these areas are now required for DEQ grant risk assessment as part of subaward agreements. They affect all DEQ funding such as Molly's subaward. Discussion was had regarding the need for the Districts current

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policy and procedure handbook to be reviewed and updated due to employment law changes. ICRMP is currently reviewing these policies in detail and will let us know of any adjustments needed and will bring to the April meeting. Discussion was held regarding clarification of Executive Director and District Administrator job description for BSWCD. Draft job descriptions and employee evaluation document were presented and reviewed. *Motion to approve new policies and procedures and job descriptions by Rick, seconded by Jeff. Motion carried.*

4. **Five-Year & Annual Plan of Work:** Board had time to review plans via email previously sent to them. *Motion to approve of Five-Year & Annual Plan of Work by Harry, seconded by Jeff. Motion carried.*
5. **Open Meeting Law Executive Session policy update:** Julie reviewed the new manual requirements on Executive Sessions. Review form in manual for properly conducting executive sessions. Sarah announced that Carl Erickson with ICRIMP will conduct open meeting training on April 15th through IDEA workshop.
6. **AIS MOU:** The District has not yet received the MOU for the program which needs to open in 30-45 days. Hiring typically occurs by the end of March to start training in early April. *Motion to approve to give Sarah authority to proceed with executing the AIS MOU with ISDA if materially in line with previous AIS MOU's by Jeff, seconded by Harry. Motion carried.*

E) District Update

1. BSWCD Report – Sarah Garcia:

Seedling Sale program: Program is about 50% sold, which is significantly lower than typical for this time of year. JD Lumber placed a decent-sized order for Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine.

PSP: New \$20,000 seedling grant from IDL for afforestation projects has been approved but MOU has not been received as of yet. The IDL -CRP funds will be administered through PSP for all four districts in Division 1. Qualified applicants will need to have purchased 75+ seedlings and meet the grant requirements to be eligible. John Gaddess created the connection with IDL for PSP to be the facilitator of getting these CRP funds, allowing IDL to have these funds distributed to multiple landowners through the state. A Co-Op article will advertise the grant this month.

Forestry Contest: Sarah shared the promotional items for the board - picnic blankets and backpacks.

Fair Board: Sarah attended last month's Bonner County Fair Board meeting. She said the Fair Board is in transition and once they have had a chance to reorganize after their fair manager transition there could be a potential partnership with BSWCD for grant opportunities. Improvements include a five-year plan.

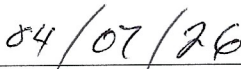
Cedar Springs Community: Sarah conducted a site visit in Talache for potential grant opportunities with their water system. They have been offered 10 acres with water resources. They are at a standstill until they decide whether to buy the property or pursue Forest Service options. There are identified potential IDWR grants that could be administered by the district and could create a framework for working with other small water systems in the county.

IDEA: Sarah in her role as IDEA President has received calls from multiple districts with personnel concerns as well as a significant request from employees for training. The templates of policies and procedures will be available to share with other districts. IDEA has organized training on open meeting law for all districts on April 15th at 9am.

Motion to adjourn at 3:27 pm by Harry, seconded by Jeff.

Minutes submitted by Julie Lakatos, District Administrator.


District Supervisor Signature


Date