



**Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, March 16, 2022 - 7:00 PM
Conference Call**

CALL TO ORDER

President Steve Becker called the meeting of the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts Board of Directors conference call to order at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, March 16, 2022. Those present included Steve Becker, Matt Woodard, Richard Kunau, Bob Flagor, Devin Fielding, Joan Cloonan and Benjamin Kelly.

PRESENT

**U OF I CLIMATE
SMART**

Steve Becker reviewed the possible Climate Smart grant the University of Idaho is considering making application for with USDA (see attached). The IASCD Board met with the University of Idaho College of Agriculture & Life Sciences (CALs) to discuss a concept draft for a grant proposal for USDA's program to develop and implement climate-smart production practices, activities and systems on working lands. There is a short timeframe if a grant proposal is to be submitted to USDA and would be written and administered by the Department of Entomology, Plant Pathology and Nematology. The IASCD Board will be working with CALs to see where and what opportunities would be available for districts if the program and partnership was to go forward. The first step is and depends on the U of I grant proposal being accepted by USDA and the deadline has been pushed back to May 6th. There is no set date for approval but would be selected by USDA sometime this summer. Bob Flagor, Joan Cloonan and Benjamin Kelly were also on a NACD webinar last week that discussed partnerships for the Climate-Smart Commodities program and responded to members' questions about this new funding opportunity.

**CLIMATE SMART
FUNDING**

USDA is authorized to allocate \$1 billion in partnerships to support America's climate-smart farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners through the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities program. The program will finance pilot projects that create market opportunities for U.S. agricultural and forestry products that use climate-smart practices and include innovative, cost-effective ways to measure and verify greenhouse gas benefits.

**CLIMATE SMART
VISION**

This project will increase the adoption and continuing development of climate smart practices related to the production of the major crops in Idaho with relevance to other states in the Pacific Northwest. The scope is comprehensive with respect to farming practices demonstrated to increase soil carbon stores and minimize CO₂ emissions. In addition to the primary emphasis on carbon, the project will target reduced emissions of N₂O, a powerful GHG (300x stronger per molecule than CO₂). The incentives will be market based, but also include improvement of returns to producers through greater nitrogen use efficiency, reduction of fossil fuel use and water

savings. The work will include approaches to informing buyers, marketers, and consumers about this comprehensive approach to GHG mitigation. The project will consider impacts of conservation practices on GHG reductions across the supply chain from on-farm production to final products through substantive involvement of farmers and private companies. It will apply principles that have been established through ongoing research in the region. It will use a combination of direct monitoring of GHG on farm and modeling based on indicator variables and a network of EC towers, and systematic assessments of soil carbon. The project partners will collectively develop a science-based, user-friendly system for measurement, reporting and verification of GHG emission reductions. The board discussed the opportunity, what districts may or may not be able handle and what districts may be interested in taking on. The short timeline would be difficult. IASCD may be the primary contractor and work with districts but would need to consult with districts. There would also need to be opportunities for those with leased ground. The board agreed that the decentralized model and producers working through their individual 50 districts would be beneficial. Joan Cloonan moved IASCD engage the University of Idaho in becoming a Climate Smart partner on the confirmation of grant funding. Seconded. Passed.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Steve Becker reviewed several pieces of legislation dealing funding and that will be beneficial to districts and conservation in Idaho. H757 is the \$5 million for the Water Quality for Program Agriculture (WQPA) and passed the House on March 14 on a 59-9 vote but must still be voted on by the Senate and Governor. H763 is the \$10 million for Best Management Practices (BMP's) and passed the House on March 14 on a 43-25 vote. H642 concerns the Division Commission Appointments for ISWCC, passed the House on March 2 with a 65-0 vote and passed by the Senate March 16 with a 34-0 vote. H768 is the Department of Agriculture Budget, including 5 positions for boat inspection stations, and has not yet been voted on. IASCD will continue to send updates to districts as legislation progresses.

ADJOURNMENT

Steve Becker adjourned the meeting at 7:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Benjamin Kelly, Executive Director