



**Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday, September 1, 2020 - 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 September 1, 2020. Those present included Steve Becker, Matt Woodard, Mike Somerville, Tom Daniel, Kit Tillotson and Benjamin Kelly. Also joining the meeting was Art Beal, Elaine Sonnen, Dave Huggins, Steve Miller and Kevin Koester.

**PRESENT**

Steve Becker welcomed the subcommittee members to the meeting and thanked them for their time and effort on this issue. The subcommittee discussed a number of different ways to go with helping districts and landed on a few options to present to the board.

**SUBCOMMITTEE  
RECCOMENDATIONS**

The two options that would be the most obvious would be to keep the statues quo and move forward as we currently stand with conservation in Idaho. The second would be to discontinue ISWCC and have districts receive the total allocation from the state appropriation. Neither option seemed to be the will of supervisors at the June 12 meeting in Boise but to put a possible plan together to look be considered.

The subcommittee worked on a third option that would dissolve the need for a commission board but would look at keeping 1 to 2 full-time positions in the Office of the Governor. The positions in the Governor's office would not be positioned to compete with other state agencies and would be appointed and hired by the Governor. They would have the following responsibilities:

- Administrator to further leverage funds, chair advisory committee, submitted budget info to JFAC
- Assistant for Fiscal, Budgetary duties and/or oversight - coordination with (LSO)
- Tasked with the review of all accountability benchmarks submitted by IASCD/Districts
- Coordinate with federal and state agencies 22-20718 5(a) - conduct, in cooperation with appropriate federal and state agencies and the owners and operators of privately owned forest lands, rangelands and agricultural lands in this state, conservation improvements on or in respect to these lands for the purposes of implementing conservation systems to conserve and improve natural resource conditions.

In addition there would need to be 2 or 3 contracted staff through the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts with the following responsibilities:

- 1 or 2 contracted staff members tasked with working with districts on Capacity Building
  - o District "mentoring" program
  - o Supervisor "mentoring" program
- 1 contracted staff member tasked with helping districts on Accountability and Administrative measures

Defining accountability - Every conservation district to have 1 project started and/or planned every fiscal year

- The completed project should be within budget
- The planned project should include a fully formed projected budget
- Districts will need a template to be completed annually
- Annual plan - already required
- Five-year plan - already required
- Need plans to be substantive and meaningful
- Possibly list the next 3-5 prioritized projects
- Financial audit - already required
- Submit annual budget to legislative services office - already required

Non-observance results in...

- If a district does not want to participate, funds would be distributed to participating districts (minus any set base funding)
- Capacity building help from IASCD staff or other experienced agent - with funding or reimbursement to the capacity building agent

## NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

To further supplement, the administrator could head up a Natural Resources or Conservation District Advisory Committee to help further coordinate with state agencies to deliver conservation of Idaho on the local level

- Compare conservation districts direction (annual/5 year plan) with state agencies priorities or annual/5 year plans to help facilitate mutually beneficial outcomes
- 22-2716 3(c) soil conservation districts, as governmental subdivisions, are the primary entities to provide assistance to private landowners and land users in the conservation, sustainment, improvement and enhancement of Idaho's natural resources
- 22-2716 3(e) lead nonregulatory efforts to conserve, sustain, improve and enhance Idaho's private and state lands and to provide assistance to private landowners and land users to plan, develop and implement conservation plans addressing soil, water, air, plant and animal resources. Technical, financial and educational assistance to landowners and land users is vital to that effort

Members should include:

- Dept. of Environmental Quality
- Dept. of Agriculture
- Dept. of Lands
- Dept. of Fish & Game
- Dept. of Water Resources
- Office of Species Conservation
- Dept. of Parks & Recreation
- Conservation District Representatives
- Conservation District Liaison
- Office of the Governor Liaison

Goal of securing non-regulatory projects to districts - Enabling objective of district law to be accomplished

- 22-2716 3(a) To emphasize nonregulatory, science-based technical assistance, incentive-based financial programs and informational and educational programs at the local level
- 22-2716 3(b) To maintain, preserve, conserve and rehabilitate forest lands, rangelands and agricultural lands to assure the protection and productivity of the state's natural resources

The board asked questions to clarify the plan laid out by the committee. Steve Becker thanked the subcommittee for all the work had done addressing such a difficult subject.

ADJOURNMENT

Steve Becker adjourned the meeting at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Benjamin Kelly, Executive Director