



Board Meeting Minutes
Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition
(Board Meeting Minutes: February 23, 2010)
(11am central time at Stubb's in Thedford, NE)

Board Members:

Present: Jim Carr, Scott Cotton, Ross Garwood

Others Present: Twila Phillips, Bob Broweleit, Marcy Hunter, Steve Chick, Mike Kucera, Britt Weiser

Proceedings

· *Meeting called to order* at 11:00 a.m. by Chair, Jim Carr

· *Treasurer's Report:*

- NGLC bank statement reviewed by Twila Phillips
- Scott asked that a change be made to the report to list his meeting at Bar J and as a network meeting
- Scott moved and Ross second to approve the report, all approve

· *Coordinator's Report:*

- Grant balances reviewed by Marcy Hunter
- Marcy reviewed balances in NET 08 and discussed the grant expires on June 30, 2010.
- Jim asked if the network money could be used for TSP training.
- Others suggested the money be used to pay conference registrations in advance for 2010 such as the NE Grazing Conference, NE Cattlemen, Farmers Union, Range Camp
- Marcy reviewed NRCS balances – NRCS stated that a new amendment will need to be resigned by Sept. 30
- Marcy reviewed STF balances - Jim stated that he has not received his Reno reimbursement and Twila stated that she had not received a request. Jim will resend.
- Marcy asked NGLC if they need to do an audit and who is in charge of doing that. The group asked Marcy to contact Paul Swanson who has handled the audits in the past.
- NRCS discussed the NE Range Short Course and Mike stated that college credits are available. Jim asked if NGLC could use funding from the mentoring program to provide scholarships to mentors for the cost of the course. Jim suggested Marcy email mentors about the scholarship money available to approximately 10 people, registrations are due in April. Jim asked Marcy to draft a letter to board members on input from details on scholarships for the Range Short Course. Stewards could use the scholarships or nominate someone else if there are no takers on the scholarships.

· *Old Business:*

- Scott and Bob discuss NGLC tax exempt status
- Scott/Bob received an acceptance letter - NGLC is a not-for-profit
- Scott and Bob took care of articles of inc.
- Scott needs to call IRS
- Ross asked if our organization is the same as before we filed as non-profit? Jim stated that the coalition was first organized by farm bill. Scott – Farm bill previous to 1991 – technically NGLC stands alone. Jim – NGLC lost identity with major grazing groups, grazing organizations can be members.
- Bob stated that we need to do the tax preparation for 2009
- Scott moved to hire McChesney again with the cost being \$500 or less, Ross second, all approve

· *New business:*

- Marcy presented the minutes from the last board meeting in January, Ross approved the minutes, Scott second – all approve

NRCS

- NRCS - Mike discussed current \$40,000 agreement with NGLC and wanted to know what NGLC's needs are for next year and where do we need additional money
- Mike introduced Britt Weiser and stated that Joe May starts Monday. Joseph will be out of Lincoln (Dana was out of Ord), Joe was the state range specialist in Idaho, state range specialist in Hawaii, has a lot of ambition

Doug Whisenhunt has been named the Prescribe Burn Coordinator/Grazing Specialist, will be out of North Platte, focused on mentoring groups like Loess Canyons, working with groups such as NGLC, Nature's Conservancy, Pheasants Forever, training staff, grazing lands assistance

- Joe and Doug will both be involved with NGLC, Joe will sit on during board meetings
- Scott stated that Dana acted as a technical advisor, support, provided ideas and thoughts from across the state and was a good liason between state office and NGLC
- Mike stated that Twin Platte and Lower Loup are both looking for a range technician
- Casey Lancaster is the new range management specialist in Valentine and will also start in March. There are 10 college students/career interns across the state and a New Mexico grad, Sara Walker, is starting in Imperial as Range Management Specialist.
- Ross stated that the coalition is happy NRCS is doing this
- Mike stated that a strong use of EQIP and CSP brought more technical funds into NE which allows NRCS to hire more. More farm bill is utilized, the more funding is provided for technical service.
- Jim asked NRCS what we need to do as a coalition to promote NRCS programs and help get more TSP
- Ross suggested we hand out NRCS materials at booths
- Steve said there is still a shortage on Conservation Technical Assistance and he appreciates the group, what we are doing and supports our agreement
- Steve stated that Doug is very effective with working with Loess Canyons, needs help with finding other areas similar to Loess Canyons (Eastern Red Cedar), involved in training (not so much burning). Possible group in O'Neil, a lot of pheasant forever burn groups, focused on grazing lands taken over by Red Cedar
- Steve stated that the CSP program funds 700,000 acres and sign up will begin in May/June 2010 for another 700,000 acres divided up regionally which is a large opportunity for producers
- Ross asked if producers have to reapply if they were not accepted in CSP
- Steve stated that yes you have to reapply and recommended to review your funding score and look at other areas where you can get more points. Producers get credit for what they have done, enhancements increase score which increase chance to get accepted
- Mike pointed out that the activities list (enhancements) is on the website (wildlife tanks, cover crops, monitoring, patch burn grazing, wildlife friendly grazing, etc.). Revising tanks for wildlife is most popular. Payment for CSP is at the end of the year for each year (12 mth lag). There are approximately a dozen grazing enhancements.
- Steve stated that NRCS is going to renew the CCPI (Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative). There are \$300,000 left in NE to entertain project proposals. Steve has been contacted by a group of 3-4 ranchers led by Sarah Sortum who are interested in ecotourism. They may be submitting an application for CCPI.
- Scott discussed the large group in Western NE that is working on ecotourism and a grant that he and Bob wrote
- Steve stated that EQIP is the largest NRCS program with 20 million in NE
- Steve discussed that RC&Ds are slated to be zeroed out, which is fought by RC&D Councils, NRCS can't lobby
- Ross asked if a letter from NGLC chairman would help save the RC&Ds
- Scott stated in the past that NGLC had 1 event a year for legislative aid and gave tours, suggested teaching landowners to make a difference

2010 Bird Tour

- Tour set for June 2-3, 2010 at Switzer Ranch, Marcy handed out brochure and press release for review by board
- Marcy contacted Marge Beatty, the tour can be credits for teachers, Marcy to add line item to brochure
- Scott suggested sending out the brochure to the administrative office in Lincoln before school gets out
- Marcy to talk to STF about funding tomorrow, Jim suggested speaking to Kyle Graham with US Fish and Wildlife
- Scott asked to be put down as attendee at event
- Jim asked Marcy to add 2011 bird tour planning to next board meeting agenda
- Marcy discussed limitation to 50 participants this year, Jim suggested we open that number up and rent another bus or traffic people in town to hotel

Rangeland Monitoring Program

- Mike asked that the training for the interns also includes Joseph May
- Mike reviewed CSP requirements and worksheets on the NRCS website
- Scott moved to approve to send out contracts to colleges and Kort, Ross second, all approve
- Marcy reviewed costs of range pins \$200, stakes \$110, ID books \$20
- Range pins and stakes to come out of NRCS supplies

- Marcy also asked if there were changes to brochure before she ordered more – to come out of NRCS marketing
- Jim suggested Marcy work on a proposal to NET 09 for reallocation for plant ID materials, redirected from Lab. Move \$7500 to materials and \$7500 to project oversight for \$15,000 total removed from Lab. Marcy to send this proposal to board for review. The ID books could come out of materials if reallocation is approved.
- Marcy asked where to direct producers if they want to purchase more than one enclosure. Jim suggested sending them to FFA to build and work with and we can send FFA the blue print.
- Board discussed lab sampling and costs. Mike asked Marcy to email him and Scott several lab results and he will talk to Ray Ward about sampling.

NE Cattlemen Invoice for Membership

- Marcy discussed invoice with group, board asked Marcy to contact NE Cattlemen about a booth and membership package.

NGLC Quarterly Articles

- Marcy reviewed article deadlines with group
- Board suggested Marcy instead contact board members who already have articles to submit such as Jim C., Sherry, Scott, Michelle, Lynn and Rod. Articles then can be submitted to Farmers Union – Graham Christensen, NE Cattlemen, Farm Bureau, ICON, FSA Newsletters, Northwest NE Power, NRD, NET, Troy Smith – Cattlemen at Sargent (Bird Tour), Trent Louse (bird tour)

Cowboy Logic

- Marcy discussed reference letter for Arden Wohlers from Tim Hruby
- Ross made a motion to put disclosure on website– have to be preapproved as a mentor or mentor candidate to receive funding, all approved
- Board didn't feel the documentation for Arden met criteria – issue died for lack of a motion
- Marcy to ask Arden for further documentation

Quick Books Pro

- Board made motion to approve purchase of QuickBooks Pro at best price, all approve
- Marcy to find Quick Books that works together for both Marcy in Lincoln and Twila in Mullen

Table throw and Exhibit Panels

- Board approves the purchase of table throw for \$300
- Board asked to see more pricing on exhibit panels. Scott suggested impressions.com

Steve and Mike make point that National CIG grant coming up soon

Board will discuss website at next board meeting & review possible demonstration

Sandhills Task Force

- Marcy asked group how NGLC and STF can collaborate on projects
- Board said NGLC can provide education, together we can maximize opportunities for landowners, ask STF member to join our board as a representative, ask for funding for bird tour (\$1500)

· *Additional business:*

- Next board meeting set for April 19, 2010 in Mullen at RC&D
- Jim Carr called an executive meeting to discuss Marcy's contract proposal

· *Minutes submitted by Coordinator, Marcy Hunter*