

CABALLO SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES

August 27, 2025

The Caballo Soil and Water Conservation District meeting of the Board of Supervisors was called to order at 9:04 a.m. by Harvey Morrow, Chairman, in the Caballo SWCD Office, located at 3000, HWY 187 Salem, New Mexico.

Supervisors Present

Harvey Morrow, Chair

Samantha Gillis, Sec-Treas
Keith Franzoy, Member
Casey McGuire, Member
Ronnie Garay, Member

Not Present

Frank Garay, Vice Chair

Dee Wear, Member

Others Present:

Kathryn Kruthaupt, NMDA SWCD Specialist *by phone*
Nicole Chavez, NRCS Soil Conservationist
Josh Smith, EBID Supervisor
Joah Franzoy, EBID Assistant Manager
Susan Downs, Caballo SWCD Programs Manager
Chantal Orosco, Caballo SWCD Business Manager

Minutes- Harvey Morrow asked for a motion to approve previous meeting minutes. *Casey McGuire motioned that the minutes from July 30, 2025, meeting be approved. Keith Franzoy seconded; the motion carried unanimously.*

Treasurer's Report- Chantal Orosco presented the treasurers report, noting that there was not much activity, noting that there were a couple of checks for general liability insurance and a new payroll check issued to our new contracted employee, RJ Garay who is working with us on the noxious weed mapping grant from State Forestry. Susan Downs called to attention that there was a reimbursed payment from an overpayment for her health insurance plan several years ago. *Ronnie Garay moved the treasurer's report to be accepted as presented, Casey McGuire seconded; the motion was carried unanimously.*

Approval of Agenda – *Samantha Gillis moved to approve the agenda as presented. Casey McGuire: the motion carried unanimously.*

NRCS Progress Report – Nicole Chavez presented the report, noting that CSP Renewals were coming up. Kristi Wright is still acting as South Area

Conservationist until the end of September. The National deadline to finish contracts is September 30.

Local work group meeting is to be held on September 4 at the Farm Bureau Office in Las Cruces. Please see the attached reports for further information.

NMDA Specialist Report – Kathryn Kruthaupt presented the report, noting that our district was awarded \$30,300 for Point System monies, Chantal and Susan asked Kathryn what the time frame was looking like for MOA/MOU to be signed in order to move forward with their DOG grants that they were awarded. Kathryn said she would have to get back to everyone on this, because as far as she knew they were already issuing reimbursements for this grant.

NMACD Report – Susan Downs reports that NMACD is working toward their annual meeting at the end of October, and that we had a request for dues payment come through by email. NMACD has not sent us an agenda for the conference yet, but we really need a supervisor to attend in order to vote. Josh Smith, VP of NMACD, added that it is hard to get anything accomplished at these conferences without a quorum of supervisors to vote on things.

Jornada Report- Susan Downs reports that Jornada has finished with their thinning project with Grant Soil and Water Conservation District. The signs for the interpretive panels along the Rio Grande have been ordered.

Business at Hand

Watersheds

- McLead Dam- Susan reports that the last thing we had heard Zach Libbin was turning in the Plan of Work to the state engineers office, and that we are just waiting to hear back from them at this time.
- Reed Thurmond- Susan reports that we have Capital Outlay money for this and are working with the state land office to move the sediment still.
- Rodey- Casey McGuire reports that EBID has been tied up at the Rincon Arroyo. We still have no start date for this. Josh Smith advises that we still are waiting for an easement, and they need to know who wants to be the holder of the easement, whether it is EBID or Caballo SWCD. It was suggested that an MOU written properly would place both EBID and Caballo SWCD as easement holders for this dam.
- Informal Dam Inspections- Susan Downs reports that the inspections were completed, reports were going to be finished in mid-September (approximately)
- Vigil Arroyo- Susan Downs reports that we now have landowners' permission in writing to work on this arroyo, the curve is completely gone, and it is about to take the railroad out. Casey McGuire suspects that the railroad is unaware of the danger this is posing, but the railroad had previously said they would send someone to look at it, but we are not sure if they ever have. Johnny Brawley's farm is getting hit hard by the sediment.

Casey McGuire made a motion to repair the Vigil Arroyo for the public's safety. Ronnie Garay seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- Rincon- Casey McGuire reports that Dona Ana County Roads have a D-8 and a D-5 on site moving dirt from last weeks hard rains. The Dona Ana Flood Commission is bringing in a 40-ton articulating dump truck for a week, they are taking the curve down by a foot and then bringing in clay to pad it. The hope is that the clay will act as a concrete barricade for rushing flood waters in the future. Casey says that we may have to rent a dozer if we cannot borrow one from Dona Ana. Susan Downs asked if rock armament on top of the clay would work to help form a support structure. Casey McGuire advises that the railroad was supposed to have done just that 20 years ago, but they never did anything as far as anyone knew. Casey says it wont hurt to call the railroad to see if they can help out in any way.
Casey McGuire made a motion to financially support repairing the Rincon. Keith Franzoy seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

ISC Dam Maintenance and the EBID/Caballo SWCD MOU- Joah Franzoy, EBID Assistant Manager, brought a packet with financial figures for all of the board members. He is reporting that there is approximately \$13 Million from ISC to work on dams throughout the district.

Joah reports that he is working on updating our MOU and that he would like to see EBID/Caballo SWCD working together more in the future to procure grants and funding that can be implemented for boots on the groundwork throughout the district.

Candidacy Declarations- It was reported that Casey McGuire and Keith Franzoy made it down to the county clerk offices in their respective voting places to declare candidacy. They have no one formally running against them at this time, and unless there is a write in candidate, they should be running unopposed.

Local Government Investment Pool- Chantal Orosco presented that the First Savings Bank CD would be coming to maturity at the beginning of October. She advises that she just wanted to present a new option to the board for what could be done with that \$180,000 if they should decide not to leave it in a CD. Chantal has been researching the LGIP fund, which we have approximately \$20k in, and have for several years now. Every month we get a reinvestment of at least \$100 per month, which is compounded interest. She said she just wanted the board members to think about this as a possibility and will have more information for the next board meeting, because she has called into the state treasurers office now, but has not heard back as of yet.

NMACD Conference Susan Downs reports that we need to have permission in order to book the rooms for the conference and approval to travel up to Albuquerque by board. *Samantha Gillis made a motion to book the rooms and approve the travel expenses. Ronnie Garay seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.*

Replacement of Office Windows-Chantal Orosco reported that during the last rainstorm, water was pouring into the office from the window seals, despite the contractors who painted the building last year having caulked them. The worse

window was the one in the filing room, where our important paperwork and documentation was stored. During the windy season, we have paper stuck inside of the window seals otherwise it sounds like a freight train. Chantal said she was worried about the wood rotting inside of the walls and didn't want to see the building falling apart. Chantal has received one quote so far for window installation, and it was from Casa Armijo Construction for \$4,865.66. *Casey McGuire made a motion to replace the office windows as needed, providing that Chantal gets multiple quotes from other contractors. Ronnie Garay seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.*

Public Meeting with Producers and Legislators- Chantal Orosco reports that she had attended the Water & Natural Resources Senate Committee Meeting in September, and that the result of that meeting was that Rebecca Dow would like to have a producer led meeting with senators and legislators, which would allow the local farmers in Hatch to express the issues that they are having as producers now, whether its water, labor, tariffs, etc. Joah Franzoy suggested that we work together with Skye Devore, EBID's state lobbyist, because EBID already has a day that they are planning to give a legislative tour and this would all tie in very nicely together. Joah will connect Chantal to Skye by email. *Ronnie Garay made a motion to coordinate with EBID on legislative meeting and to pay for a meal for the attendees. Samantha Gillis seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.*

Caballo SWCD Website- Chantal Orosco reports that the district had just been notified by Debbie Hughes that there had been changes at a federal level that states that we need to have our website ADA compliant to accommodate the blind folks. This would entail a company going through and adding verbal narratives to photos and voices to the descriptors. Chantal said that from what she saw this looks like a \$2,000 annual expense, because we would have to contract with a company to revamp it to make it ADA compliant. Chantal would like to know whether the board would entertain paying for something like this or if it is best to just let the site go. After some discussion, this subject was tabled until the next board meeting.

Supervisor Stipend- Chantal Orosco reports that Scott Northam had been here to perform the audit the previous week, and he had said that every supervisor needed to have their stipend taxed since they were an elected official to the board. The board members discussed this and after some discussion they decided it was best to negate the stipend going forward. *Casey McGuire made a motion to cancel the supervisor stipend. Keith Franzoy seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.*

Employee Monthly Per Diem/Fuel Stipend- Chantal Orosco reports that Scott Northam had advised that because it is a flat rate of reimbursement, that the \$150/month that she and Susan receive to help with fuel needs to be taxed, unless it is put as a reimbursement. The board asked Chantal what she would like to see happen, since she would be the one tracking this, and she said she would like to see it as reimbursed rather than the straight \$150. *Samantha Gillis made a motion to track mileage for reimbursement, Keith Franzoy seconded. The motion carried unanimously.*

Auditor Update- Chantal Orosco reports that the auditor had spent an entire day here scanning files and folders and that he had already done the exit interview with Samantha Gillis. We are now just waiting for the Office of the State Auditor to approve the audit, but everything went really well and it was very efficient.

ISC Cover Crop 25/26 Update- Susan Downs reports that changes may be made to the upcoming cover crop, because producers who don't have an irrigation well but do have EBID water rights, but also are too small to qualify for HSP would like to participate in the program. Susan Downs said that these small producers were asking for a seed cost share program, if the district was amenable to this, which we can discuss further once we have more information on costs.

NFWF- Susan Downs reports that there is another meeting in the works and that there will be a date released sometime within the next few weeks, if any supervisors would like to attend.

Drip Tape- Susan Downs reports that after the last meeting she had contacted a company out of El Paso. They require a minimum of 20,000 pounds to come pick it up. We will be asking the Franzoy's, who own the lot next to ours, if we could start a collection pile there. The caveat to this process is that the tape needs to be clean, free of the metal clips, and mostly free of dirt and it needs to be in rolls or bales, and polyethylene pipe only. Harvey asked that Susan get more information about how clean it needs to be.

Grant Updates- Chantal Orosco reports that the preliminary work has started with the compost grant for Garfield Elementary school and that the teachers and principal seem to be very excited about it. Chantal reports that she is waiting for some more equipment to come in, because the district had to buy more mealworms, because 2,000 between 8 classes was not enough worms to go around, but once we receive everything the plan is to have her go into the classrooms one at a time (total of 8 classes for the school) to do one on one teaching with the kids and teachers and incorporate soil health and recycling/composting into their science component. Chantal will be working on a worm farm science binder with the kids that she is developing.

Susan reports that we have begun preliminary work with the noxious weed mapping, we have finally hired a contract employee, who is mapping the invasive weeds along the Rio Grande corridor, and it is working out really well. She expects to be able to close this grant out this fall.

Susan and Chantal are both waiting for the MOU for the DOG grants that they were awarded, and Chantal is waiting on the MOU from the state forestry for the salt cedar mitigation due to the person in charge of signing them having a medical emergency and being out of the office.

Plan of Work- The Board reviewed the Plan of Work for August and September, noting that the meeting for September needs to be moved to the 17 since Samantha, Susan, and Chantal will be in Las Cruces for Southern NM State Fair. Susan and Chantal already have plans for the booth in Sierra County, where they plan to have an exhibit about healthy soils.

Correspondence- Caballo SWCD has received letters from Dona Ana County lawyers regarding taxes, which were sent to numerous businesses around the

county. We have also received dues requests from NMACD, NACD, and Jornada, as well as an invitation from Hatch Valley Schools to attend the Ag Day November 7.

Adjournment

Seeing no other business, *Casey McGuire made a motion to adjourn at 11:05 am, Ronnie Garay seconded; motion carried unanimously.*

Presiding Official

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