North Carolina Sentinel Landscapes Committee Minutes
February 10, 2021 1:30 p.m. – 2:51p.m.
Conference Call: 984-204-1487
Conference: 43651512#
Meeting Recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fNX3dO0j5so

Committee members present:

- David Smith, Chief Deputy Commissioner of NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS)
- Dr. Myron F. Floyd, Dean NC State University College of Natural Resources (NCSUCNR)
- Kyle Briggs, Interim Executive Director of NC Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC)
- Walter Clark, Designee of NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NCDCNR)
- Ariel Aponte, Designee of NC Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (NCDMVA)
- Chester Lowder, NC Sentinel Landscapes Partnership Representative

Other Attendees: Joe Austin, John Hammond, Stacy Serono, Robert Bardon, Tina Hlabse, Will Best, Jonathan Lanier, Janine McLawhorn, Dewitt Hardee, Evan Davis, Laura Brookshire, Mitch Peele, Phil Wallace, Joe Beckman, Rodney Woolard, Scott Shoulars, Pete Benjamin, Susan Miller, Peter Connelly, Sabrina Shaffer, Nancy Richardson ,Bill Cary, Cavin Fitzsimons, Kyle Briggs, Nancy Guthrie, and Veronica Jamison.

Mr. Smith called the meeting to order at 1:32pm, and thanked everyone for attending. He let everyone know the Commissioner may call in. He asked Veronica Jamison to conduct a roll call. A quorum was present.

Mr. Smith welcomed Sabrina Shaffer to the NCDA&CS Farmland Preservation team.

Mr. Smith read the Ethics Reminder:
Under the State Government Ethics Act, the chairman is required to remind all members of their duty to avoid conflicts of interest or appearances of conflicts of interest. If you have any conflict or appearance of conflict of interest with respect to any item on the agenda, please state this for the record and refrain from inappropriate participation on that item.

Mr. Smith requested a motion to approve the minutes from the November 30, 2020 meeting. Mr. Lowder moved to approve the minutes for November 30, 2020. Dr. Floyd seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Dewitt Hardee provided the NCDA&CS report. There was $1.2 million reverted from the ADFP Trust Fund budget. Mr. Hardee reviewed the Partnership Funding Overview, 2016 RCPP Conservation Easement Projects. The conservation partnership with USDA, Air Force, and

NCDA&CS is the first with a single template easement. It totaled over 2,028 acres. The five easements are being held with Working Land Trust. Mr. Hardee review the American Farmland Trust: New Farms Under Threat report. Since 2001-2016, over 11 million acres of agricultural lands were converted nationwide. He stated that North Carolina is the second-most threatened state in the nation, with 732,000 agricultural acres lost between 2001 and 2016.

Mr. Aponte provided the NCDMVA report. He stated that Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point and Coast Guard Base in Elizabeth City had no significant impact to operation and readiness due to COVID-19. The Aviation Technical Training Center has seen some minor impacts, and some training has been delayed or rescheduled. Testing for COVID-19 is taking place at local sites. The US Army Corps of Engineers - Wilmington Sector have started conducting hurricane season preparations.
Mr. Aponte reported on the upcoming events for NCDMVA:

- May 25, 2021 - Memorial Day Tribute
- June 6, 2021 - D-Day Tribute
- June 14, 2021 - Army Birthday
- July 2, 2021 - Independence Day Virtual Event
- July 27, 2021 - Korean War Veteran Armistice Day
- August 4, 2021 - Coast Guards Birthday

Walter Clark is sitting in for Reid Wilson. Mr. Clark stated there is $13.2 million in proposed recurring funding, and $5 million in proposed nonrecurring funding. There are 16 application that were in military areas. There were over 145 total applications.

Kyle Briggs was sitting in for Gordon Meyers with NCWRC. There was over 680 acres of prescribed burns, and there were timber sales in the project area.

Dr. Floyd gave an update on the NCSUCNR. The university was working with the federal government and other partners on the mapping project “Spaces Between the Bases.” He provided updates on how to get more veterans involved with distance learning.

Mr. Lowder gave a update on the Sentinel Landscape Partnership. All the conferences in the past year have been cancelled or moved online. The Southeast Regional Partnership for Planning and Sustainability (SERPPAS) meeting will be rescheduled for September or October 2021.

Evan Davis with NCDA&CS Farmland Preservation reviewed the award of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). The Preserving Upriver Farms to Reduce Flooding in N.C. proposal is a phased project that aims to reduce the negative impacts of soil erosion and runoff in the river basins in the Piedmont and Sandhills. Mr. Davis said Sentinel Landscape Partnership was on track to submit an application to the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Challenge in March.

Michelle Lovejoy with the NC Foundation for Soil and Water Conservation reported on outreach efforts to landowners in the Eastern NC Sentinel Landscape. Some of the outreach efforts have been delayed due to COVID-19.

Mr. Smith asked if there was any more comments or additional items to bring to the committee. Mr. Lowder moved to adjourn the meeting, while Mr. Clark seconded the motion.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:51 pm.