

NORTH CAROLINA SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION BUSINESS MEETING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES July 23, 2025

Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
Division of Soil & Water Conservation
N.C. State Fairgrounds
Gov. James G Martin Building
Trinity Road – Gate 9
Raleigh, NC 27607

Commission Members	Guests	Guests Online
Barbara Bleiweis, Chair	Tinesha McNeil	Teresa Furr
Billy Kilpatrick	Lorien Deaton	Stephanie Alston
James Lamb	Bryan Evans	Angie Quinn
Brian Parker	Michael Shepherd	Lea Ann Branch
Porche Spence	Shelby Kaplan	Fredrick Cox
Gail Hughes	Chris Love	Morgan Martin
Patrick Baker	Ken Parks	Madeline Loman
Commission Counsel	Amber Rights	Lisa Fine
Brian McGinn	Tom Hill	Sabra Cahoon
Guests	Darren Layton	Brody W. Brown
David Williams	Guests Online	Charles Bass III
Kristina Fischer	Bonny Watauga (SWCD)	Jonathan Wallin
Matt Safford	Leslie P Rose	Guest 1(unverified)
Taryn Thompson	Justin Nobles	Paula Day
Matt Safford	Casey Turlington-King	Sierra Digan Pamlico SWCD
Kristina Fischer	Jason Turner	Warner1, James
Rick McSwain	Michelle Kasey	Kayla McCoy
Josh Vetter	Steven C Ward	Kori Higgs
John Beck	Hannah Benge	Brian Bonville
Rachel Smith	Kathryn Reis/Randolph (SWCD)	Taylor Fair
Dewitt Hardee	Colin Hall	
Regina Kilpatrick	Michael Thaggard	
Tim Beard	Emily F Bateman	
Cody Waters		
Brad Moore		

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Bleiweis called the meeting to order at 9:10a.m.

II. PRELIMINARY: Chair Bleiweis charged the Commission members to declare any conflict of interest, or appearance of conflict of interest, that may exist for agenda items under consideration, as mandated by the State Ethics Act.

Chair Bleiweis asked all of the Commission members and attendees to introduce themselves and reminded everyone to sign the registration sheet and silence their cell phones.

The committee and division presented Tom Hill with a plaque and thanked him for his contribution and service. Tom Hill wanted to express his thanks for the experience and how grateful he is.

III. BUSINESS:

1. **Approval of Agenda:** Chair Bleiweis asked for approval of the agenda. Commissioner Brian Parker moved to approve the agenda, and Commissioner John Langdon seconded. Motion carried.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** Chair Bleiweis asked for approval of the minutes. Commissioner Gail Hughes moved to approve the minutes, and Commissioner Porche Spence seconded. Motion carried.
 - A. May 13, 2025, Work Session Meeting Minutes
 - B. May 21, 2025, Business Session Meeting Minutes

INFORMATION ITEMS

3. **Division Report:** Chair Bleiweis recognized Director David Williams to present. Director Williams shared staffing new hires – Elise McLaughlin – Western Regional Sr. Coordinator, Amber Rights – Eastern Regional Coordinator, Krishna Tiwari – CREP Specialist, Justin Webb – Engineering Specialist II, and Steven Porson – Applications Systems. The division currently has 8 vacancies.

Director Williams spoke on Disaster Funding increases from Session Law 2025-26 and 2024-57, other available funding diverted from Matthew Disaster to provide disaster BMP funds for Helene. USDA Block Grant approved for \$221,236,071. Funds will be used to cover losses/repairs not covered under other USDA programs. Include TA/engineering funding for districts and division as well.

Upcoming training:

- EWP 7/24 (virtual) , 7/28 (in person), with the remainder of week (7/29 – 8/1) volunteers will complete EWP site assessments
- Goal is to have majority of EWP site assessments completed by September.

Mr. Williams reported on the extension request for Cost Share contracts. There were 93 contracts impacting 42 districts. Twelve RFPs received, 76 were approved and 5 were denied.

Up coming Commission Meeting.

- September 17, TBD
- November 19, Mecklenburg (Virtual Work Session 11/12)
- January 4, Cherokee (Virtual Work Session TBD)
- March 18, TBD (Virtual Work Session 3/10)
- May 20, TBD(Virtual Work Session 5/12)

4. Association Report:

A. Chair Bleiweis encouraged staff to send in pictures for A Wonderful World.

- 5. NRCS Report:** Chair Bleiweis recognized Tim Beard. Mr. Beard gave an update of changes within NCRS involving federal funding that has lead to losing key employees as well as other changes. Program updates for EQIP and CSP consist of a push to get funds Obligated. NRCS has giving itself an internal target deadline for obligatinf financial assistance is August 15. Most of the IRA funding has been resended due to the Big Beautiful Bill. N.C. initially was awarded four RCPP project, however due to recent adjustments, only one 2024 RCPP project will be moving forward. The EWPP deadline request for Helene-related assistance has been extended to July 26, 2025. A copy of the report is an official part of the minutes.

ACTION ITEMS

- 6. Consent Agenda:** Chair Bleiweis asked for a motion for the consent agenda. Chairman Bleiweis called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

A. Supervisor Appointments:

- Travis Potter, Brunswick SWCD, district requested Anthony W. Street's resignation, filling elected term 2024 - 2028.
- Jeffrey Autry, Harnett SWCD, filling the unexpired appointed term of Gerald Temple for 2024-2028
- Gary East, Stokes SWCD, filling the unexpired appointed term of Marvin Cavanaugh for 2022-2026
- Alan Cochran, Swain SWCD, filling the unexpired elected term of Patrick Breedlove for 2022-2026

B. Supervisor Contracts:

County	Contract Number	Supervisor Name	BMP	Contract Amount	Comments
Cabarrus	13-2025-003	Carl Haigler	Heavy Use Area Protection	\$2,567	
Cleveland	23-2025-003	Larry Corry	Cover Crop	\$7000	
Cleveland	23-2025-011	Larry Corry	Cover Corp	\$7000	
Henderson	45-2025-008	Wayne Carland	Non- Field Farm Rd	\$36,496	Applicant: Carland Farms INC
Pamlico	69-2025-002	Pete Anderson	Cropland Conversion to Grass (Repair)	\$6,804	Applicant: Anderson Family Farms, LLC

Pamlico	69-2025-003	Pete Anderson	Cropland Conversion to Grass (Repair)	\$3,213	Applicant: Anderson Family Farms, LLC
Person	73-2025-005	Hunter Thomas	Grassed Waterway, Field Border	\$7,855	Applicant: Thomas Family Farms Landowner: Heather House
Vance	91-2025-009	Wilton Lee Short, iii	Sod-Based Rotation – 5 YR	\$1,545	
Wake	92-2025-021	Thomas Dean	Cover Crop	\$972	Applicant: Dean Agri Products

Total \$73,452

Total Number of Supervisor Contracts: 9

- 7. JAA Technical Competency Requirements :** Chair Bleiweis recognized Mr. Josh Vetter to present. Mr. Vetter presented an overview of the Job Approval Authority (JAA) program is a quality assurance and quality control to ensure that we have certified, well-trained, competent staff planning, designing and certifying BMPs that meet our program policies and requirements. Mr. Vetter asked that the committee take action on item 7 to approve the JAA Technical Competency Requirements for the Use Exclusion Fencing BMP and the revision to the JAA requirement in the Use Exclusion BMP Policy. Chair Bleiweis asked for a motion. Commissioner Patrick Baker moved to approve. Commissioner Brian Parker seconded. Motion carried

A. Use Exclusion Fencing

- 8. Agriculture cost Share Program (ACSP):** Chair Bleiweis recognized Mr. John Beck to present. Mr. Beck gave a brief overview of the items that was discussed at the Work Session (7-15-2025) in depth. Topics discussed included General Policy Updates such as Spot checks: changed reference to the commission policy and copied additional instructions. Added grading minimum (cost list component) and geotextile references from Stream Protection Management general policy. Expanded fence setback and vegetation policies to reflect Stream Protection Management general policy. Remove requirement to show the stream on maps – not required in other measures. Recommendations to add Map requirements on the BMP policy. Waste management and stream protection HUAP policies were discussed with a goal to reduce confusion.

A. Consideration of ACSP Policy Revisions

1. Waste Management Measures General Policy - Chair Bleiweis asked for a motion to approve Waste and Nutrient Management Measures policy. Commissioner Gail Hughes moved to approve. Commissioner Billy Kilpatrick seconded. Motion carried.

2. Heavy Use Area Protection - Chair Bleiweis asked for a motion to approve revisions to the Heavy Use Area Protection BMP. Commissioner Billy Kilpatrick moved to approve. Commissioner James Lamb seconded. Motion carried.

- B. Detailed Implementation Plan** - Chair Bleiweis asked for a motion to approve the Detailed Implementation Plan. Commissioner Gail Hughes moved to approve. Commissioner Porche Spence seconded. Motion carried.

C. Average Cost List - Chair Bleiweis asked for a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2026 Agriculture Cost Share Program Cost List. Commissioner James Lamb moved to approve. Commissioner Billy Kilpatrick seconded. Motion carried.

D. District Financial Assistance Allocation - Chair Bleiweis asked for a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2026 Agriculture Cost Share Program District Financial Assistance Allocations. Commissioner Brian Parker moved to approve. Commissioner Patrick Baker seconded. Motion carried.

1. **ACSP and Impaired/Impacted Allocation**
2. **Upper French Broad River Allocation**

9. Technical Assistance Allocation: Chair Bleiweis recognized Ms. Julie Henshaw to present. Ms. Henshaw stated that we are requesting approval that the technical assistance allocation remain at the same amount of what was awarded last fiscal year. Chair Bleiweis asked for a motion. Commissioner Billy Kilpatrick moved to approve as presented. Commissioner Gail Hughes seconded. Motion carried

10. Agriculture Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP): Chair Bleiweis recognized Ms. Lorien Deaton to present. All items were discussed in detail at the Work Session (7-15-2025)

A. Consideration of AgWRAP Policy Revisions

1. Water Supply Well - Lorien stated that for the Water Supply Well there is a revision to policy number 9 to clarify that if there are additional water sources under the cooperator's control (i.e. pond stream), the contract must explain why these sources are inadequate to meet the operation's needs. If the additional water sources are adequate, wells are not cost shareable through AgWRAP. Public water supply is not considered under the control of the producer.

2. Baseflow Interceptor – Adding the BMP that a method for distributing the water from the baseflow interceptor must be available.

Chair Bleiweis asked for a motion for both Water Supply Well and Baseflow Interceptor BMPs. Commissioner Patrick Baker moved to approve as presented. Commissioner Porche Spence seconded. Motion carried.

B. Detailed Implementation Plan – The Competitive regional application process for selected AgWRAP conservation practices will receive 20% of available BMP funding. 80% of available BMP funding will go to the district allocations. Under the program guidelines an addition to support the change in the Water Supply Well contracts, if there are additional water sources under the cooperator's control, the contract must explain why these sources are inadequate to meet the operation's needs to qualify for a second well.

Chair Bleiweis asked for a motion for FY26 AgWRAP Detailed Implementation Plan. Commissioner Brian Parker moved to approve as presented. Commissioner John Langdon seconded. Motion carried.

- C. Average Cost List** – Ms. Deaton stated that she pulled data from previous contracts that have been completed over the last couple of years and receipts that have been submitted, as well as data from crossover between both programs to attain the increases. These changes are shown in Attachment 10 C and will be included in the official record.

Chair Bleiweis asked for a motion regarding the changes to AgWRAP Average Cost List . Commissioner Gail Hughes moved to approve as presented. Commissioner Patrick Baker seconded. Motion carried.

- D. District Financial Assistance Allocation** - Allocate to 90 counties that requested with a minimum allocation chosen being \$9,500 (unless district requested less than the minimum).

Chair Bleiweis asked for a motion for AgWRAP FY26 District Allocation. Commissioner John Langdon moved to approve as presented. Commissioner Billy Kilpatrick seconded. Motion carried.

- 11. Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP)** : Chair Bleiweis recognized Ms. Julie Henshaw to present. Ms. Henshaw stated that we are recommending keeping the maximum award per district at \$100, 00 in per project, a maximum of \$50, 000. Due to staff vacancy we are asking that we open the application period in January. In regards to the Average Cost List Ms Henshaw stated that CCAP is mostly paid by receipts so she has no recommendations, therefore asking for the same amount as last year.

- A. Detailed Implementation Plan** - Chair Bleiweis asked for a motion for Detailed Implementation Plan. Commissioner Patrick Baker moved to approve as presented. Commissioner Porche Spence seconded. Motion carried.

- B. Average Cost List** - Chair Bleiweis asked for a motion for Average Cost List. Commissioner Billy Kilpatrick moved to approve as presented. Commissioner Brian Parker seconded. Motion carried.

- 12. Spot Check Report** – Chair Bleiweis recognized Ms. Shelby Kaplan to present. Ms. Kaplan shared Spot Check Policy and a summary of 2025 spotchecks received from 100 districts. ACSP Spot Check Results, AgWRAP Spot Check Results, CCAP Spot Check Results, All Program Spot Check Results, Common BMPs Found Needing Maintenance, Common BMPs Found Out of Compliance, Helen Impacted Contracts, Fy2024 Spot Check Follow-up, and Process Improvements for Fy26.

Process Improvements for FY26

- Several districts submitted Spot Check Reports after the deadline8% of districts submitted their reports late
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- Some districts did not spot check the 5% of active contracts per program9% of districts did not meet the 5% minimum of active contracts per program

- Two districts did not have technical representatives from their districts present on the spot checks, which the Division has not seen previously
 - One district did not have a supervisor present on one of their spot checks
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- Division staff have started the process to improve the spot check process. Division will develop new training tools for district supervisors and staff
 - Working on new tools for districts to use for contract selection

13. Inquiry Committee Findings: Chair Bleiweis recognized Ms. Kristina Fischer to present. Ms. Fischer stated that supervisor Edward Jones was sent to the Commission's Inquiry Committee due to failure to attend three consecutive regularly scheduled meeting. After deliberation, the Inquiry Committee voted that evidence of neglect of duty has occurred for Supervisor Jones, the and he is referred to a hearing by the Commission.

14. Special Request: Chair Bleiweis asked if there were any special request. There were none.

15. Inquiry Committee Determination and Referrals : Chair Bleiweis recognized Mr. John Beck and Ms. Kristina Fischer to present respectively:

- A. Supervisor Appointments:** Chair Bleiweis recognized Ms. Kristina Fischer to present the additional nominations for supervisor appointment that wer not included on the consent agenda due to being submitted after the work session. Chair Bleiweis asked for a motion for the Supervisor Appointments. Commissioner James Lamb moved to approve. Commissioner Billy Kilpatrick seconded. Motion carried. A copy of the report is included as an official part of the minutes. Ms. Fischer stated the following:

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS: Chair Bleiweis asked for any public comments. Bryan Evans shared that the Association is very honored to be inducting David Williams to the Southeast NACD Hall of Fame at the Southeast NACD meeting in Louisville, KY.

Darren Layton, a technician from Alamance county, spoke on his concern of a policy change for AgWRAP in regards to the water storage facility. Chair Bleiweis thank him for his comments and encouraged him and the staff to get together to increase engagement so the policy changes doesn't come as a surprise and to have more involved.

Brad Moore, of Alamance, spoke on how hard it is to get supervisors to do Spot Checks. He offered a suggestion of flexibility of dates.

Lorien Deaton clarified the changing of the process regard additional well.

Julie Henshaw stated that these changes were made to address clarification of what is being done.

Dewitt Hardee exbounded of the history of the water storage uses.

Commission recognized John Langdon for his service on the Commission from 2015 to 2025.

Commission recognized counsel Mr. Reynolds for his service on to the Commission from 2015 to 2025

Mr Reynolds expresses his appreciation to the Commission and the importance of the partnership with all the programs.

Former Chair John Langdon expressed his appreciation of his wife, former counsel, and the committee.

V. 11:30 a.m. Hearing – Kristina presented the following:

COMMISSION HEARING RE: INQUIRY COMMITTEE DETERMINATION AND REFERRALS

Grounds for removal of District Supervisors are set forth in G.S. 139-7; any supervisor may be removed by the Commission upon notice and hearing for neglect of duty. Under 02 NCAC 59A .0301 (a), evidence of neglect of duty shall include, but is not limited to, the failure to attend three consecutive regularly scheduled district meetings, except when prevented by illness. Evidence of neglect of duty shall also include the failure of sitting Supervisors to meet training requirements set forth in 02 NCAC 59A Section .0200.

The Inquiry Committee outlined in 02 NCAC 59A .0302 met in May 2025 and has sent two supervisors to the Commission for a hearing for neglect of duty.

Non-attendance at local board meetings, Cody Waters - Edgecombe SWCD:

02 NCAC 59A .0301(c) requires District boards to notify the Commission in writing of any member that has failed to attend three consecutive regularly scheduled meetings, except when prevented by illness of the Supervisor. Notification from the District shall include explanation for non-attendance and the actions that the District board has taken to address the Supervisor's attendance.

District Name Explanation Details

Edgecombe SWCD Cody Waters Schedule conflict 2 of 9 local meetings attended Dec 2023 - Nov 2024; 4 consecutive meetings missed, beginning August 2024.

The Inquiry Committee did not receive correspondence from Supervisor Waters. The Committee met in May 2025 and determined that there was evidence of neglect of duty. Correspondence related to this hearing was delivered to Supervisor Waters and sent to his SWCD Board Chair.

Supplemental attendance information for 2025 submitted by the Edgecombe SWCD is listed below.

Meetings held Attendance

March 2025 Waters attended

April 2025 Waters attended

May 2025 Waters attended

June 2025 Waters attended

Cody Waters was in attendance and spoke of the various committees and leadership programs that he has been apart of and the impact that they have had in his life. He did not realize that he had missed the meeting that he had. He would like to continue in his role of supervisor.

The committee expressed concerns if he thought he could fulfill his duties if giving the opportunity to remain. While following his

Chair Bleiweis as if there was a motion regarding Cody Waters. Commissioner Billy Kilpatrick moved to allow Cody Waters to continue in his position as supervisor of Edgecombe. Patrick Baker seconded. Motion carried

Lack of Training, Trent Talbert - Pender SWCD:

02 NCAC 59A .0301(d)(2) requires the Division to submit a summary of Supervisor Training Credits by

February 1 of odd years.

Under NC General Statute 139-7.2 and 02 NCAC 59A .0203, all supervisors are required to obtain a minimum of six Supervisor Training Creds per term of service.

District	Name	Elected/ Appointed	2020-2024 STCs	Start Month	Start Year
Pender SWCD	Trent Talbert	Appointed	0.00	September	2021

The Division has received coov of correspondence where Trent Talbert resigned. effective Julv 8. 2025.

VI. ADJOURNMENT: Chair Bleiweis asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Gail Hughes approved. Patrick Baker seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 12:15p.m.

David B. Williams, Director
Division of Soil & Water Conservation, Raleigh, N.C.

Tinesha McNeil, Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved by the North Carolina Soil & Water Conservation Commission on September 17, 2025.