

HIGHLANDS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT MINUTES  
October 4, 2005

The regular meeting of the Supervisors of the Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District was called to order by Chairman Don Bates at 3:00 p.m., Tuesday, October 4, 2005 in Conference Room 3 at the Highlands County Agri-Civic Center, Sebring, Florida.

**Supervisors present:** Chairman Don Bates, Charlie Filler, Joan Hartt, and Wayne Zahn

**Supervisors absent:** Ida Jackson

**Staff present:** Larry Sharpe, District Conservationist  
Jackie Bailey, Office Manager  
Jennifer Donze, Natural Resources Specialist  
Clell Ford, Lakes Manager Specialist  
Eric Harper, Soil Conservation Technician

**Guests:** Bo Griffin and Jack Ritchie

DEPOSIT:  
No deposits

CHECKS WRITTEN:  
No checks written

HSWCD balances as of September 26, 2005:

Highlands Independent Bank	Checking	\$6,916.93
Highlands Independent Bank	CD	\$1,500.00
Highlands Independent Bank	CD	\$1,500.00
Highlands Independent Bank	CD	\$2,000.00
<u>Citrus Ridge VRT Grant account</u>		
Balance as of September 26, 2005		\$50,010.00
<u>Lake Okeechobee Restoration Grant</u>		
Balance as of September 26, 2005		\$37,577.69

Minutes of September 6, 2005 were approved as written.

Valerie Lewis, the same CPA that does Okeechobee SWCD's audits, will perform our audit. Tallahassee has been informed that the audit will be late. There are no penalties for a late audit. Bob Clark at FDACS said we would get help with the cost of the audit. He said he would be able to tell us next week how much FDACS will give us. Audits are triggered by expenditures. Bo suggested that we prepare a budget of our needs for next year. It was suggested that we invite Valerie Lewis to our meeting after the audit is finished.

The contract for Water Savings Incentive Program has been signed and returned to SFWMD. This is the toilet rebate and showerhead exchange program. The monies must be expended in F/Y 2006 and only in the part of Highlands County that lays in the SFWMD's Boundary.

Jackie has spoken with Bob Stabough from the State Office about producing a professional presentation to be shown to the County Commissioners thanking them for their support and funding throughout the years, the presentation will also show the BCC what we accomplish with the funds we receive. Bob will be in our office on October 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>.

We are preparing for this year's Envirothon. The competition will be held on December 9 or 10. Avon Park may have three teams this year, we have not heard from Lake Placid. Donations have been received to sponsor the teams. Jennifer had been coaching the teams.

The Soil Tunnel is completed. The interactive tool has been taken to many area elementary schools. The tunnel is getting rave reviews.

The possibility of funding a Mobile Irrigation Labs (MIL) for Highlands County was discussed. It was suggested that David Sleeper be invited to our next meeting to shed some light on how the MIL in Hardee County is funded.

Citrus Ridge VRT Grant. We have two applications. One is for Ben Hill Griffin to purchase two new machines. The variable rate technology on each machine will be \$18,935.00; the cap payment of \$10,200 will apply to the purchase. Charlie Filler made a motion that we accept Ben Hill Griffin's application for the purchase of two new spreaders at the VRT cost of \$20,400. Seconded by Joan Hartt. Motion passed unanimously. The second application was for Perry Mason to purchase one new machine. The variable rate technology on the machine will be \$15,660; our 60% payment will be \$9,396.00. Wayne Zahn made a motion to accept the application. Seconded by Charlie Filler. Motion passed unanimously.

CIAP Grant. One request for payment was received from Lykes Brothers. Charlie Filler made a motion to pay \$10,759.32 the 75% cost-share for the eradication of Lygodium on 136.4 acres. Seconded by Joan Hartt. Motion passed. Wayne Zahn abstained from voting. Larry stated that he had attended the Lygodium task force meeting in Babson Park and has leads on producers in Highlands County that could use this grant.

Lake Okeechobee Water Storage and Treatment Grant – Don Bates attended the meeting on September 13 with Sarah Lynch from World Wildlife Fund (WWF). The meeting focused on reporting, check writing and verification of work preformed through this grant.

Lake Okeechobee Restoration Act – Bo stated a Best Management Practices workshop for agricultural producers and growers within Highlands and Glades Counties has been scheduled for December 6<sup>th</sup> from 10am until 1pm at the Ag Center Auditorium.

District Conservationist Report – Two cooperators have requested to have their EQIP contracts cancelled. NRCS has an option of assessing liquidated damages against cooperators who cancel

their contracts. NRCS now has total responsibility of the EQIP program. A Local Working Group meeting needs to be scheduled soon to set priorities for the ranking procedures for the 2006 EQIP applications. Three people were served through conservation planning, eleven people were served through conservation application, and twenty-two people were served through inventory and evaluations.

Natural Resources Specialist Report – Jennifer continues to work on a volume gun irrigation design. Nancy Deyrup at Archbold Biological Center will meet with her and our Envirothon teams on Saturday.

The Lake Manager Report – Clell reported that the FDEP stated that they are very early in the process of reviewing TMDLs. LIMC meeting held with much discussion of increasing nutrient levels from various sources and aquatic vegetation control. Lake Istokpoga Intensive WQ Investigation Task 2 samples have been collected. Graphs of the results are included in this report. The Istokpoga residential canal maintenance project had its first meeting. The EWP projects for Erin Park canal and Lake Bonnet Canal are nearing completion. Little Lake Jackson Alum Injection System's dewatering plan has been approved by SWFWMD. Pond construction will begin soon. Persimmon aeration system motors are being serviced. Collected "first-flush" stormwater samples from Lake Blue.

Jack Ritchie has concerns about a brochure received from Fish and Wildlife. The brochure states that fish from many area lakes should not be eaten. Jennifer and Clell stated that if no data was available the statement, "do not eat" was entered into the brochure. Clell will report back on his findings after contact Fish and Wildlife.

The next board meeting was set for November 1, 2005 in Conference Room #3 at 3p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:50p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Recording Secretary

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Chairman