

September 22, 2015 UCSWD Meeting

Present:

Pete Cameron – Chair
Buddy Finley – Vice Chair
Duke Emerson – Treasurer
Laurel Schaafsma – Secretary
Monica Jones – NRCS Representative
Scott Tucker – Santa Fe River Partnership
Jay Tucker – Forestry

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

Mr. Scott Tucker, conveyed to the Board that its importance is “education”. He explained that most of those receiving the education about soil and water will be the younger generation. Educating the younger generation will help prevent their generation's wasteful water use.

Pete Cameron brought up septic tanks and the lack of maintenance by homeowners (1% regularly empty their tanks). No one, he said, is going to pay for the tank to be emptied if they are not sure it is near to being full, and owners have no means of determining if it is full except when it malfunctions. This lack of maintenance leads to contamination of the environment and there does not seem to be any solution to this problem. Scott Tucker mentioned that prices, for pumping private septic tanks will likely double next year due to regulations for increased treatment of waste. Currently, the cost to have a septic pumped is around \$200. Next year that would change to around \$400. Laurel Schaafsma said that these increased costs to pump private septic tanks will lead to less pumping than there is now.

Mr. Jay Tucker educated the Board members about Union County's terrain prior to farming and development. He pointed out that much of Union's land was pine and grasses, without a lot of variety. He encouraged BMPs for tree growers to emulate the original vegetation of the land. Some of the BMPs Jay Tucker mentioned were thinning trees and burn or spray brush every 3 years. If left to nature, a burn would occur every 2 to 7 years.

Monica Jones had questions for LOCAL WORKGROUPS. These work groups help NRCS to send county answers to a higher level of government in order to accommodate counties with resource concerns and problems. Answers from the county can help gain funding for reoccurring concerns in multiply counties. These 4 questions were for Union County residents for 2016. The answer(s) to each question are indicated with a (*).

1. What are the biggest resource concerns which need to be addressed in the county?

* (1) water quality (2) animal health/migration and bird flu (3) planting and burning/reforestation (4) lack of rain/vegetation (5) small tributaries overgrown/causing backups and overflows

2. Are there priority areas within the county where funding should be targeted to address these resource concerns?

* (1) if there are any forest or special concern in Union County (2) watershed reservoir/if located in Union County

3. How important is addressing resource concerns on forest land in this county?

*(1) very important/reforestation (2) bringing back the forest

4. What suggestions do you have to help shape future years of EQIP?

*(1) EQIP program turn-around (possibly more batching periods in 1 year) (2) ranking- if you have active contracts you should have reduced points or if you have received funding within 2 years, you should get reduced points. (3) If clear cut, it should be due to time of trees or pine beetles, etc. If cutting too early there should be penalty.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25pm.