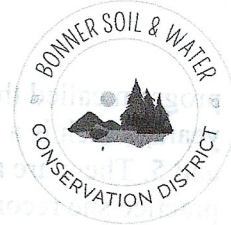


# Bonner Soil and Water Conservation District

## Monthly Board Meeting



**Date:** Tuesday, January 6, 2026  
**Time:** 1:00 pm Meeting  
**Place:** CREC Conference Room, 130 McGhee Rd., Suite 220, Sandpoint ID 83864  
\* Zoom info at bottom of agenda

### Attendance

**Board members:** Dale Van Stone, BSWCD; Jeff Connolly, BSWCD; Rick Watt, BSWCD; Harry Menser, BSWCD; Chris Elliott, BSWCD.

**Others:** Sarah Garcia, BSWCD; Julie Lakatos, BSWCD; Cindy Lewis, NRCS; Megan Parnell, Farm Bureau.

**Via Zoom:** Jim Stevens, BSWCD; Kaitlyn Parks, ISWCC; Bill Lillibridge, ISWCC; Austin Terrell, GOSC.

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 pm by Chairman Dale Van Stone.

### A) Call to Order

1. **Action Item:** Amendment to agenda. Motion to approve changes on agenda-election of officers names deleted and board mileage action items were separated out by item instead of as one action item-by Rick, seconded by Jeff. Motion carried.
2. **Action Item:** December 2025 Meeting Minutes  
Motion to approve December 2025 Board Meeting Minutes by Jeff, seconded by Harry.  
Motion carried.
3. **Action Item:** November 2025 Financial Report  
Motion to approve November 2025 Financial Reports by Harry, seconded by Rick.  
Motion carried. Sarah sent out a letter to Rosedale about our match funding from Bonner County, invoice sent. Funds have been moved to LGIP approx. \$30K. Rates of LGIP have gone down since last year. DEQ just sent an award for '24 projects. Sarah sent in documentation to ISDA for boat stations and are awaiting their response. No word on this year's agreement yet.
4. **Action Item:** Election of Officers. Motion to retain officers as in the positions as they are: Dale Van Stone-Chair, Jeff Connolly-Vice Chair, and Rick Watt-Treasurer by Harry, seconded by Chris. Motion carried.

### B) Agency/Grant & Guest Reports

1. **Farm Bureau - Megan Parnell:** The Farm Bureau Convention was held in Coeur d'Alene this year with 4-500 people attending. There is the Legislative Social in Boise Jan 10-11th. Potato truck coming from east Idaho in mid to late March for those in need distributing 50lb. boxes of potatoes.
2. **GOSC - Austin Terrell:** March 1st is the deadline to apply for grizzly or wolf prevention measures. In 2025, there were no livestock conflicts in north Idaho, but there was one possible bear conflict with a momma bear and cubs in which shots were fired but no blood found. Received \$75K from state, and there was a \$25K carryover from last year. \$150K paid out across the state this last year. May be due to the higher price of beef.
3. **NRCS - Cindy Lewis:** Experienced 43 days furloughed in Oct/Nov '25. There are 119 eligible applications for Bonner County of which 78 contracts per planner. The optimum is 30, though. Application cutoff is Jan. 15th. Secretary of Agriculture Rollins has created a new

program called the Regenerative Ag Program that is basically like EQIP but operates over 5 years, which is a mandatory amount of time (cannot go less). Soil testing is required in years 1 and 5. There are a couple qualified soil testers in the Panhandle. Forest thinning is not a practice she recommends due to soil testing not possibly getting done and the difficulty of people having to pay back funds. Applications are ranked at one time for all programs. Local Work Group changes - each state will not have its own fund pool to help with ranking applications. Waiting to see what that looks like. For high tunnels, there are 17 applications and will likely fund 5 in Bonner County.

4. **PRWC - Jessica Erickson:** Distributed PRWC newsletter to board members to review.
5. **SWCC – Kaitlyn Parks & Bill Lillibridge:** Commissioners discussing 2nd disbursement installment at next board meeting regarding 5% hold back. Email will be sent after that meeting. Five-year annual plans are due March 31st. Bill will get back to Sarah regarding the question on why ISWCC wanted proof of surety bond for districts. The ISWCC/IDWR merger is waiting on legislative action.

### C) **District Business**

1. **POB Invasive Mussel Prevention & Readiness Summit:** Convergence of states for a summit to discuss water bodies in the Columbia basin, specifically the Pend Oreille Basin-Montana, BC, Idaho, Washington. Currently, there is no clear identification of the water body response like what occurred in the Snake River. The response there would not work for these surrounding water bodies here. Funding for the summit is by Seattle Lights and will be held at the PR Event Center. Participants would tour Albeni Falls Inspection Station. Expecting 150-200 people. Possible dates would be April 13th or 20th. The benefit would be to have conservation opened to northern Idaho. County Commissioners should be invited as informational.
2. **Legislative Social:** Tabletop displays (District, AIS, and programs) will be presented at Social (Board viewed the displays). Invitation to Bonner County's legislators will be sent about BSWCD's attendance. Table cloth ordered with BSWCD logo. IASCD is asking all districts throughout state to make a \$100 donation for the work behind getting the Social coordinated.  
*Action Item:* Motion to approve \$100 donation to IASCD for Legislative Social by Chris, seconded by Harry. Motion carried.
3. **Forestry Contest Steering Committee:** Michelle Sarratt is leading the Committee as IC. Meetings are held here at CREC.
4. **Mileage rate:** 2026 rate increase from 70 cents to 72.5.
  - a. *Action Item:* Motion to accept new rate increase by Chris, seconded by Harry. Motion carried.
  - b. *Action Item:* Associate Supervisors have to have a motion by the board due to professional background and support provided by Associate. Motion to approve BSWCD Associate Member to the mileage program by Rick, seconded by Jeff. Motion carried.
5. **Spokane Conservation District Conference:** *Action Item:* Motion to approve Sarah and Julie attendance at Spokane CD Conference at \$300 registration fee to learn about tree health in our general area by Jeff, seconded by Rick. Motion carried.
6. **Statewide Performance Report:** The flyer provided 2024 information of all districts throughout the state. Sarah reviewed the various graphics noting BSWCD's position relatively. Division 1 was 2nd in money administered amongst Divisions. This flyer was the first time to condense all of the District's information. It was created by

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Jessica Harold in Ada County District.

### D) District Update

#### 1. BSWCD Report – Sarah Garcia:

Storage unit renewal - Dalke storage units (2) rate increased by \$5/mo each unit.

Open Meeting Law - there are updates to the law. Executive Sessions are now not a note-free session. There are specific requirements of what to note. The new manual will be reviewed with the board.

Pack River Streambank grant is completed and BSWCD has received funding from DEQ. Board reviewed video and pictures of rain event in December at the project site as well as an older project (Spring Creek). Culverts at Spring Creek were blown out.


Benewah has a new District Manager - Nick Elwell.

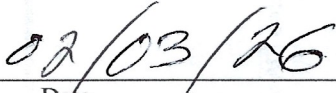
Tree Sales - Sold 20K seedlings so far to 55 people/orgs. Ad occurred in Co-Op in Nov and will have ad in Co-Op in March. In addition, will be doing email campaigns to email lists.

Streamline - Julie discussed new policy regarding ADA requirements of websites to include PDF's. Board viewed DocAccess and how it converts an PDF (such as an agenda or meeting minutes) to an HTML document for screen readers, which are used by those with visual disabilities, as an example. The deadline for these changes was April 2027, which the District had already adopted with the purchase of DocAccess at a grandfathered price rate.

Motion to adjourn at 2:47 pm by Rick, seconded by Jeff.

Minutes submitted by Julie Lakatos, District Administrator.

  
District Supervisor Signature

  
Date