

# MARION SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING

All Committee Meetings are Open to the Public  
Due to COVID-19, these meetings will be held by video conference. See access below.

Date: 2/16/2022  
Time: 9:00 am  
Location: Online

	Item	Purpose	Lead
9:04	Call to order		Kyle Ross
	Updates		All Members
	LAP Extensions	Discussion, Recommendation	Amy
	Scotts Mills Dam Removal	Decision, LOS	Scott
	Plants for Grants Program	Discussion	Sarah
	LAP Rename	Discussion, Decision	Sarah
10:44	Adjourn Meeting		Kyle Ross

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### **Program Committee Members:**

Dave Budeau, Leland Hardy, Kyle Ross

Staff: Sarah Hamilton, Jenny Meisel, Mark Akimoff, Becky Pineda, Amy Boyd, Susan Ortiz, Delani Herb

Guest: Scott Walker, Wallace Jennings

### **Updates:**

- Becky Pineda will be taking over as staff coordinator for the committee starting in March
- Jenny Meisel is leaving the district. She will be sorely missed!
- The plant sale will close on Monday. At this time we have just 200 plants remaining and have sold over \$19,000, more than ever before! Jenny will not be here for the plant sale next year, but is excited that Heath will be taking over.
- The Bare Ground Cover Program development is on hold. The early-start waiver may make it unnecessary. Mark will keep it in mind and come back to the committee in the future if he decides it is needed.
- Wallace Jennings was on hand to update the group about NRCS.
  - The Salem office has 2 positions open, so they may have capacity issues for a little while
  - The Conservation Incentive Contracts (CIC) program is expanding. Last year was the pilot year, this year it is being extended and has no boundaries, but there is less money for it.
  - The application deadline for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) has not been announced, but will be soon. CSP can be used to enhance EQIP projects and provide an annual payment.
  - To find more information about NRCS programs, check out the website:  
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/or/programs/>

LAP Extensions: Amy had questions to discuss with the group

- The group discussed the LAP extensions. They want to minimize the number of extension requests to save staff and board time.
- The following questions were posed:
  - What is the maximum extension?
  - When can they be requested? If the applicant knows they can't meet the deadline, do they have to wait until just before their grant expires to ask for an extension?
  - Should we make our LAPs in 1 or 2 year grant periods only?
- Decisions:
  - End date must be at least 1 year from start date on applying for a grant
  - End date can be no later than 2 years from start date at application
  - Extensions can be for no more than 1 year from the original end date of the grant
  - Staff will encourage participants to include all project changes into a single request, when possible
  - Staff will only offer an extension if requested by participant
- ACTION: Staff will confer about restoration projects for which a 2-year limit is difficult to achieve
  - Most restoration projects take a minimum of 2 years, with 1-2 years of weed control followed by planting. Project success is significantly impaired by lack of site prep, especially weed control. In the past, projects would not be approved if they did not include both weed control and replanting. The Tech committee will discuss options for addressing this.

Scotts Mills Dam Removal

- The Pudding River Watershed Council is requesting a Letter of Support for the Scotts Mills Dam Removal Project. The project is currently being held up by county commissioners.
  - Scott Walker encouraged the committee to support the project, referencing ecological improvement of the waterway.
  - He acknowledged some political discourse around the project, but suggested the district stay away from the politics and focus on the technical aspects of the project.
  - ACTION: The committee approved sending the letter of support to the board with minor changes to be made by staff prior to the board meeting.

Plants for Grants Program

- The program will allow the district to work directly with wholesale nurseries to provide native plants at wholesale price to district grant recipients for their grant-funded projects.
  - After discussion about whether to send this to the board for approval or just for discussion, the group landed on providing a presentation to the board about the program. They can bring any questions or concerns back to the committee for further discussion, unless the board is ready to act.
- ACTION: Sarah and Amy will put together a short presentation about the program.

Landowner Assistance Program Re-Name

- The group considered several new names for the grants to make it more inclusive and descriptive. 3 were selected to send to the board as a poll:
  - Conservation Assistance Grants
  - Community Conservation Funding
  - Incentives for Conservation and Restoration Efforts – iCaRE

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