



**Southwest Project Grass Chapter
6024 Glades Pike
Suite 103
Somerset, PA 15501**

Officers:
Chairman: Jason McGinnis
Vice Chair: Dam Komarinski
Secretary/Treasurer: Jeff Leindecker

**Minutes from 2-19-2015
Southwest Project Grass Meeting Somerset County PA 10:00am**

Meeting called to order at 10:09 am by Jason McGinnis

In attendance:

John Hewitt, J.B. Harrold, Jason McGinnis, Laurel Rush, Karlie Wright, Hannah Hoblitzell, Adam Cotchen, Tom Ulrich, Susan Moon, Pierce Willson, Dan Komarinski, Don Williams, Jeff Leindecker, Becky Berger, Lou Kopczyk, Ryan Harr and Cody Waltemire.

Conservation Districts represented: Allegheny, Beaver, Bedford, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Somerset and Washington.

Public Comment: None

Reports –

- Reports were given by the Counties present.
- GLCI – J.B. announced the There has been a slight name change. The new Name is Grazing Lands Coalition (GLC).
- State Conservation Commission – Laurel Rush announced that she has taken the position left by Bill Clouser’s retirement. Handout material was offered to the various counties present.

Treasurer’s Report: Sue passed out a packet of budget info and gave the treasury report. All dues for 2015 are paid at this time. Sue explained the 2014 budget as presented and the 2015 SWPG budget. **The treasurer’s report will be filed for audit.**

Previous Meeting Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting were presented for review. There were no corrections or additions to the minutes.

- ❖ **Motion by Dan K. second by Don to approve the minutes of the previous meeting.**
- ❖ **Motion approved.**

Jason turned the meeting over to Laurel Rush for the Election of Executive Committee Members and the Election of Officers.

Election of Executive Committee: Laurel opened the floor for nominations and Tom presented the Nominating Committee choices for Executive Committee. The terms are up for Larry Lohr, John Hewitt and Lou Kopczyk. The Nominating Committee recommended Don Williams, Rich Huether and Jeff Leindecker.

- ❖ **Motion by Sue seconded by Ryan to close the nomination and elect these board members. Motion approved.**

Election of Officers: Laurel opened the floor for election of officers.

❖ **Motion by John seconded by Jason to elect Jeff Leindecker as Secretary/Treasurer.**
Motion approved.

❖ **Motion by Sue seconded by Adam to elect Jason as Chairman.**
Motion Approved

❖ **Motion by Jason seconded by Jeff to elect Dan Komarinski as Vice Chairman.**
Motion Approved

Laurel turned the meeting back over to Jason.

Discussion was held on the need for a person to handle the website. Becky Berger from Beaver County volunteered to take on this duty for the group.

Sue asked all Counties to let her know ASAP if they would like to change their subscription for 2015. John will send a notice out to all the Districts about this.

Appalachian Grazing Conference: Laurel and J.B. gave a report on the Conference and Laurel passed around the brochure. J.B. discussed the SWPG display setup for this and asked that anyone who will be attending to help out at the display if possible.

Adam will be getting a notice out to the District about sending their farmer nominee for the drawing for this year's SWPG paid registration to the Conference.

Discussion was held on the conference and drawing.

2015 SWPG Bus Tour: Jason asked for a volunteer to host the 2015 SWPG Bus Tour. No volunteers stepped forward.

2016 SWPG Grazing Conference: Jason asked for a County to volunteer to host the 2016 SWPG Grazing Conference. Pierce with Fayette County volunteered. Discussion was held on what SWPG was looking for as far as Conference content, number of days etc...

A 2016 SWPG Grazing Conference Steering Committee was formed. Volunteers were Pierce, Hannah, Jeff, Dan K. Laurel and J.B. as advisor. If anyone else who would like to be on the committee please contact Pierce.

J.B. pointed out that if no one was going to host the 2015 Bus Tour the money set aside for this in the 2015 budget could be used if needed to help with the 2016 Grazing Conference.

Discussion was held. An email will be sent out to the Districts to see if anyone would be interested in hosting the Bus Tour.

Cattle Chute Program: Jason reported for the committee. He has been sending email to the members of the committee but has only gotten one response so far. Jason has been reaching out to the Counties that were not present for the vote on this in November to get their thoughts on the program but has not gotten any response. Jason commented that the program has not come together as he had envisioned it would.

Discussion was held on the reasoning that counties were not interested in the program and on the vote to approve this being passed by only 4 counties. John stated that there was a quorum of the Counties present when the vote was taken and the majority vote was in favor of the motion.

Extensive discussion was held on what KBMN was looking to get out of this partnership and what SWPG was looking to get from the partnership. This brought on discussion about whether or not we should proceed with this project.

❖ **Dan Komarinski made a motion to rescind the vote held at the November SWPG meeting to move forward with the Cattle Chute Program. Don Williams seconded the motion.**

The motion to rescind was approved.

John asked if there is any interest in doing anything with KBMN as far as the Cattle Chute is concerned. It was decided that the Committee would discuss this with KBMN and come up with some written guidance of type of involvement and SWPGs responsibilities etc... for the group for the next meeting. (NOTE: This paragraph was moved from below Grassland Contest Update).

Grassland Contest Update: Jeff gave an update. They will be selling T-shirts and sponsors who donate at least at certain levels can get their logo placed in certain areas of the shirt depending on the donation amount.

Discussion was held on how the contest works and how the schools etc... are notified. District Managers were sent an email asking for donations as well.

The committee was asked to provide a financial report for the contest at the next SWPG meeting. Dan K. stated that he has a donor interested in this and needs information on who to contact for this.

Education & Outreach: J. B. presented the current brochure for SWPG. This brochure is extremely out of date. Discussion was held on updating the SWPG brochure to be more current and less time sensitive. Becky Berger volunteered to look at updating the Brochure. Jeff volunteered to help her.

Discussion was also held on updating the display in the near future.

NRCS Advisor Report: J.B. reported:

- J.B. passed around handouts for the Northwest Grazing Conference.
- NRCS has a new grazing tool that was discussed.
- J.B. Discussed some trainings he will be giving. If anyone is interested in attending some of these they should contact him
- NRI points he will be working with this year are in the southwest corner of the region.
- J.B. received a request for information on pasturing swine. Discussion was held on this topic.
- In 2016 all 528 plans will have to have the Pasture Condition Score run.
- J.B. Discussed what NRCS will be paid for as far as fencing under the EQIP Program.

The following is information that J.B. handed out on this:

- **Fencing**
- Exterior fence - can only pay for cropland conversion... converting cropland to pasture, not paying for fence for idle or permanent hayland.
- Exterior Fence protecting a resource concern is eligible (water body, woods, steep area).
- Amount of Pasture – Payment based on current animal units and up to a 25% herd expansion.

- Amount of Pasture – Maximum 2:1 ratio (pasture acres/animal units) ie. 10-1,000# cows cover a maximum of 20 acres.

May Field Day: Adam with Indiana County, said they would host the May Field Day. Dustin Heeter who farms in Indiana County has volunteered his farm for this. The date for this and the next meeting will be decided once Adam has worked out the details.

❖ **Motion by Jeff seconded by Pierce to adjourn the meeting.
Motion approved.**

Meeting adjourned at 11-35am.

After Lunch Presentation: J.B. and Tom Ulrich gave a presentation on Grazing Sheets.

Written and Submitted by: John Hewitt