

SOUTH DAKOTA SECOND CENTURY HABITAT FUND  
TELECONFERENCE BOARD MEETING  
PIERRE, SD  
JANUARY 30, 2020

Board Members Present by Teleconference: DeLon Mork, Steve Halverson, Dr. Barry Dunn, Jim Faulstich, Larry Ness, Dan Rykhus, Jim Scull and Ex Officio Board Member Kelly Hepler, GFP Department Secretary and Gary Jensen GFP Commission Chair. Others present: Kevin Robling GFP, Tom Kirschenmann GFP and Executive Director Lisa Weyer.

**CALL TO ORDER AND CHANGES TO AGENDA**

President Jim Scull called the meeting of the South Dakota Second Century Habitat Fund Board to order at 1:02pm CT and a quorum was present. No declarations or conflict of interest were heard. Weyer stated that the meeting is being recorded and to announce your name when you speak. Hepler requested to add some time to visit about open positions on the board.

**UPDATE ADDRESS ON LETTERHEAD/ENVELOPES**

Rykhus made a motion to approve ordering new letterhead and envelopes with the change of address to Rapid City, since it is the organization's registered address, and Jensen seconded the motion, motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**CONTRACTS FOR WORKING LANDS HABITAT PROGRAM**

Weyer questioned if the Board wanted a small sub-committee to review contracts for the Working Lands Habitat Program?

Kirschenmann gave an update on how the current process works. Habitat Advisors or Pheasants Forever Biologists work with the producer or landowner to get the agreement. They review it and put it all together then they will email it to Weyer, Kirschenmann and Tim Olson, the private habitat lands biologist. If any issues, Olson will reach out to the advisor. Then Weyer has the authority to execute the contract. The contract is signed by Weyer and a copy is sent to the producer along with the full payment. GFP staff and Habitat Advisors work with Weyer to put in a seed order and the seed is shipped to the producer.

Question was raised about receiving payment before planting. What if it doesn't get planted? The individual habitat advisors will follow up with the producer to make sure they have planted.

Question was asked who the Habitat Advisors are? Directed to go to GFP website under Habitat Pays and look under Habitat Advisors to view a map with the Advisor's names and phone numbers.

Question was asked on how many acres are planted? Kirschenmann said he doesn't have that answer but will find out and work with Weyer to report to the Board.

Question on provisions for not planting the seed. Weyer read the termination clause in the agreement. Contract does state that the landowners must repay the funds back if any issues. Weyer will add planting to the spreadsheet for record keeping and tracking.

Rykhus made the motion to delegate authority to a sub-committee of Mork, Halverson and Faulstich to review and finalize the process and contract approval of the Working Lands Habitat Program and seconded by Ness, motion carried unanimously by voice vote. Faulstich moved to amend the motion to include any changes made subject to review by the entire board.

### **HABITAT DECALS**

Weyer reported that in 2019 over 2000 people donated \$10 or more to the Second Century Habitat Fund when obtaining hunting licenses online. Discussion took place as to what decal would be sent to the donors. There are 10,000 habitat decals in inventory at a cost of roughly \$3,500 paid by the Second Century Habitat Board. Hepler will follow up with the Governor's office.

### **ADDITIONAL MEMBERS TO THE BOARD**

Hepler stated that when the board was put together the intent was to appoint a member from the House and a member from the Senate as advisors to the Board. Hepler has had conversations with the Governor and have selected a Senator but have not selected anyone from the House. Hepler will follow-up.

Also still have one member of the board vacant. Hepler has submitted a name to the Governor's Office and is waiting for approval. Her name is Stephanie Rissler and she works for Public Broadcasting. Waiting to contact Rissler until approved.

### **PRECISION AG & CONSERVATION SPECIALISTS POSITION**

Robling clarified Every Acre Counts which started in 2018 under Governor Daugaard. Daugaard asked the board to come up with a proposal that would have an impact on how we farm and ranch across SD. That is what started the Every Acre Counts idea. Daugaard contributed one million dollars during his administration. In addition to the million dollars, \$100,000 was allocated for a Development Director position.

SDSU Extension needs more help to go out and talk with producers and get this program up and running and have made a funding request to the Board for a Precision Ag & Conservation Specialist.

Weyer stated they are asking for \$147,519 for the position funding. In return for the next 3 years Pheasants Forever would pay \$45,000 toward the first landowner/producer payment in the Every Acre Counts Program.

It was questioned the difference between Every Acre Counts and Working Lands Habitat Program. Robling provided the following details:

Every Acre Counts:

- Goal is to enroll 40,000 acres to quantify the return on investment for every acre

- Looks at the entire farming/ranching operation and identifies acres that are marginal acres
- Marginal or net zero yield acres are to be planted into habitat grass
- \$150 per acre plus free seed. The key advantage to this program is having an Economics Professor and an Agriculture school look at the data that is given in relation to a dollar and cents investment.

Working Lands Habitat Program:

- Goal is 5000 acres to be enrolled
- \$150/acre payment plus free grass seed with a 5-year contract

President Dunn commented that the producers had a tough year for participation and planting due to the weather, so the Every Acre Counts Program got off to a slow start.

The Board would like more detailed information about the position at the next meeting for their knowledge and understanding. Since the Every Acre Counts Program was a concept put in place already, the Board voted on the funding of the position. Faulstich moved to approve the Precision Ag & Conservation Specialist Position as presented, seconded by Mork and the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The Board requested that Weyer bring clarification on all funds to the next board meeting and provide the distinction between the million dollars in the Working Lands Habitat Program and the Every Acre Counts Program in the form of financial statements/reports.

The Board requested that a monthly report is provided at future Board meetings on the Every Acre Counts Program.

### **OTHER COMMENTS:**

Goals and Objectives will be discussed at the next meeting due to time restraints. Halverson asked the board to think about if we having a true impact on the next generation with these habitat projects? May need to think about putting a lot of focus on getting the youth involved in getting outdoors hunting and fishing.

### **MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2020**

The Board would like to have the monthly meetings in person rather than by teleconference, so Weyer will find a location for the next meeting in either Pierre or Chamberlain.

### **ADJOURN**

Hepler made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Jensen seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Scull adjourned the meeting at 2:07m CT.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lisa Weyer, Executive Director

Date

Approved by,

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Jim Scull, President

Date