

Greenbrier Valley Conservation District

July 17, 2025, 7:00pm

Regular Board Meeting, Approved Minutes

The Greenbrier Valley Board of Supervisors met on Thursday, July 17, 2025, at 7:00 pm in the conference room of the USDA service center located in Lewisburg.

Those present:

Supervisors:

Chairman, Gary Sawyers
Gary Truex
Donald McNeel
Avery Atkins
Carolyn Miller (Virtual)
Timothy VanReenen

Others:

Jon Bourdon, State Conservationist
Adam Merritt, NRCS
Wanda Smith, NRCS
Chelsea Cook, FSA
Kyle Rhodes, Pheasants Forever / Quail Forever
Jeremy Salyer, WVCA (Virtual)
Jacob Lavender, WVCA
Morgan Dial, WVCA
Jason Nicolai, WVCA (Virtual)
Barrett Level, GVCD (Virtual)
Angela Feamster – Sawyers, WVCA

Chairman Sawyers called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and welcomed everyone.

Chairman Sawyers led in the pledge of allegiance and Gary Truex led the group in prayer.

Approval of Minutes

Timothy VanReenen moved to approve the minutes of the June 11, 2025, Regular Board Meeting. Donald McNeel seconded; motion carried.

Guests

N/A

Funding Requests

N/A

Cooperating Agency Reports

- NRCS – Monroe County District Conservationist Wanda Smith, along with Greenbrier and Pocahontas County District Conservationist Adam Merritt and State Conservationist Jon Bourdon, provided updates to the board of supervisors and reviewed the highlights of their reports. (Submitted reports are attached.) Mr. Bourdon also shared information related to SB 941. Adam Merritt introduced Kyle Rhodes, a partner biologist with NRCS' Quail Forever and Pheasants Forever, who spoke briefly about his background and interests. Adam and Kyle additionally informed the Board of Supervisors about an outreach event focused on native plants at the hatchery in White Sulphur Springs, WV, scheduled for August 23, 2025, from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM.
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- FSA – Chelsea Cook, the Monroe County CED, shared updates regarding ECP applications and crop reporting. She also provided information about the new Supplemental Disaster Relief Program (SDRP).
- Forestry
- WVCA – Area Director Jeremy Salyer reviewed the highlights of his report, which is attached. He also reported that the Southern area farm tour concluded with a non-traditional farm winner from McDowell County and a traditional farm winner from Jackson County.
- Other

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

- Financial Reports

Gary Truex moved on behalf of the committee to accept the general and CDO funds report, and file for audit. Timothy VanReenen seconded; motion carried.

Gary Truex moved on behalf of the committee to accept the WVCA restricted funds report, and file for audit. Avery Atkins seconded; motion carried.

Gary Truex moved on behalf of the committee to pay the bills, per payables list. Donald McNeel seconded; motion carried.

Gary Truex moved for the approval of the FY25 CDO Budget. Timothy VanReenen seconded; motion carried.

Watershed

Jacob Lavender reported that they have received multiple stream calls for permit assistance and noted that the in-depth survey for the Anthony Creek Stream Restoration project has been delayed due to staff assisting with the recent flooding in the north and the streams elevated water levels from sporadic rain events.

In addition, Jacob reported that the Southern District crew has completed the mowing and weed-eating of the Marlin Run and Howard Creek Dams and that the invoices have been received.

Following a brief discussion, Gary Truex moved to approve payment to the Southern Conservation District for the mowing & weed-eating of the Marlin Run & Howard's Creek Dams, pending Jacob Lavender's verification. Donald McNeel seconded; motion passed.

Jacob also reported that he had received a quote back from Southern District Crew regarding the debris removal from Howard's Creek Dam for the amount of \$9,190.00.

Jacob reminded the board of supervisors about the opportunity to utilize the GLCI grant to help fund a field day in the fall. He suggested that if they are interested, they could discuss it further at the next committee meeting. Additional discussion on this topic ensued.

319 Committee

Updates (if any)

Donald McNeel moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following LOR:

LOR ID: 16401

Purpose: NPS1829 Spring Creek Phase II

Amount: \$45,000.00

AGR: NPS1829

Gary Truex & Carolyn Miller seconded; motion carried.

- **Contracts for Approval:**

- **NPS 1847 Upper Meadow River II**

Donald McNeel moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following contract:

- **Travis Cadd**- Septic Replacement
cost-share rate of 75% not to exceed \$6,000

Timothy VanReenen seconded; motion carried.

Donald McNeel moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following contract:

- **Christine Peters** – Septic Replacement
cost-share rate of 75% not to exceed \$6,000

Timothy VanReenen seconded; motion carried.

Donald McNeel moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following contract:

- **Keith Holliday** – Septic Replacement
Cost-share rate of 75% not to exceed \$6,000.00

Timothy VanReenen seconded; motion carried.

Donald McNeel moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following contract:

- Bob Martin – Exclusion Fence, Water Trough, Pipeline, & Tree Planting – cost-share rate of 75% not to exceed 6,088.35

Avery Atkins seconded; motion carried.

- Indian Creek IV

Donald McNeel moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following contract:

- Brittany Greenlee – Septic Pumping
Cost-share rate of 50% not to exceed \$300.00

Carolyn Miller seconded; motion carried.

- Payments for Approval

- NPS 1847 – Upper Meadow River II

Donald McNeel moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following payments:

- Mike Hambrick – Septic Pumping - \$159.00
- Elizabeth Fuller – Septic Pumping - \$159.00
- David Lumsden – Septic Replacement - \$6,000.00
- Nicole Yoney – Septic Replacement - \$6,000.00

Carolyn Miller seconded; motion carried.

- Indian Creek III

Donald McNeel moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following payment:

- Mike Dunbar - Septic System Replacement - \$5,000.00

Timothy VanReenen seconded; motion carried.

- Indian Creek IV:

Donald McNeel moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following payments:

- SGS WQ Monitoring - \$129.93 for May 2025
- Reimbursement to GVCD for the purchase of replacement parts for YSI monitoring device - \$411.12

Gary Truex seconded; motion carried.

Donald McNeel moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following payments:

- Spring Creek II
 - SGS-WQ Monitoring - \$86.62 for May 2025
- Second Creek
 - SGS -WQ Monitoring - \$476.41

Gary Truex seconded; motion carried.

Agricultural Enhancement Program Committee

Timothy reported sign-ups have been completed for the AgEP program and applications are currently in review.

A lengthy discussion was held concerning the AgEP allocation formula.

Grassland Committee

- Updates (if any)
- Outstanding Grassland Farmers

Barry Level presented his recommendations for the Outstanding Grasslands Awards for each county this year in order of placement, and Donald McNeel contributed three additional recommendations for Pocahontas County. Following discussions, *Gary Truex moved that Barry complete the necessary preliminaries and then proceed. Avery Atkins seconded; motion carried.*

Building/Equipment Committee

- Updates (if any)

The board of supervisors reviewed the monthly equipment report, which is attached.

Following a discussion, the board of supervisors agreed to put the King Cutter Potato Hillers up for bid, starting at \$130.00. All sealed bids must be submitted to the district office by 4:00 PM on Friday, August 1, 2025. Angela will post an advertisement with the details on Facebook.

Timothy VanReenen moved to designate Gary Sawyers with authority to approve/reject the final bid submissions. Donald McNeel seconded; motion carried.

Education Outreach/Events Committee

Updates- if any

- Banquet Awards

Carolyn Miller moved that Matt Tuckwiller and Steve Hedrick be named GVCD's 2025 Honorary Members and that they be invited to the banquet. Avery Atkins seconded; motion carried.

Supervisor of the year votes via secret ballot

Other Business

- Westfield Insurance Policy review/changes – following discussion this item of business was tabled until the next committee meeting.
- Discussion/Ideas for District Educational Outreach Programs/Events
- WVACD Dues – no action

Dates to Remember:

September 25, 2025, GVCD Legislative & Awards Banquet beginning at 5:30pm

Following discussion, the board of supervisors decided to cancel the committee meeting that was scheduled for August 13, 2025, at 9:00 am, because it falls on the same week as the West Virginia State Fair. However, the regular board meeting will be held as scheduled on August 21, 2025, at 7:00 PM.

With no further business the meeting adjourned by consensus at 9:02pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gary M. Sawyers".

Gary Sawyers
Chairman

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gary L. Truex".

Gary Truex
Secretary/ Treasurer

GS/GT/as

Recorded by: Angela Feamster-Sawyers, Administrative Specialist

Greenbrier Valley Conservation District Greenbrier Valley Work Unit Union DC Report

7/17/2025

Follow Ups from Previous Meetings

Cultural Resources:

- WV NRCS has Jacqueline Monsell on board now as our Cultural Resources Specialist. Grey and Pape Inc. (private archeological firm) should be contacting me soon to schedule site visits on 2 older contracts in Monroe.

Engineering:

- We have been making excellent progress on getting completed designs.
- Progress includes for P 2024 Drought program (administered by FSA but will be NRCS designed and certified livestock water systems).
 - 75 ECP applications in Monroe
 - 63 ECP applications determined eligible, some with multiple farms
 - NRCS will do 68 ECP designs
 - 26 completed and approved Monroe ECP designs delivered to FSA to date
 - 8 Monroe ECP designs pending checking and approval
 - 35 Monroe ECP designs not completed

Financial Assistance Programs

Active Contracts-

- 173 Active contracts in Monroe
- \$5,773,817.94 total in Monroe in active contracts
- \$1,681,486.11 of Monroe Active contracts CINs already installed and paid

Contract Management –

- 13 contract items paid May 20 – July 17, 2025
- \$33,157.50 in cost-share monies paid

Contract Reviews –

- Contracts Reviewed = 64 (37%)
- Contracts Not Reviewed = 109 (63%)
- I have been concentrating on expiring contracts first, then out of compliance contracts

Greenbrier Valley Conservation District Greenbrier Valley Work Unit Union DC Report

7/17/2025

Working Applications –

- 11 of 13 expiring CSP contract participants have applied for renewal. We are currently assessing and planning these FY 2026-1 CSP Renewal applications.

Expiring Contracts

- Currently addressing 6 contracts that expire 12/31/2025
- 3 are in contract compliance and currently being modified
- 3 are non-compliant and we have developed agreements covering contract non-compliance on 2 of these
- The 3rd non-compliant expiring contract currently has a draft agreement covering contract non-compliance

Cancellations

- No new cancellation requests in recent months

Office Administration

News and Events

- Accepting applications year-round for CSP, AMA, and EQIP. Application cut-off for Round 1 PY2026 set as August 29, 2025 for EQIP, AMA, and CSP.

Field Office Priorities

- Contract Management/Reviews:
 - Priority #1 expiring contracts
 - Priority #2 contracts without payment within past 12 months
- Ongoing engineering design work for existing NRCS contracts
- Ongoing field inspection and certification work for existing NRCS contracts
- I am utilizing our partner biologists and ACES employee as much as possible
- ECP 2024 Drought: remaining NRCS responsibilities:
 - survey & design of livestock water systems
 - certification of installed practices

Greenbrier Valley Conservation District
Greenbrier Valley Work Unit Union DC Report
7/17/2025

Attached is our West Virginia State Conservationist's Report for June 2025.

Any questions may be directed to the undersigned at wanda.smith@usda.gov or (304) 772-3006 ext. 115 (office) or (304) 216-9353 (mobile).

Wanda Smith

District Conservationist

Distribution:

Jon Bourdon, State Conservationist (STC)

Brandon Duckworth, Assistant State Conservationist – Field Operations (ASTC-FO), South Area

Burton "Matt" Murphy, Area Resource Conservationist (ARC), South Area

Julie Stutler, NRCS Outreach Coordinator

Greenbrier Valley Conservation District Board of Supervisors (c/o Angela Feamster-Sawyers)

Adam Merritt, Acting GV North District Conservationist

NRCS Field Office Staff: Union Service Center



United States Department of Agriculture

July 17, 2025

GVCD-N NRCS Report for July 2025

Fiscal Year 2025 Farm Bill Update

We have finished obligating Farm Bill funds for FY25. The following is a breakdown of the funding received for Greenbrier and Pocahontas counties for FY25:

Program	Obligated Funds
AMA (3 contracts)	\$139,151
EQIP (9 contracts)	\$159,427
CSP (6 contracts)	\$135,233
Total (18 contracts)	\$433,811

Miscellaneous

- Total payments for existing contracts from 6/10/25: \$147,124.02
- Staff are currently prioritizing field visits for FY26 Farm Bill applications, specifically CSP Renewals and CSP Classic applications as those will be first to be obligated in the new fiscal year
- Staff are also working on contract management actions and contract clean up through modifications, cancellations and terminations. These include non-compliant contracts and contracts set to expire at the end of the calendar year.

ECP

- We have one remaining ECP design to complete for Pocahontas county
- We have approximately 40 of the 58 ECP designs completed for Greenbrier county

Staffing Update

- Garrett Vaughn is now working out of the Lewisburg office as a partner employee between NRCS and WVDA as a Nutrient Management Specialist. Garrett will be concentrating on Nutrient Management for Farm Bill contracts for the Greenbrier Valley and Southern Conservation Districts.

Natural Resources Conservation Service
LEWISBURG SERVICE CENTER
179 Northridge Dr.
LEWISBURG, WV 24901
Phone: (304) 645-6172 ext. 3
Helping People Help the Land

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Local Work Group Meeting

Listed below are the results from the polling/voting for each category discussed during the LWG meeting:

Priority Resource Concerns

1. Bank erosion from streams
2. Nutrients transported to surface & groundwater
3. Sheet & Rill erosion
4. Plant productivity & Health
5. Inadequate livestock water
6. Sediment transported to surface water

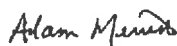
Priority Land Uses

1. Pasture
2. Crop
3. Forest/Wildlife
4. Associated Ag Land
5. Farmstead

Priority Fund Pools

1. Introductory Grazing
2. Grazing
3. Wildlife
4. Stream Restoration
5. Forestry
6. NWQI/Focused Conservation
7. Cover Crops
8. CPA/DIA/CEMA
9. CNMP Implementation
10. High Tunnel Systems

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out.



Adam Merritt
Acting District Conservationist
adam.merritt@usda.gov
304.282.6036

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West Virginia State Conservationist's Report

June 2025

Program Priorities

Our staff is currently working on obligating approved Agriculture Management Assistance (AMA) and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) applications. So far, we've obligated over \$1.6 million across both programs, with an additional \$7.8 million in preapproved or approved status. We hope to have all of our funding obligated late June and focus on practice implementation and conservation planning through September.

We're also wrapping up Local Work Group (LWG) meetings with Conservation Districts throughout the state. We appreciate your participation in those meetings that help target conservation funding where it's needed most. If you have proposals for Focused Conservation Approach (FCA) projects within your district, we encourage early and frequent conversations with your local NRCS field and area office staff. We will review all comments, suggestions, and proposals gathered at LWG meetings and present recommendations at the State Technical Committee meeting on July 22nd.

Drought Recovery

NRCS WV is continuing to assist the Farm Service Agency with the implementation of their Emergency Conservation Program (ECP). ECP provides emergency water for livestock and existing orchard and vineyard irrigation systems. To date, NRCS has assisted with 485 applications with the majority of applications Monongahela, Potomac Valley, Greenbrier Valley, Little Kanawha, and Western Districts. Designs for these watering systems will be developed and delivered to FSA in the very near future.

Staffing Updates

The Deferred Resignation Program (DRP) was made available to NRCS employees in January and again in April as part of a national effort to reduce the federal workforce. Twenty-one NRCS WV employees elected to participate in this program. Affected offices include Franklin, Huntington, Keyser, Lewisburg, McMechen, Middlebourne, Princeton, Ripley, Union, Weston, and White Hall field offices, as well as both north and south area offices and the state office. Alderson Plant Materials Center was also impacted.

The hiring freeze was extended until July 15th, 2025. We do not anticipate any hiring actions in calendar year 2025.

Ahead of an anticipated agency restructuring announcement in late May, a judge in northern California extended the restraining order previously put in place that prohibits the administration from implementing reorganization efforts. The order requires the administration to pause implementation of any reductions in force or agency reorganization plans and to seek congressional oversight and approval of any large-scale reorganization effort. We are awaiting further guidance from the Department.

We're continuing coordination with the Department and our sister agencies to place non-NRCS employees within our office space.

Cooperative Agreement and Watershed Rehabilitation Funding

Payments towards cooperative grants and agreements with partnering organizations that were funded utilizing Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funds have been released. This will allow NRCS WV partners to continue the outreach, education, and conservation planning efforts as originally planned.

Unfortunately, we still have one agreement with WVACD with language that is preventing us from processing payments. This project would have supported education and outreach efforts with individual districts and selected community organizations.

Payments toward dam rehabilitation projects through the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO) utilizing Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funds have also been released.

Flood Recovery Efforts

Federal contracting of two Emergency Watershed Program (EWP) streambank stabilization sites in Kanawha County were delayed due to contracting moratorium; however, a waiver was granted, and construction has begun. Federal contracting is proceeding on two additional sites (one in Kanawha and one in Braxton County), pending mussel survey and coordination with WV Department of Natural Resources for the Braxton County site. NRCS visited 29 sites in McDowell County to determine eligibility for EWP from the April 2025 Storm Event. Staff is assembling engineering cost estimates to submit for funding at the request of the McDowell County Commission. NRCS staff is in communication with local sponsors and has done field reconnaissance of damages from the May 13, 2025 storm event in Mineral County.



July 2025 WVCA Report

Items to be thinking about and placed on your agendas in the coming month:

Carroll Greene Nomination – form is due to Belinda Withrow by September 1

WVACD Honorary Member At Large

WVACD Lifetime Honorary Member

Annual Work Plan

Reminder - District annual work plans were due **June 30** to Guthrie.

CDO Budget

CDO budget closeout needs submitted to Guthrie by August 1

Agreed Procedures Engagement (Audit)

Conservation Districts are asked to begin the Agreed Procedures Engagement (APE) (audit) soon after the close of the fiscal year on June 30th. It is important that each district read their audit, and then take steps to correct any findings noted by the auditors. If you have questions, ask Don or Jeremy.

Conservation Farm Tour

Timelines:

- **July** - Area judging
Southern area week of July 7
Northern area week of July 21
- **August** - Statewide judging.
- **October** – Presentation of Area and State awards at WV Conservation Partnership Annual Conference

O&M Agreements:

CDs are encouraged to continue to work with local sponsors for O&M funding. This process started last year these agreements will not be matched dollar for dollar as they were in the past. The WVCA will be allocating funds on a watershed basis moving forward to help with O&M costs.

Ag Enhancement Program Timeline

- May/June/July – CDs to finalize upcoming FY program, update AgEP agreement addendums, take action to approve LORs June 15 – Deadline for CDs submit final practice list to WVCA (CDs can submit final list any time after SCC approval of practice list)
- AgEP data base needs closed out by July 15

SB 941

WVCA is waiting for correspondence from DEP regarding the bill. As we receive information it will be shared. In the meantime, CDs should continue regular operation and maintenance work. SCC has requested a formal opinion from the AG office.

WV State Fair Sign Ups

The schedule for state fair volunteers is now available under the WVCA admin webpage. If you would like to schedule a time frame to work at the fair, please contact your Administrative Specialist.

MONTHLY REPORT

Greenbrier Valley Conservation District Monthly Equipment Report

Month/Year June 2025

Equipment	Number of Days Rented	Number of Acres	Total Revenue	Total Cost of Repairs & Maintenance	Total Field Service Mileage
Tye #1					
Tye #2					
Great Plains #1					
Great Plains #2					
Great Plains #3	2	35	525.00		
No-till Seeder Totals	2	35	525.00		
Cricket				141.25	
Grasshopper	16		1968.00		
Big Silver	16				
Lime/fertilizer Totals	16		1968.00	141.25	
Chemical Sprayer				358.35	
Litter Spreader #1	2		246.00	132.64	
Litter Spreader #2				76.00	
Litter Spreader Totals	2		246.00	207.89	
Post Driver #3					
Post Driver #4	2		400		
Post Driver #6	1		200		
Post Driver Totals	3		600.00		
Potato Planter					
Potato Sprayer					
Potato Hiller					
Potato Totals					
Portable Scales					
Other			338.10	99.97	
Shop Supplies			Concrete	11.50	
GRAND TOTALS (all equipment)	23	35	\$3677.10	\$818.96	