

**Southwestern Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting – Teleconference
March 28, 2013**

Present John Porter* Steve Fearn* Bob Wolff*
 J. R. Ford* April Montgomery* Monte Naslund*
 Doug Stowe* John Taylor*

Absent Tim Kelly Fred Kroeger (Emeritus)

Staff Bruce Whitehead, Executive Director
 Jane Maxson, Office Manager
 Adam Reeves, MBSS
 Jeff Kane, MBSS
 Steve Harris, Harris Water Engineering

Guests Darlene Marcus*

Vice-President Steve Fearn called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. Roll was taken and a quorum was present.

Questions/Comments from Audience

There were none.

Old Business

Gunnison Sage Grouse FWS comments

Maynes, Bradford, Shipps and Sheftel prepared a memo that was emailed to Directors on March 27, 2013. Adam Reeves, MBSS, recapped the memo, highlighting three areas to consider:

1. Section Seven – applies to Federal actions and precludes any action authorized, funded, permitted by the Federal government which might result in jeopardy to continued existence of the species.
2. Section Nine – applies to private actions that result in the “take” of a species.
3. Critical Habitat Designation – it is important because it casts a broader net than the species itself. They need to be carefully considered. The identified habitat in this instance is overly broad in MBSS’s opinion, particularly in the Monticello-Dove Creek unit which is the main unit of concern in southwestern Colorado.

The Dove Creek unit has 236,000 acres of unoccupied habitat, 85% of which is privately owned. It has 112,000 acres of occupied habitat, of which 90% is privately owned. The Fish & Wildlife Service admitted it didn’t have the resources to carefully identify whether all the areas actually contained the necessary elements for the species to exist, reproduce, and recover. As a result, a huge amount of private irrigated, farmed land was designated for critical habitat in a way that Adam Reeves thinks is overly broad and not in conformance with the Federal Endangered Species Act.

Comments were shared by the Directors. It was expressed that any letter or communication from SWCD should not undermine actions taken by the various boards of county commissioners.

The Upper Gunnison Water Conservancy District and Dolores Water Conservancy District are providing comments. The deadline for comments is April 2. Multiple states are meeting in Salt Lake City next week to address the issue. Governor Hickenlooper is sending comments. Discussion occurred.

Monte Naslund moved and Doug Stowe seconded that SWCD provide comments by April 2. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

There was none.

Executive Session, if necessary

Next Meeting

Apr 4	10:00	Board Meeting
Apr 5	8:30	Water Seminar
Apr 17	9:00	Teleconference
May 1	9:00	Teleconference

Adjournment

Vice-President Steve Fearn adjourned the meeting at 9:51 a.m.



Steve Fearn, Vice-President