

MINUTES

Watauga Soil & Water Conservation District

971 West King Street, Boone NC 28607

August 27, 2025

Present:

Denny Norris, Chair
Nate Coppenbarger
Bill Moretz
Jennifer Hanifan
Elise McLaughlin

Michelle Kasey
Brian Bonville
Brandon Turlington
Samantha Dame

1. Denny Norris called meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

2. Denny Norris opened the meeting in prayer.

3. Ethics Awareness and Conflict of Interest Reminder:

In accordance with the State Government Ethics Act, it is the duty of every board member to avoid both conflicts of interest and appearances of conflict. Does any board member have any conflicts of interest or appearances of conflict with respect to any matters coming before the board today? If so, please identify the conflict or appearances of conflict and refrain from any undue participation in the particular matter involved.

4. Statement of Professionalism:

Supervisors are reminded of their responsibility to uphold the laws of the United States and North Carolina and their constitutions. Business is to be conducted in a professional manner, free of bias, of interactions that violate policies or individual liberties and that address business issues only. Interactions are to be held with integrity, courtesy, honesty and in compliance with the highest ethical standards.

5. Approval of the minutes

Jennifer Hanifan made a motion to accept the original minutes without changes; Bill Moretz 2nd. Minutes accepted.

6. Approval of the agenda

Jenny Hanifan made a motion to accept the Agenda; Bill Moretz 2nd. Agenda accepted.

7. District Report: Brian Bonville

New Applications: None

Contracts needing approval: None

Contract Updates:

A. ACSP:

95-2023-001 Scott and Dawn Jensen – Cooperators have not completed Work. Waiting on engineer decision on closeout.

95-2023-003 Ronnie Joe Brown – Livestock Exclusion system with well. Cooperator has contacted well driller. No other updates.

95-2024-003 Charles Norris – Feed pad, HUAP, Diversion. Construction delayed due to Helene damage. No update.

95-2024-006 Valley View Land Company – Ag Road Repair. Monitoring construction.

95-2024-007 Al Zimmerman – Wetland restoration system. No update. Looking for Contractor.

95-2025-001 Will Kulczyk – Ag Road Repair. On schedule. Monitoring construction.

95-2025-002 Holland Whitesides – Waiting on cooperator to approve design. Cultural resource review ongoing.

95-2025-003 Larry Kitchens – Cultural resource review has been submitted. Waiting on engineer design.

95-2025-004 Diane Deal – Monitoring construction. No update.

95-2023-004 Greene – Waiting on receipts to submit RFQ. No update.

B. AgWrap updates:

95-2025-802 Daniel Brown – Spring development. Mr. Brown has signed contract.

C. CAP updates:

95-2022-502 Blue Ridge Conservancy – Riparian Buffer/Stream Restoration. Extension submitted. State engineers have reached out for timeline.

95-2024-501 New River Conservancy (at Green Valley Park). Waiting

on private engineer to get permits.

95-2025-501 Kellwoods 1 Townhomes POA – Streambank restoration.

On track.

D. StRAP:

2022 Funds – Funding extension request letter is needed.

Bill Moretz made a motion to do a StRAP Extension. Jennifer Hanifan 2nd.
Motion passed.

Brian Bonville suggested rolling 2022 StRAP money into the 2024 project.

Bill Moretz made a motion to approve rolling 2022 StRAP money into the Temple of the High Country project if the State will approve. Jenny Hanifan 2nd the motion. Motion carried.

2024 Funds – Brian Bonville to meet with Project Cooperators, New River Conservancy and Temple of the High Country on September 9th.

8. Brian Bonville – Attended CET. Attended disaster related workshops.

Bonville also attended SURGE week during which 11 EWP sites were addressed. 110 sites overall were completed for the State. Bonville reported That there were 17 left to visit.

DOT reached out for comment on 321 stretch the County is pushing to move to 4 lanes. Bonville shared response letter with Board. Board shared some suggested changes to the letter. Bonville to change.

Bill Moretz requested an update on the Corp of Engineers. Discussion followed.

Bonville shared that the Private Roads and Bridges Program deadline is August 31, 2025 for interest. Official application period comes after.

Bonville stated that he is helping Blue Ridge Women in Ag with a cover crop Talk on September 19th. He will be taking the No-Till Drill.

Bonville asked by the Town of Boone to stop by the Clawson Burney Greenway On August 29th where debris is being removed. He gave advice on invasive plants and to help remove some.

9. NRCS Samantha Dame – NRCS wrapping up the Fiscal Year September 30th.

Discussed EQUIP and CSP contracts to date. RCPP funding no longer available. Brandon Turlington – updated that the Compliance Reviews were on-going and almost complete.

10. Division Report – Elise McLaughlin

There are 2 resolutions. One Brian Evans has typed up but no Board has Signed yet. The title is: Revegetation for Streambanks during Disaster Work. Denny asked the Board if they would like to sponsor the Revegetation Resolution.

Nate Coppenbarger made a motion to approve endorsing the resolution. Jennifer Hanifan 2nd the motion. Motion Carried. Denny Norris to sign the resolution.

The 2nd is related to Local Work Group spot treatments for stream bank erosion. More than 1/2 of the districts in area 2 have signed. The Fall meeting is October 9th. Registration is due by 9/26/25. Location is Johnny Wilson Farm in Caldwell County.

Trainings coming up for Technicians – be watching your email.

Ms. McLaughlin told Denny Norris that at the Fall Meeting a slate of Representatives for open seats and alternatives will be approved.

Chris Hughes was chair on the Water Resource committee. Barbara Bleiweis and Gail Hughes will be replacing Mr. Hughes.

McLaughlin reminded that the 2VP will come from the Mountain Region, Area 1, 2 or 8.

She also mentioned that a new Technical position was approved. Brian stated that he has a meeting with Kristina about how the position and money Would be split with Wilkes. Wilkes County asked for \$40,000 to hire a Contracted position leaving \$160,000 for Watauga County to hire a Technician. Bonville asked if that would cover a full-time position for 2 years. Denny Norris stated that this needs to be discussed with the County and

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County Manager to determine salary and benefits. Bill Moretz stated that a contract employee may be needed. Denny Norris to talk to the County Manager to see which direction to go.

McLaughlin stated that the CET Training was excellent this year. The Division Is ramping up the quality of training for Technicians for BMPs.

11. Admin Report: Michelle Kasey

Kasey asked Board which contests they wished our District to hold this year.

The answer was the Essay Contest and the Poster contest.

Jennifer Hanifan stated that she would like an email about everything our Office does with the Community to have speaking points.

Email copy of Chris Hughes resignation received.

Watauga 5th Grade Environmental Field days are September 4th & 5th

With rain dates of 9/11 & 9/12.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:37 am.

Next meeting will be September 24, 2025.

Minutes submitted by: Michelle Kasey



Denny Norris, Chair

Signed

9-29-25

Dated

