

## RECORDING OF PROCEEDINGS

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Wyoming Board of Agriculture  
January 16, 2008  
Conference Call

Members Present: Jack Corson, President  
Gene Hardy, Vice President  
Jim Bennage  
Joe Thomas  
Dave Graham  
Juan Reyes  
Dalin Winters  
Jim Mickelson  
Patrick Zimmerer  
John Etchepare, Director

Unexcused: Frank Galey, Dean College of Agriculture  
Ryan Lance, Governor Fredeudenthal's Office

Staff Present: Muff Parker, Recording Secretary  
Jason Fearneyhough, Deputy Director

Called to order by President Corson at 8:05 a.m.

### Minutes

**Gene Hardy made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 19, 2007 Conference Call. Jim Mickelson seconded the motion. Motion carried. Joe Thomas made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 2, 2008 Conference Call (as amended). Dave Graham seconded the motion. Motion carried.** Amended was the word mad to made and removing Jim Mickelson from the present members. He was noted in both places. The members wanted to make sure CIA meant Crop Improvement Association. Muff will verify and will spell it out.

### Budget

Jack asked the members to get travel vouchers sent in right away to be paid so he has a better idea where the budget stands.

### Vacancies

John said he will check back with the Governor's office on the two vacancies.

### Wolf Plan

Joe said he will be attending the meeting scheduled for January 24th at 5:30 in Cody. He should be receiving a couple of changes to the plan before then and will make sure the other members receive them.

### **Drought Task Force**

Jack asked what John thinks the direction will be. He indicated that is what the meeting today is for. He thinks perhaps the name should be changed to better reflect the future. He feels instead of dealing with a continuing drought, we should maybe be looking at climate changes and dealing with those changes.

Dalin asked if the small water program was still going on. John stated, as it relates to private lands, no, and there isn't any legislation planned this year. There has been some talk of a block grant, but our Constitution won't allow direct grants to individuals. He said the key is making sure the criteria of public benefit are met.

Juan asked about the solar panels for wells program not continuing. John said those funds came from penalties collected from energy companies. He said the meeting later this spring is to see if there are any funds left and what type of funds might be available. No general funds were used for the solar pumps. Small water development is still done on public lands because they meet the public benefit criteria. John feels the 2009 session would be a good time for legislation.

He also gave the members some background of the drought task force. He talked about some of the projects and legislative changes the task force has done to help the producers who have had to sell livestock because of drought. Jack asked for members to give their thoughts on the benefits from the drought task force and any direction for John. Most members have not received any direct benefits of the Task Force but they felt they have received some indirect benefits.

Gene feels the county drought declaration methodology is not working. Those contiguous counties are as dry as the declared county. John wanted everyone to know there are state and federal sides and we need to be careful about the declarations. If the county is declared, it can affect the permits on federal lands. The feds base it on crop conditions and not on moisture. The milk program was a federal program & solar pumps were a state program. Jim Bennage agrees with John about looking at the program to make sure more help is received by producers.

Patrick said the website hasn't been updated it for three years. John indicated he agrees, saying it was originally set up to have documents displayed rather than updates from the task force and that is something they should take a look at.

John asked if the name and direction should be changed. Gene said yes-it should be changed to include climate change because that seems to be the new direction. Jim Bennage said he feels they need to think of it as a longer term program and Gene feels developing water is the key to addressing the climate changes. Dave Graham agrees. Jack said identification of the drought areas is important as well as water development. He also said finding feed during times of shortages is also important. John said ranchers need to start doing their own monitoring. He said it might be a good idea to invite Lois Van MARK to a meeting to get her thoughts.

**Meeting with the Forest Service**

John said the Big Horn Forest meeting last week was regarding permit cuts. The meeting scheduled for January 23rd will further discuss those cuts. The Forest Service has allowed mediation which will extend the cutting deadline of those AUMs another sixty days. Those cuts will take affect for the 2009 grazing season.

**Joint Appropriations**

Gene was asked by John if the District Predator Boards are contacting legislators regarding the funding. He said the 22nd and 23rd of January will be the date for the appropriation committee to start working the budget. Gene will start getting his boards busy. Three million is in the department's standard budget and the legislature wanted to revisit the other three million. John feels it won't be increased, but could possibly be reduced. Gene said that Wildlife Services has added about nineteen additional trappers to their staff. Counties are cost-sharing those salaries with Wildlife Services and if the county's budgets are cut, they will loose those trappers. John said to be careful using that as an argument because it's funding an unfunded mandate.

**Farmers Market**

Jason said they had a great turnout. Better by far than in previous years.

Patrick said he attended the AIME conference and indicated it was pretty good.

Jack would like to have Muff ask Lois VanMARK to the February meeting. The gentleman from England (VaWey) is also speaking at Farm Bureau meeting on the 26th. Muff will get the information out to members regarding his speaking engagement on February 25th at 5:30 in the Herschler B63.

Juan made a motion to adjourn at 8:53. The motion was seconded by Jim Mickelson. Motion carried.

There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jack Corson, President

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Date