

## MINUTES

Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District held at Newton, N.C.

Meeting Number 1

January 2, 2026

Supervisors Present:

Steve Killian

Julia Elmore

Bill Shillito

David Caldwell

Brandon Bowman

Others Present:

Randy Willis, Soil Conservation Supervisor

Blake Henley, Soil Conservation Technician

Leia Hamlyn, Education Coordinator

Elise McLaughlin, Area 2 Regional Coordinator

Will Faulkner, NRCS

Steve Killian read the following statements then called the business meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.:

*The State Government Ethics Act mandates that at the beginning of any meeting the Chair reminds all the members of their duty to avoid conflicts of interest and inquire as to whether any member knows of any conflict of interest or potential conflict with respect to matters to come before the Board. If any member knows of a conflict of interest or potential conflict, please state so at this time.*

### *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.*

David Caldwell made a motion to approve the agenda for the board meeting. Julia Elmore seconded. All in favor. Motion passed. Agenda approved.

William Shillito made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 5, 2025, board meeting. Brandon Bowman seconded. All in favor. Motion passed. Minutes approved.

**Randy Willis and Blake Henley** presented the Catawba District Operations Report.

### **District Operations and Technical Assistance**

- StRAP – We are preparing to apply for additional Helene funds through StRAP. We are reevaluating sites and shifting priorities somewhat.
- StRAP- We have taken ownership of a 2025 Honda Pioneer 1000-5 and we are waiting on the trailer from Kaufman.

- ARC- as of November 19th., 100% of demolition and 80% of framing was complete.
- Met with a landowner about issues with stream.
- Attended Career Day at Mt. View Elementary.
- Assisted Iredell SWCD with contracts.
- Met with Catawba Lands Conservancy.

#### NCACSP

- Contract 18-25-05-03 has completed the rock lined channel.
- Met with a potential applicant for ACSP.
- Working with other applicants about getting contract estimates.

#### AGWRAP

- Contract 18-26-801-03 has been approved by the State. We will be delivering the contract specs.

#### CCAP

No updates at this time.

**Leia Hamlyn** presented the Education and Outreach report:

- The contest theme for 2025-2026 is "We All Live in a Watershed."
- January 27, 2026 – contest entry deadline
- January 31, 2026 – speech contest
- February 24, 2026 – banquet
- David Caldwell made a motion to nominate Andrew Lail for Catawba SWCD Farm Family. Julia Elmore seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

**Will Faulkner** presented the NRCS Team 5 Soil Conservationist's Report:

#### FY 2025 EQIP/CSP:

EQIP 2025:            Team 5- 60 applications  
14 funded in Team - \$404,000

CSP 2025:            Team 5- 13 applications  
4 applications funded for - \$156,000

#### FY 2026 Programs

- Taking new Application for both CSP and EQIP until 1/15/26. This is a National Deadline.
- Do not yet know what Fiscal Year 26 funding or programs will look like yet.
- New USDA Regenerative Agriculture Program announced nationwide (see attachments)

- \$700M in EQIP and CSP

**Fieldwork:** Team members working on active projects throughout the team including site assessments for 313/316, pasture watering systems and high tunnels. New site visits are occurring for applications that have been taken over the last year before new fiscal year funding.

**Other Notes:** No SSC will be attending SWCD Annual Meeting

**Elise McLaughlin** gave the Division Report. Resource Conservation Workshop applications will be handled by the Soil & Water Districts this year instead of NC State. Division Update Meeting scheduled for February 4, 2026, in Yadkinville. Basic Training scheduled for February 10, 2026. Area 2 Spring Meeting scheduled for March 12, 2026.

Brandon Bowman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Julia Elmore seconded. All in favor: Meeting adjourned at 9:37 a.m.

Minutes taken by Leia Hamlyn.

*Julia Elmore* Julia Elmore, Board Vice Chair