

Washington County Soil & Water Conservation District

Minutes of Regular Meeting - October 19, 2022

Attending:

Board Members

Jay Skellie, Director
Kate Ziehm, Director
Cassie Fedler, Director

Staff Members

Corrina Aldrich, District Manager
Lyndsy Hilder, District Technician
Amber Luke, District Technician
Bob Kalbfliesh, District Technician

1. Call to order at 10:09 a.m. by Director Skellie.
2. Minutes: Motion by Ziehm seconded by Fedler to approve the minutes of the last meeting. **Unanimously carried.**
3. Treasurer's Report: After review and approval of the finances, **Motion** by Ziehm seconded by Fedler to approve the Treasurer's Report (as a whole) for September and to pay bills as presented. **Unanimously carried.** (Attachment)
4. Agency & Staff Reports:
 - A. Farm Service Agency: FSA news bulletin distributed - "Dairy Producers Can Now Enroll for 2023 Signup for Dairy Margin Coverage"
 - B. Cornell Cooperative Extension: Report Attached, submitted by Aaron Gabriel
 - C. District Manager: Verbal Report by Aldrich
 - D. District Technician: Attachment, reviewed by Kalbfliesh
 - E. District Technician: Attachment, reviewed by Luke
 - F. District Technician: Attachment, reviewed by Hilder
 - G. NYS-SWCC Report: Attachment, submitted by Cunningham
5. New Business:
 - A. **Motion** by Fedler seconded by Ziehm to approve the 2023 Annual Plan of Work. **Unanimously carried.**
 - B. **Motion** by Fedler seconded by Ziehm to approve the 2023 Part B Project – Washington County Lake Water Quality Monitoring. **Unanimously carried.**
 - C. **Motion** by Ziehm seconded by Fedler to pay Capital Tractor for Great Plains No-till Drill with funds from Equipment Reserve Fund (\$33,873)
 - D. **Motion** by Fedler seconded by Ziehm to un-table additional vacation leave policy for discussion. **Unanimously carried.**
 - E. **Motion** by Ziehm seconded by Fedler to amend Vacation Leave Policy to add sentence "The employee will earn the additional vacation leave (40 hours) in increments of 10 hours each quarter in the respective year of service (25, 30, 35 & 40)." **Unanimously carried.**

- F. **Motion** by Fedler seconded by Ziehm to approve Round 24 Farmstead Improvement HTW final grant payments to the following:
- Washington County SWCD Personal Services (\$23,093.50)
 - Jeremy Wolff BMP Payment (\$1,140.40)
 - Hicks Orchard BMP Payment (\$6,535.83) and Engineering Payment (\$1,500.00)
 - Toolite Farm BMP Payment (\$1,351.25) and Engineering Payment (\$1,200.00) and
 - Close dedicated grant checking account. **Unanimously carried.**
6. The next Board meeting will be held on November 16, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.
7. **Motion** by Ziehm seconded by Fedler to adjourn the meeting at 11:20 a.m. **Unanimously carried.**

Lori Sheehan, Secretary

Director

Reports Attached: *Treasurer Report, CCE Report, District Technicians Reports, NYS-SWCC Report*

CCE Report

- Had 6 people at the Fall Round Up Grazier meeting to discuss mud and manure as well as fall and spring calving.
- Jingjing, Horticulture Educator for CAAHP, held a soil health day for cut flower growers on Tuesday, 10/18
- Have not replaced Dayton yet.
- For me, the next big meetings will be the Grain School in February and a weed meeting for in March.
- This past summer, Aaron grew twin-row corn on 5 ft centers with the objective of growing 2 ears on each stalk, evaluating ladino clover as a living mulch and testing the product PivotBio40. No significant results in 2021. Will repeat the trial in 2023 and get a more appropriate corn hybrid and plant the seed more uniformly using the same treatments.

Aaron Gabriel, Sr. Extension Resource Educator, Agronomy
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Technician's Report: Bob Kalbfliesh – 10/19/2022

AEM:

I completed Tier II's for the following:

- Foot Hill Farm – Kevin Eastman
- Yorkmont Farm – Dave Perry

Cover Crop Tier IV – I have been working with Mercure Farm, Darren Tyler and Fred Burch on implementing their cover crops for this fall.

Grants:

- Round 24 Walkers – Construction has begun on the heifer facility. Post, headers and roof trusses were up and some concrete work done.
- Lake Champlain Basin Program Cover Crops – I have been working with approved farmers on completing their cover crops this fall.

No-Till Drill:

There has been only one new rental since last month.

The new Great Plains drill is here.

I have talked to Rebecca at the Washington County Fairgrounds about winter storage for the drill and hydro-seeder. We are all set with them.

Meetings Planned:

Interseeder Cover Crop & Soil Health Talk, Buskirk – 10/26

Soil Health Workshop, Johnsonville – 10/27

Technician's Report-Amber Luke- October 19, 2022

Ag Non-Point Source-

- Round 24-
 - Walkers- Lyndsy and I (mostly Lyndsy) went out and conducted site visits while Bob was out due to his surgery. Things are progressing smoothly!
- Round 28-
 - Kenyon Hill- Waiting to hear an official announcement on funding awarded.

Climate Resilient Farming (CRF)-

- Round 6-
 - We have gotten the official announcement on funds awarded! 2 out of 3 grants applied for were funded! Morrow- Water Management on Grazing Lands and Beavers- Permaculture for Soil Health. I set up times to meet with both landowners to go over the entire grant process with them again to make sure we were all on the same page. I have met with both, and we discussed the plan of work, the contract timeline, construction, and closeout. We are currently waiting for plan of work to be announced and the deadline for that to be due.

CAFO Waste Storage and Transfer-

- Round 1-
 - Kenyon Hill. We are making progress. Ramp and pumping pad were poured on October 5, 2022, after originally having the pour scheduled for 9/29/22. Due to not being ready for the pour on 9/29/22 we had to postpone the pour until 10/5/22. Kent has finished grading and mulched all around the North and Western sides of the manure storage. Along with Fencing all that is left to be done is some grading, and Patrick needs to finish cleaning out the manure storage (garbage, forms, blankets, rebar etc.). I am doing my best to keep the project moving along but keeping everyone in the loop with weekly updates and texts to everyone involved! I have gone over what we need from everyone prior to closeout so that we can make closeout a smooth process. I have revised one invoice (from Patrick to Kenyon Hill) from Kenyon Hill towards closeout, but I told them they would need to make sure the dates are accurate prior to closeout.
 - Deep Roots- I attended a site visit with NRCS, the engineer, the CAFO planner, and the farm present on 10/6/22. I went over the requirements of the grant and the timeline to have the project done. The engineer went over the draft design with input from the planner to make sure everyone was on the same page. The engineer is going to work on finishing up the design so that the farm can start the bid process this winter with hopes to start construction this coming construction season.

AEM-

- REPORTING: We just passed the end of the third quarter and are now in the final quarter of the year. So far, I think we are in a good spot, but we are still a little behind of our goals for this year money wise. I will be pushing to get some more 5B (Evaluation of prior implemented BMP systems) completed as construction starts to wrap up in this final quarter of the year.
- Still waiting on updated AEM hours from some but hopefully I will get them all by the end of the year as I hope to start drafting up the final report, so I don't have to do it all at the end of the 2-year AEM program.

- Completed two tier 2 visits. One with Hunter Southerland on October 13, 2022 (update counts as a Tier 5A), and one with Rachel Costello on September 19, 2022. Working on organizing AEM participant folders!
- I think there is potential and beneficial to implant improved stream crossings at both place (Southerland and Costello) due to the protected nature of both streams.
- I have been working on Tier 3A plans for Ghost Light Farm and Maple Grove Farm which have both been funded for CRF Round 6 so getting these completed is a priority.

Upper Hudson River Watershed Coalition:

- Roadside Erosion Grant: We are nearing the end of this grant. This is the final quarter to get any work done towards this grant.
- Next meeting is 11/10/22

Trainings/Meetings Attending or Attended-

- Silvopasture Tour- Watkins Glen, NY 9/15/22-9/16/22. Paid for by NYS CDEA.

Miscellaneous

- Bank Reconciliations

Technician's Report: Lyndsy Hilder - October 19, 2022

- **Grants and Projects:**

- **Part B Projects:**

- Manure Safety Course: We were able to complete our second farmer safety course at Ideal Dairy on Friday, October 7th by putting on our Manure Storage Safety Course with NYCAMH educator Jim Carrabba. We had a total of 15 people come to the training who were from local fire departments and EMS. John walked us through their entire manure storage facility, and Jim gave a lot of information and opened up a lot of things to the fire fighters. This led to many of the departments wanting to have discussions with the farmers in their area about having a walk-through their facilities. Overall, it was a nice end to our 2022 Part B projects.
- 2022 Part B Final Reports have been completed
- 2023 Project Ideas:
 - Lake Water Quality Monitoring → (Category= Conserve, Restore, and Enhance the Soil and Water Resources of the State) This will put funds towards getting a baseline of all of the lakes in the County as well as getting our Water Quality Coordinating Committee back up and running in the County. It will also serve as a way to inform and help locals living on the lakes and lake associations.
 - Riparian Buffer on Ron Decker's property → (Category= Protect and Restore Streams and Wetlands) This will allow us to plant a riparian buffer along the streams on Ron Decker's property as Trout Unlimited has decided that they will not take on the project.
 - Assisting ASA with projects → (Category= Manage Public Lands) ASA still has more work to be done at the Cambridge Forest, including a bank in which they wish to be able to create access to the creek without creating an erosion issue and more trails to be made.
 - Georgi Streambank Plantings and Invasive Species Removal → (Category= Protect and Restore Streams and Wetlands or Conserve, Restore, and Enhance the Soil and Water Resources of the State) This will allow us to continue our work at the Georgi by helping with the removal of the invasive species along the bank and planting native species that will help mitigate the erosion currently happening along the banks.

- Connect with the Battenkill Conservancy for Cleanups→(Category=Protect and Restore Streams and Wetlands) We will be able to contact the Battenkill Conservancy and connect with them more with projects such as cleanups of the Battenkill.
- **CAFO Waste Storage and Transfer:**
 - **Round 1:**
 - Kenyon Hill: Amber and I have been on multiple visits to stay up to date on any updates and to be on site for any pours. We were there for the last pour on October 5th and have sent pictures and updates to the engineer as we near the end of the project and as-builts can begin being made up for the project.
- **Ag Non-Point Source:**
 - **Round 24:**
 - Walkers: While Bob was out, I took over the visits to Walkers to ensure that everything was going smoothly. Corrina and I have gone out a couple of times and I have gone out to see how the trusses went up as well as the roofing being put on.
- **Climate Resilient Farming (CRF):**
 - Ghost Light Farm: Amber and I went to talk with the owners of Ghost Light Farm to go over the future steps of the grant as the award was announced and we were able to tell them that they were funded. We wanted to make sure that everyone was on the same page and for them to understand how the next steps will be taken and the approximate timeline.
- **NYS-DEC WQIP:**
 - I have done more hydroseeding in the town of Salem. We are trying our best to work with more towns in the Upper Hudson Watershed to do more hydroseeding. Outside of this grant I have done hydroseeding with the Town of Granville to finish up a project that they had done this past summer.
- **AEM:**
 - I have been working on multiple tier 2 site visits and finishing tier 2 reports. I have also been doing soil sampling for some of the farms and sending them out to be analyzed.
 - Reporting quarterly AEM hours to Amber
- **Workshops and Meetings Attended:**
 - CWICNY meeting: Attended September 15th, 2022

- Heat and Wildfire Smoke Exposure in Ag workers: Zoom meeting September 20th, 2022
- Round Table Discussion - Grain Bin Safety: Zoom Meeting September 22nd, 2022
- Confined Space - Grain Bin Entry: Zoom Meeting September 22nd, 2022
- Conservation Skills:
 - Stormwater construction permit and site inspection: Attended September 27th, 2022
 - Pollinators: Attended September 28th, 2022
- CWICNY Strategic Planning: Zoom meeting October 6th, 2022
- Manure Storage Safety Training: Attended October 7th, 2022
- **SWCD Projects:**
 - Offering Drone Services to Public: It was brought to our attention through Scott that someone from one of his projects wanted to have drone footage or pictures taken above their wetland restoration site to have the ability to see how it changes over the years. We have decided for me to do some research on what we could possibly charge for something like this as it is not a part of one of our projects. This would allow me to use the drone more often and for more people to learn about how we can use it.
 - From what I have researched people either charge by the hour or as a package. Common prices per hour are between \$40-\$100 per hour and the packages vary based on what is provided. Video and mapping would be more expensive than simply taking photos due to the time it would take to create a video or mapping. Most of the things I researched were more expensive due to most of the time where someone is using a drone in photography is wedding or real estate pictures that are edited which takes more time, but we will not be editing any of the photos or videos.
 - Package examples:
 - Photo package: 10-20 pictures= \$150-\$200
 - Photo package with 1–3-minute video= \$300-\$400
 - Photo package with map= \$300-\$400
 - All photos, videos and maps are unedited due to the fact that we are simply taking pictures of property to be able to see how the environment is changing or to be able to have an up-to-date map of a property, not for selling real estate or pictures that people want to have edited.
 - I think that we should do an hourly rate as it would be better for the district. Videos and maps would take longer to put together than pictures, therefore people would be paying for my services either way and it can cover us more than packages would, especially with larger projects or property with more acreage.

New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee
Region 4 Report – October 2022
Submitted by: Ryan Cunningham – Region 4 Associate Environmental Analyst

General Updates

Resumption of In-Person Meeting Requirement: The State of Emergency has ended in New York and the Executive Order which suspended Open Meetings Law has now expired. As of 09/12/2022, public bodies in New York State should now begin to operate as they did before the onset of the pandemic in early 2020 when the “in person” aspects of the Open Meetings Law were first suspended. Questions can be directed to your Regional AEA.

NYS SWCC News

October SWCC Meeting: The next SWCC meeting is scheduled to convene at **10:00 AM on October 18th**. Further details and an agenda for this meeting will be sent out shortly. Reminder – participation at all SWCC meetings are eligible toward PM1, Part C of State Aid to Districts.

Funding Opportunity - Implementation of AEM on NYS Grown & Certified Farms: Funding in the amount of \$1.4 Million is available for the Implementation of AEM Plans on farms enrolled in the NYS G&C program or farms that provide commodities to NYS G&C processors. The maximum award level is \$50,000 per farm application. Applications must be submitted through Grants Gateway by **4PM on October 24th, 2022**. <https://agriculture.ny.gov/rfp-0279-implementation-agricultural-environmental-management-plans-new-york-state-grown-certified>

SWCC November 1st Reminders:

- **2023 Annual Plan of Work (APOW):** It’s time to start updating your APOW for 2022. The deadline for submittal to your AEA is **November 1, 2022**. This will allow time to review, provide feedback, and recommend to the SWCC for approval by the end of the calendar year. Please don’t hesitate to discuss with your Regional AEA if there are any questions or concerns.
- **2023 Part B Conservation Project Financial Assistance:** Part B proposals are Due **November 1, 2022**. Projects are to be completed by December 31, 2023. Part B requests should be submitted via email to ben.luskin@agriculture.ny.gov.
- **Interim Reporting:** Interim reports for AGNPS Contracts (Round 21-Round 23), CAFO WSTSP (Round 1 and Round 2), CRF (Round 1 – Round 4) are due **November 1st**. Reports should be sent to Maureen.Irish@nyagriculture.ny.gov, as well as the appropriate program manager and your Regional AEA.

Climate Resilient Farming (CRF) Program Round 6: Congratulations to those Districts who will be receiving funds to help farms via the Climate Resilient Farming Program! \$7.9 million will be divided between 23 Districts to implement projects on 70 farms. The funding will help protect and preserve NY’s natural resources by supporting farms and addressing the unpredictable conditions and challenges of climate change. Information about Plan of Work development will be available shortly. More info about the Round 6 awards can be found here: <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-announces-nearly-79-million-help-new-york-farms-address-impacts-climate-change>

NYS Connects - Climate Smart Farms and Forests Project Coming to NY: Governor Hochul recently announced the NYS Connects: Climate Smart Farms and Forests Project, was awarded a \$60 million grant under the first round of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities funding opportunity. The project is one of 70 selected nationally and will help agriculture producers and forest landowners implement climate smart agriculture and forestry practices and build connections between landowners and companies with a growing demand for commodities produced using climate smart strategies. More information about these funds will be available in the coming months.

Draft Great Lakes Action Agenda Released for Comment: The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), has released the draft New York’s Great Lakes Action Agenda 2022-2030, a multi-year action plan for restoration and conservation that will foster sustainable, resilient, communities in New York’s Great Lakes region. The draft Action Agenda is available on DEC’s website at: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/91881.html>. Public comments will be accepted until **November 11th, 2022 and** can be submitted to greatlakes@dec.ny.gov.

Other Events

Upper Susquehanna River Watershed Forum – Watershed Wednesdays: Watershed Wednesdays is in its third year of mini-sessions with topics related to the watershed, conservation initiatives, and ongoing projects. These sessions began again in September 2022 and are scheduled to commence through November. Future session announcements and past webinar recordings can be found at, <http://www.upperSusquehanna.org/usc/watershed-wednesdays/>

Working with Nature for Shorelines Workshop: NY Sea Grant, NYSDEC, NYS Department of State and Jefferson County SWCD are hosting an informative workshop from **1 – 4 p.m. on Friday, October 21, 2022**, at Lyme Free Library, located at

12165 State Route 12E in Chaumont, New York, to provide shoreline residents and contractors an overview of shoreline management techniques, with a focus on natural and nature-based techniques. Register by October 14 at <https://bit.ly/3QyhWyW>.

2022 Northeast Region Agribusiness & CCA Conference: Including the Basic Training track for those preparing to take the CCA exams as well as the Advanced Training track for current CCAs. An in-person track will commence at the Doubletree Hotel, East Syracuse, NY on **November 29 - 30, 2022**, followed by a virtual track will commence on **December 13 - 14, 2022**, when additional programming will be offered. More information and a registration link can be found here, <https://www.nysaba.com/educational-meetings>

NACD 2023 Annual Meeting: Registration for The National Association of Conservation Districts' (NACD) 77th Annual Meeting is now open! Hosted in partnership with the Louisiana Association of Conservation Districts, the 2023 Annual Meeting will take place in New Orleans, Louisiana from **February 11-15, 2023**. To learn more and to register, please visit <https://www.nacdnet.org/news-and-events/annual-meeting/2023-registration/>

Other Funding

US Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Grant: The US Forest Service (USFS) is requesting applications for the Fiscal Year 2022 GLRI Grant Program through **November 14th, 2022**. This program will support reforestation, ecosystem restoration and forest health improvement in the Great Lakes Basin through an agreement with the U.S. EPA. Two grant opportunities under GLRI will be available at the same time; Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMA) Grants and Forest Restoration (FR) Grants. It is anticipated that up to \$850,000 in funds will be available for the CWMA grant, and up to \$4.15 million for the FR grant. More information can be found at, <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/r9/workingtogether/grants>