

August 8, 2023

MINUTES

**OSWEGO COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
DIRECTORS MEETING**

The Directors and staff met in-person at the District Office Conference Room, located at 3105 State Route 3, Fulton, NY 13069 at 10:03am on Tuesday August 8th, 2023.

PRESENT:

Jeff Richards, Chairperson
Linda Lockwood, Vice Chairperson
Tom Bonoffski, Member
Mary Ellen Chesbro, Member

Joe Chairvolotti, District Manager
Erica Schreiner, Sr. District Technician
Sarra Learned, Environmental Resource Technician
Laura Romanowicz, Secretary
Ryan Cunningham, SWCC

1. **MINUTES - MOTION: TO APPROVE MINUTES FOR July 2023 AS SUBMITTED.**
4 yeas (in favor), **0 nays** (those opposed)
Made by Director **Bonoffski** and seconded by Director **Chesbro** and carried.
2. **ADMINISTRATIVE - MOTION: TO APPROVE THE BILLS FOR August 2023 AS SUBMITTED.**
4 yeas (in favor), **0 nays** (those opposed)
Made by Director **Lockwood** and seconded by Director **Chesbro** and carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT - MOTION: TO APPROVE THE FINANCIAL REPORT FOR July 2023 AS SUBMITTED.
4 yeas (in favor), **0 nays** (those opposed)
Made by Director **Chesbro** and seconded by Director **Lockwood** and carried.

2023 MODIFIED BUDGET - Board of Directors reviewed and approved the 2023 Modified Budget as submitted.

PAYROLL CERTIFICATION FOR EMPLOYEES - Board of Directors reviewed and approved the **August 2023** Payroll Certification for Employees as submitted.

RECONCILED BANK STATEMENTS - Director **Richards** reviewed the **July 2023** Reconciled Bank Statements and initialed.

August 8, 2023

Old Business

Developed specs for the vehicle bid and submitted to the Oswego County Purchasing Dept. The bid will be conducted this month in time for review before the September board meeting. General discussion followed.

New Business

Giant Hogweed Invoice: Received invoice from Chase Enterprises in the amount of \$12,282.75 for giant hogweed control work in Oswego County. The treatments were effective and successful and involved both herbicide application as well as seed head removal. General discussion followed.

MOTION: TO PAY THE INVOICE FROM CHASE ENTERPRISES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$12,282.75 FOR CONTROL WORK CONDUCTED ON GIANT HOGWEED IN OSWEGO COUNTY.

4 yeas (in favor), **0 nays** (those opposed)

Made by Director **Chesbro** and seconded by Director **Bonoffski** and carried.

Agreement with Jefferson County SWCD for technical services: This includes design work as well as certified nutrient management planning services. Reimbursement will include staff time at the current AEM rate as well as mileage at the current NYS rate. General discussion followed.

MOTION: TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENT WITH JEFFERSON COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT FOR TECHNICAL SERVICES TO INCLUDE DESIGN AND CERTIFIED NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLANNING, WHICH WILL ENTAIL REIMBURSEMENT OF STAFF TIME AT THE CURRENT AEM AND NYS MILEAGE RATES.

4 yeas (in favor), **0 nays** (those opposed)

Made by Director **Lockwood** and seconded by Director **Chesbro** and carried.

Budget/County request: Starting to work on this with Laura and will complete by the submission deadline, 9/1. General discussion followed.

APOW

MOTION: TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL PLAN OF WORK (APOW) FOR THE OSWEGO COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT FOR 2024.

4 yeas (in favor), **0 nays** (those opposed)

Made by Director **Chesbro** and seconded by Director **Lockwood** and carried.

August 8, 2023

REPORTS:

Ryan Cunningham gave the following report:

New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee

Region 4 Report - August 2023

Submitted by: Ryan Cunningham - Region 4 Associate Environmental Analyst

NYS SWCC News

State Aid to Districts Forum: A State Aid to Districts Forum will be held on **August 16th**, from **10:00 AM to 1:00 PM**. In-person meeting locations will be in Albany (Department of Agriculture and Markets, 10 B Airline Dr., Albany, NY 12235) and Syracuse (NYS Fairgrounds Agriculture Office, 581 State Fair Blvd, Syracuse 13209). A virtual WebEx option will also be available. Space is limited in Syracuse so if you plan to attend in person at this location, please contact your Regional AEA for more information.

2024 Annual Plan of Work (APOW): It's time to start updating your APOW for 2024. The deadline for submittal to your AEA is November 1, 2023. 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.

SWCC Operations Sub-Committee: The SWCC is preparing to re-establish the Operations Sub-Committee. The sub-committee is normally tasked with discussing various SWCD operations issues as they arise, assisting SWCDs with the development of various operational polices, and defining a set framework to illicit good operational practices. A major component of the sub-committee's focus is directed at the upkeep of the SWCD Office/Operations Manual. The SWCC is currently looking for interested SWCD staff to help serve on the Operations Sub-Committee. We anticipate the first meeting to occur in the Fall of 2023. If you are interested in serving on the sub-committee, please contact your Regional AEA.

August SWCC Meeting: The State Committee meeting will not meet in the month of August. They will reconvene with a regular meeting in September. Further details and an agenda for the September meeting will be available soon.

SWCC CAA Training: The CAA trainings on basic conservation practices are being updated and transferred to Youtube. The Hydrology, Culverts and Fence courses are all updated with more on the way. They are a great way to get new employees up to speed on basic design skills. Check them out at: <https://www.youtube.com/@nysdepartmentofagriculture9462/playlists>.

Status of Existing Contracts: As a reminder, all contracts between the State of New York and SWCDs must be closed out in a timely manner. Final written reports must be filed with the Department no later than sixty (60) days from the contract end date. Once the work under an Agreement is

August 8, 2023

complete, the SWCD must provide a complete close out packet to their Regional AEA to begin the review process. If the close out packet is not received within 60 days from the contract end date, the Department reserves the right to require ALL funds to be returned.

Please take stock of the end dates of your currently held contracts and plan to begin the closeout process for those grants nearing their expiration. Your Regional AEA's are available to answer any questions or concerns about the closeout process and to discuss the options available to a SWCD for contract extensions.

Reminder, Applications are Taken on a Rolling Basis: The following NY AGM funding opportunities accept applications on a rolling basis.

- The goal of the **Source Water Buffer Program** is to protect public drinking water and to enhance water quality protection. The program funds the purchase of conservation easements and projects that establish riparian buffers on farmland that borders critical water sources. Approximately \$5 million is available to support the purchase of conservation easements and the implementation of buffer systems. <https://agriculture.ny.gov/soil-and-water/rfa-0181-source-water-buffer-program>
- The intent of **Round 19 of the Farmland Protection Implementation Grants (FPIG) Program – Agricultural Conservation Easement Projects**, is to fund the implementation of certain farmland protection activities intended to maintain the economic viability of the State's agricultural industry and its supporting land base. Specifically, AGM seeks applications that will enable eligible applicants to cover a portion of total eligible project costs for Agricultural Conservation Easement Projects with owners of viable agricultural lands that are at risk of conversion to non-farm uses. <https://agriculture.ny.gov/land-and-water/rfa-0294-farmland-protection-implementation-grants-round-19-agricultural>

Other Events

2023 NY Soil Health and Climate Resiliency Field Days: The NY Soil Health Alliance Group will convene a series of Soil Health & Climate Resiliency Field Day's throughout the State during 2023. Registration is now live for the **August 16th event at the Miner Institute, the August 24th event in Penn Yan and the August 31st event in Le Roy.** Visit, <https://www.newyorksoilhealth.org/fielddays/> for more information and to register.

2023 Conservation Skills Workshop – The 2023 Conservation Skills Workshop will be held **September 18 – September 21** in Auburn, NY at the Holiday Inn (75 North St, Auburn, NY). This workshop is sponsored by the NYS CDEA, USDA NRCS, and NYS SWCC. This year there will be several classes that cover multiple days. Please read each class description carefully and be aware that classes will overlap. This year's registration rate is \$100 per person. To register online, please visit: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScUwGi-RgLOm-OAIyJJ8wTkSqw46LH5sgxCucwDZIQtVkrqYA/viewform> before the registration deadline **August 14th, 2023.**

August 8, 2023

Other Funding

Consolidated Funding Application Requesting Proposals: Round XIII of the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) is open and applications are requested by **4:00 p.m. on Friday, August 11th, 2023**. More than \$750,000,000 in funding will be made available under this year's CFA. Grant programs of interest to SWCDs offered via the CFA include:

- Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) Program - <https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/4774.html>
- Non-Agricultural Nonpoint Source Planning and MS4 Mapping Grant - <https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/116725.html>

Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Grants: Nearly \$175 million in funding is available for fish passage projects under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act. This funding will support projects that reopen migratory pathways and restore access to healthy habitat for fish around the country. Proposals must be received through www.grants.gov by **11:59 PM Eastern time on October 16, 2023**. <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/grant/restoring-fish-passage-through-barrier-removal-grants>

Sarra Learned gave the following report:

Wrapped up the 2023 giant hogweed season with Chase Enterprises. All assigned sites for this season were continuously monitored between May and July. By the end of July, all known giant hogweed plants had been chemically treated or had their seed heads removed. Received site-specific treatment data from Chase Enterprises which will be used in conjunction with the District's survey data to report all season findings to NYSDEC via Survey123.

Conducted pre-treatment surveys throughout the Oswego River to assess which populations were suitable for herbicide treatment. Follow up surveys were conducted post-treatment to ensure treatment was successful and to take note of any patches that need additional treatment, which is being carried out this week. Herbicide was applied by Chase Enterprises' drone and all patches display uniform mortality whereas treatment applied from the airboat would typically leave a non-uniform "stripping" effect throughout the patches.

Collected water samples in Minetto and Oswego after the first round of water chestnut treatment was complete. Samples were collected one day, two days, and five days after treatment. Samples were frozen and mailed to Waters Agricultural Laboratories where it was concluded that imazamox, the active ingredient in the herbicide used, was not detected in any of the samples, inferring that the water body meets the standards for irrigation as described on the label. Additional samples will be collected throughout the Oswego River after the second treatment round is complete.

Completed a rough draft of the 2022 District Annual Report which is currently under review by the rest of District staff before final edits are made.

August 8, 2023

Attended the SLELO PRISM summer partner meeting, held at Southwick Beach State Park.

Assisted SLELO PRISM with an emerald ash borer (EAB) biocontrol release at the Rice Creek Field Station.

Continued involvement with the water sampling aspect of the Sandy Creek 9 Element Plan with Jefferson County SWCD.

Provided technical assistance through customer phone calls and by providing various maps and environmental reviews as needed.

Erica Schreiner gave the following report:

The first of three AEM implementation projects of 2023 began August 3 and should be completed mid-August. The second project is awaiting contractor availability. The landowner for the third project is awaiting a third bid.

Continued AEM planning with other program participants. Completed two re-certifications for the New York Grown and Certified program.

Conducted a site visit for an agricultural landowner who would like to install tile drainage on their farm. A survey will be completed after hay is cut on the fields.

Expecting to work with a newly hired CNMP planner at Jefferson County SWCD for a landowner who has an interest in a waste storage facility.

Distributed a reimbursement form to active AEM participants for soil, manure, and compost testing services.

Maintained the District web site and Facebook page.

Hosted the August meeting of the Oswego County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs.

Continued completing tasks as a member of the NYS Conservation District Employees' Association State Fair Committee.

Provided customer technical assistance in the following areas: ag assessment vs. ag district, several drainage concerns, general property questions, and well water testing.

Attended training for a Day in the Life of Lake Ontario - St. Lawrence River Watershed in preparation for an education program for middle school students at Rice Creek Field Station this fall.

August 8, 2023

Attended the Local Working Group meeting for NRCS w/JC and provided input about programs and producers.

Continued monitoring the status of a culvert replacement project on Route 49 in regard to assistance given to an agricultural producer in communicating with the NYS Department of Transportation.

Continued planning the 35th annual Oswego County Conservation Field Day to be held on September 21, 2023 at Selkirk Shores State Park. Five schools have registered sixteen classes to attend.

Laura Romanowicz gave the following report:

Received AEM Round 17 Landowner Cost Share funds in the amount of \$11,528.00 and the funds have been placed in the AEM Round 17 savings account.

2024 Budget: Met with Joe and provided the draft financial figures for the 2024 budget. We will firm up the numbers before the September 1st deadline.

Began the initial review of species for the 2024 Annual Tree and Shrub Program. Was able to reserve the PAT trees from one nursery. Will meet with Joe to review the final selections in the coming weeks.

Performance Measures: Thank you directors for continuing to complete the performance measures for 2023. To date, 2 out of 3 directors have attended a regional or state meeting, and one additional director will need to complete a regional or state meeting to satisfy this requirement. Meeting information will be provided to directors as they come up.

Joe Chairvolotti gave the following report:

Reforestation Property:

An issue has come up regarding a property boundary for a Reforestation parcel on Happy Valley Road. Looking into this currently and a survey may be needed. General discussion followed.

Gathered information necessary for the carbon program review.

Three interns will be staying an extra week to assist with hanging signs, property checks and potentially forest inventory for management plans

Assisted landowners and municipalities with general technical, water quality and forestry related advice, both remotely and on-site. Requests involving flood plains, aquifers, conservation easements, ponds and regulatory features were received and addressed.

August 8, 2023

Town of Williamstown Culvert: Notice of Incomplete Application received for Williamstown culvert project and will be working on that in the latter part of the summer to move the project forward.

Great Bear Shoreline Project: Scheduled an on-site meeting with DEC, ACOE, Barclay's office and Friends of Great Bear.

Dam Removal in Mexico: A WQIP application was not submitted, but we will continue to look at opportunities as they come up.

Little Salmon River Watershed: Several DEC staff and myself met with Mr. Dowling, representing the Veracruz Yacht Club. We listened to Mr. Dowling's presentation and offered recommendations. A DOS watershed plan seemed most appropriate as well as the Citizen Science opportunity. Mr. Dowling will need to approach the Town of Mexico to pursue this and if there is an opportunity for this office to be of assistance, we will.

Village of Pulaski: Asked to participate in a wellhead protection planning process with the Village of Pulaski, which is being coordinated by CNY Regional Planning. Will be attending meetings and providing technical assistance as needed.

Town of Mexico: Invited to the American Farmland Trust meeting. This is intended to assist Mexico with their ordinances involving ag land protection.

Lake Neatahwanta: Working on organizing a meeting with the Mayor, different interest groups, academia and regulatory groups.

Met with CNYRPB and Sea Grant separately, regarding a NOAA climate resiliency grant. CNYRP will not be submitting an application, but Sea Grant will. Sea Grant is working on one for projects and one for staff capacity. This may benefit us with a staff person, as well as other Districts.

Water Chestnut Herbicide Treatment:

Met with DEC and the contractor on 7/17 at Big Island. The treatment occurred during that week with the drone. Follow-up visits from shore and photos from Sarra on the river show great results.

The treatment prompted a few calls, but mostly riparian owners were interested in whether their areas would be getting sprayed or not.

NOI was provided for the treatment during the week of 8/7. The drone will be used again to get anything that was missed, which was minimal. There will be one patch missed in the Big Island area as it is not in our treatment zone and too large to pull.

August 8, 2023

Sarra conducted follow-up water sampling. Samples were sent to Waters Agricultural Lab via FedEx. The results showed that the concentration of imazamox was at or below 1 ppb, which meets the standards for irrigation.

Submitted a completed QAPP for review by the DEC. This is necessary in order to fund post-treatment water testing through FLOWPA. Some editing is necessary and will take place this week.

Water Chestnut Hand-pulling Program:

Reviewed permit applications that Sarra completed.

Interns have been doing a great job. Have pulled at every wc site on the Oswego River, as well as Rice Creek, Scriba Creek and Oneida lake. A total of over 27,000 lbs have been removed so far this year.

Interns are conducting nut sampling to predict patch status.

The season will be wrapping up this week and the crew will submit a research paper and a technical report.

Approximately 20 participants were present at the Metzger's Pond Hand Pull. Around 1,500 lbs were removed.

Silver Lake: Cattail mitigation and research has started at Silver Lake.

Will be an instructor for the AEM forestry course at Conservation Skills Workshop in September.

Developed and submitted a Division 3 report.

Completed several annual report articles and submitted to Sarra.

3. **NEXT MEETING** - Tuesday September 12th, 2023 @ 10:00am at the District's Conference Room

4. **ADJOURNMENT** - Meeting adjourned at 11:24am.

MOTION: TO ADJOURN

Made by Director **Chesbro** and seconded by Director **Lockwood** and carried.

August 8, 2023

Respectively submitted,

Laura Romanowicz

cc: Directors

NRCS/Area Office

Ryan Cunningham/NYSSWCC

FSA & NRCS/Oswego Field Office

Betsy Sherman-Saunders/Clerk of the Legislature

Raven Ahart/Deputy Clerk of the Legislature

DRAFT