

September 12, 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 10:04am on Tuesday September 12th, 2023.

PRESENT:

Jeff Richards, Chairperson
Linda Lockwood, Vice Chairperson
Tom Bonoffski, Member
Mary Ellen Chesbro, Member
Sandy Tuori-Bell, Member

Joe Chairvolotti, District Manager
Sarra Learned, Environmental Resource Technician
Laura Romanowicz, Secretary

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

FINANCIAL REPORT - MOTION: TO APPROVE THE FINANCIAL REPORT FOR August 2023 AS SUBMITTED.
5 yeas (in favor), **0 nays** (those opposed)
Made by Director **Lockwood** and seconded by Director **Chesbro** 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 **September 2023** Payroll Certification for Employees as submitted.

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

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Old Business

New Vehicle: A Jeep Grand Cherokee was delivered to the office and Laura has worked on the registration and insurance. General discussion followed.

Budget/County Request: A level funding request was submitted to Oswego County prior to the 9/1 deadline. The budget for 2024 was reviewed and discussed. General discussion followed.

MOTION: TO ACCEPT THE 2024 OSWEGO COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT BUDGET AS SUBMITTED.

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

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

State Aid Meeting and Performance Measures: Several amendments to the performance measures have been made as a result of increases in funding. General discussion followed.

New Business

Water Chestnut Invoice: Received invoice from Chase Enterprises in the amount of \$59,236.50 for water chestnut control work in Oswego County. The drone was used exclusively and the treatments were effective and successful. General discussion followed.

MOTION: TO PAY THE INVOICE FROM CHASE ENTERPRISES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$59,236.50 FOR CONDUCTING AQUATIC HERBICIDE APPLICATIONS ON 138 ACRES OF WATER CHESTNUTS.

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

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

AEM Project

MOTION: TO MAKE PAYMENT FOR AN AEM BASE ROUND 17 IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT AT OSWEGO COUNTY AEM FARM 075-0129 UPON SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT AND ENGINEER SIGN-OFF.

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

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

Bee infestation, fire alarm and other issues in the office. A big thank you goes out to Oswego County Buildings and Grounds for always responding quickly.

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REPORTS:

Ryan Cunningham provided the following report:

New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee

Region 4 Report - September 2023

Submitted by: Ryan Cunningham - Region 4 Associate Environmental Analyst

NYS SWCC News

September SWCC Meeting: The next meeting of the NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee is scheduled for **10AM on Tuesday, September 19th**. The meeting will take place via video conference. There will also be multiple locations where in person attendance is an option. Further details can be found in the available meeting agenda.

AEM Base Program Round 18 Announced: AEM Base 18 offers non-competitive funding for technical assistance and cost-sharing BMP implementation projects based on the local AEM Strategy. The two-year AEM Action Plan is due **November 1, 2023, and the program runs from January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2025**. Visit the SWCC's SharePoint site for program details (<https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/Agriculture/SWCC>): "Resources for Districts > Agricultural Environmental Management > AEM Base Program Materials > AEM Base Round 18 Materials". please feel free to contact me (greg.albrecht@agriculture.ny.gov or 607.229.4654) or your Regional Coordinator with any questions.

Also, please join us for a webinar from **1 to 3 PM on Tuesday, September 12th**, where we'll tour through AEM18's upgrades and workings and field questions. Please use the following WebEx info to join: <https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/j.php?MTID=m3902ea43e3bf78bde19939c820602972>
Webinar number (access code): 161 389 2738, Webinar password: r2iJKdMWj88

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.

State Aid to Districts:

- **2024 Part B Conservation Project Financial Assistance** - Part B proposals are Due November 1, 2023. Projects are to be completed by December 31, 2024. Part B requests should be submitted via email to ben.luskin@agriculture.ny.gov.
- **2023 Part C Performance Measures** - As for Performance Measures, the end of the year is rapidly approaching and SWCDs should be checking to make sure that your District is fulfilling their obligations for meetings, training, training plans, etc., to be able to earn all the funds that will be available. Please contact your Regional AEA with any specific questions that you may have.

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SWCC Operations Sub-Committee: The SWCC is preparing to re-establish the Operations Sub-Committee SWCC is currently looking for interested SWCD staff to help serve. A major component of the sub-committee's focus is directed at the upkeep of the SWCD Office/Operations Manual. We anticipate the first meeting to occur in the Winter of 2023. If you are interested in serving on the sub-committee, please contact your Regional AEA.

Applications for use of CDEA 4-HR Funds: The NYS CDEA is pleased to announce the release of their application form for use of funds generated from the NYS DEC Endorsed 4-Hour Erosion and Sediment Control Online Training. Funds are available for SWCDs to host or attend a training that will benefit SWCDs state-wide. All information is available on SharePoint (CDEA Materials - Application for Use of 4 Hour Funds.) All questions and application submissions should be sent to Caitlin Stewart at Hamilton SWCD, caitlin@hamcoswcd.org.

Other Events

Silvopasture Training for Professionals: CCE and other partners will host a three-day training centered around Cornell's Arnot Teaching and Research Forest starting on **Monday, September 25th at 1:00 pm and concluding on Wednesday, September 27th at noon**. This inaugural field-based training (<http://cceschuyler.org/resources/silvopasture-agenda-2023>) is tailored to Technical Service Providers and resource management professionals who work with grazing operations that are already using or interested in developing silvopastures. Cost is \$60. The training is limited to 30 participants on a first-come, first-serve basis so register before September 21st at: https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/2023_Silvopasture_Training-2_244

2023 CDEA Administrative Conference: The New York State Conservation District Employee Association (NYS CDEA) is happy to announce the 2023 Administrative Conference! The conference will convene **November 6th and 7th**, at the DoubleTree by Hilton Syracuse, 6301 State Route 298, East Syracuse, NY. Registration details will be available shortly. Please save the date.

2022 CREP Annual Report now available on SharePoint:

<https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/Agriculture/SWCC/SitePages/CREP.aspx> The report focusses on the number of CREP contracts, practices implemented and acres enrolled as well as highlights success Stories and list suggestions to improve the Program. Please use the link above to also access previous years reports, CREP fact sheets and USDA training material. If you have any questions about the CREP Program, please contact Scott Fickbohm at Scott.Fickbohm@agriculture.ny.gov

Other Funding

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**

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time on October 16, 2023. <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/grant/restoring-fish-passage-through-barrier-removal-grants>

DEC Invasive Species Grant Program Funding Available: DEC recently announced that \$3 million is available in the third round of the State's Invasive Species Grant Program (ISGP). This grant program is designed to advance projects that target both aquatic and terrestrial invasive species across the state, with six funding categories that address invasive species spread prevention; early detection and rapid response; research; management planning; and education and outreach. DEC is accepting applications for these grants through **Nov. 1st, 2023**. For more information and to apply, visit: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/115742.html>

NOAA Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grant: NOAA recently announced that they will provide nearly \$240M to prioritized high-value, high-impact habitat restoration projects that advance resilience. The competition closes **November 17th**. Proposals can request between \$1M - \$25M. Eligible project types include planning and assessments; feasibility studies; engineering design and permitting; on-the-ground implementation; pre- and/or post-implementation monitoring; capacity building, stakeholder engagement or a combination of activities. For more information and to apply, visit, <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/240-million-available-transformational-habitat-restoration-and-coastal-resilience>

Sarra Learned gave the following report:

Chase Enterprises carried out a second round of herbicide treatment at all water chestnut sites on the Oswego River in Mid-August. Post-treatment inspections were conducted and each site was documented with photos. Mortality of treatment populations was nearly 100% at most sites. Roughly ten days after treatment ended, ten water samples were collected from Phoenix to Minetto to be tested for herbicide concentration. Samples were shipped to Waters Agricultural Laboratories where they determined that the active ingredient, imazamox, in the herbicide used was not detected in any of the samples, allowing all use restrictions to be lifted from the river.

Reviewed and signed the amended Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) prior to collecting samples.

Created maps for NYSDEC and the Waters Agricultural Laboratories to show the location for each sample collected on the Oswego River.

Hand-pulled roughly one hundred pounds of water chestnuts from the Fulton Marina.

The giant hogweed program has been officially wrapped up until next spring. All site information and treatment data from the 2023 season has now been uploaded to the Survey123 application for NYSDEC.

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Worked a shift at the NY State Fair alongside LR.

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.

Laura Romanowicz gave the following report:

There are some upcoming opportunities to complete the regional/state meeting performance measure for board members. (NYS SWCC 9/19, NYS Grange Annual Meeting 10/13-17, & NYACD Annual Meeting 10/24-26). To date, we have 2 out of 3 required attendances.

Attended an OSC webinar with Joe that addressed the changes to the 2024 Performance Measures.

Completed the 2024 budget figures with Joe, and the paperwork was hand-delivered to the County on 08/31/2023.

Volunteered for an afternoon shift on August 29th at the NYS Fair with Sarra.

Finalized the species selection for the 2024 Tree and Shrub program with Joe. Orders have been emailed and confirmed by the nurseries.

Received cost share funds from two landowners for AEM Round 17 BMP projects in the amount of \$28,457.76. Funds have been transferred into the AEM Round 17 savings account.

Received FLOWPA's NYS DEC Advance payment for contract C311775 YR 4, Advance 1, which was just over \$1.5M. Funds have been transferred from the District Checking to FLOWPA's Reserve Account, where retainage and advancement payments will be processed and sent to several SWCD's.

Sent Nye Chrysler Jeep Ram all of the necessary information to process the purchase of the District's new 2023 Jeep Grand Cherokee, which also included requesting Eastern Shores Associates to add the new vehicle to our insurance. The Jeep was received on September 6th and the registration & a new gas card application were also completed on the same day. The new license plates will be sent in the mail, along with the title.

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Joe Chairvolotti gave the following report:

Items from ES:

ES currently working in the field and will provide a full report next month. CFD invitations emailed to directors on 09/08/23.

Invitation received to have a booth at the Oswego County Family Fall Festival, September 29 - October 1. General discussion followed and it was decided to not participate in the event.

Reforestation Property:

Met with Real Property staff to discuss boundary inquiry from individual wanting to purchase an adjacent property. The information was relayed to the inquiring individual.

Three interns stayed on an extra week to assist with hanging signs, property checks and forest inventory for Part B forest management plans. Provided forestland navigation training. The crew installed signs on several property boundaries, performed checks and assisted with the fieldwork for one management plan. General discussion followed.

Conducted site visits of 2 timber sales that have been harvested and not cleaned up. Will organize the site restoration work soon.

Assisted landowners and municipalities with general technical, water quality and forestry related advice, both remotely and on-site. Requests involving ponds, regulatory features, plant ID, solar, critical area seeding, weed harvesting, invasive species and forestry were received and addressed.

Completed fieldwork for 1 forest management plan covered under Part B funding. Assisted by interns.

CSW AEM Forestry Course: Met twice at course sites in the Town of Niles and attended a zoom meeting as well in preparation of class on 9/20.

NYACD Forestry Course: Communications in preparation of presentation on 10/26.

Great Bear Shoreline Project: Held an on-site meeting with DEC, ACOE, Brittney Jerred from Barclay's office and the Friends of Great Bear. Agreed on a plan to move the permitting process forward.

Little Salmon River Watershed: Several communications with Mr. Dowling regarding this watershed and the push for a planning effort. Mr. Dowling has contacted the Town of Mexico and seems to be pursuing a DOS watershed plan.

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Village of Pulaski: Will be conducting a bid next month to move the stormwater planning process forward near the Salmon Meadows development.

Town of Mexico: Attended the American Farmland Trust meeting. This is intended to assist Mexico with their ordinances involving ag land protection. This office may offer technical assistance as needed.

Lake Neatahwanta: Invited to a meeting with stakeholders and the EutroPHIX firm. A treatment with EutroSorb is being proposed, which acts as a phosphorous binder. The intent is to render the phosphorous in the lake inactive to alleviate the HAB concerns. I have committed to inviting regulatory and academic folks to this meeting. There is also a public meeting the day after. General discussion followed.

Water Chestnut Herbicide Treatment:

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.

Water Chestnut Hand-pulling Program:

Received an NOIA for the harvesting permit that we submitted. Working on moving this forward.

Interns did a great job this year. A total of over 31,000 lbs has been removed from the Oswego River, as well as Rice Creek, Scriba Creek and Oneida lake.

Conducted exit interviews and reviewed their research paper and final technical report.

HWA at Independence Park: Biocontrol release should happen this fall. Pesticide treatment will be delayed as it conflicts with the successful release of biocontrol agents.

Meeting with CNY Regional Planning to share updates on water quality activities.

Met with a new employee from Sea Grant to serve as a water quality mentor along with Wayne County SWCD.

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3. **NEXT MEETING** - Tuesday October 10th, 2023 @ 10:00am at the District's Conference Room
4. **ADJOURNMENT** - Meeting adjourned at 11:29am.

MOTION: TO ADJOURN

Made by Director **Chesbro** and seconded by Director **Tuori-Bell** and carried.

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