



Finger Lakes
Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.
CHEMUNG, ONTARIO, SCHUYLER, SENECA, STEUBEN, AND YATES COUNTIES, NEW YORK
415 West Morris Street, Bath, New York 14810
(607) 776-7398 Ext. 5 Fax: (607) 776-7487
Email: fingerlakesrcd@earthlink.net

Minutes

The Finger Lakes RC & D Council Meeting was held Wednesday, January 21st, 2009 at 1:00pm as a Teleconference.

In Attendance:

Chemung County

Ken Bush, S&WCD Rep
Dick Gunderman, Legislature Rep
Karen Tillotson, Member @ Large

Ontario County

PJ Emerick, S&WCD Rep

Schuyler County

Elaine Dalrymple, S&WCD Rep
Timothy Hicks, Legislature Rep
Brett Chedzoy, Member @ Large

Seneca County

Kristin White, S&WCD Rep (Alternate)

Steuben County

Greg Heffner, Legislature Rep
Tom Tomsa, Member @ Large
Amy Dlugos, Legislature Rep (Alternate)
Velynda Risley, S&WCD Rep (Alternate)
Ernie Swift, S&WCD Rep

Yates County

John Keidel, Member @ Large
Jim Balyszak, S&WCD Rep
Taylor Fitch, Legislature Rep

RC&D Staff

Dick Winnett, Coordinator, NRCS
Cheryl Faucett, Finger Lakes RC&D Secretary

Meeting called to order by President, Ken Bush at **1:02pm**.

Approval of Minutes of November 19th, 2008 Council Meeting.

Velynda Risley moved to approve, seconded by Dick Gunderman and carried to accept the Council meeting minutes of November 19th, 2008.

Treasurer's Report:

Treasurer Greg Heffner reviewed the financial statement dated December 31st, 2008. ***The Treasurer's report was filed for audit.***

Communications:

- After submitting a brief application, the USDA Secretary Schafer recognized the Venison Donation Coalition with a “Fight Hunger Initiative Award”. The Coalition was one of four not-for-profit organizations in the Country to receive this award.
- National RC&D Annual Leadership Forum in Washington D.C. is coming up in February.
- Chief of NRCS, Arlan Lancaster stepped down with change in administrations.
- Marc Usher – Greater Adirondack RC&D Coordinator, retired as of December 31, 2008 after 15 years of service.
- The National Association sent letters to President Obama and various members of the Congress, because of the proposed economic stimulus, the Nat’l Association of RC&D Councils has proposed that the Pres. and Congress consider awarding \$100,000,000.00 to the RC&D program nationwide. They call this the “Challenge” grant for RC&D and are looking for opportunities dealing with Economic Development, Bio Energy, and Energy Efficiency. If it were to be approved it would be administered through the National Association.

County Reports:

None

Coordinator’s Report:

NYSEPF Grazing Grant – Working in conjunction with the Steuben Co S&WCD (project sponsor) and grazing advocates, John Wildeman, John Wickham & Jonathan Barter. The Council has prepared a grazing grant application valued at more than \$388,000.00 which has been submitted to Round 15 of the NYS Environmental Protection Fund. The proposal is requesting funds for 22 livestock producers located in the Chemung River Basin (Chemung, Schuyler & Steuben Counties). State funds requested range from \$24,000.00 to \$6,000.00 for individual landowners who in turn must provide a match of at least 30%. Best Management Practices include fencing, wells, spring developments, ponds, stream crossings as well as prescribed grazing.

Streambank Stabilization Grant – Collaborating with the Steuben, Chemung & Schuyler County SWCD’s, the Finger Lakes RC&D Council has prepared and submitted a \$435,000.00 grant preproposal to the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation’s Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund. The purpose of this preproposal is to demonstrate natural stream design effectiveness in controlling streambank erosion and consequently protecting public infrastructure such as roads and bridges. The Council and SWCD’s are expecting to hear from the NFWF later in January on whether to submit a final proposal.

Venison Donation Program – As of January 12, 2009, 26,826 pounds of venison have been processed across New York State and distributed to individuals in need through New York’s Food Bank Association. Just before Christmas 2008, the VDC received \$75,000.00 in accordance with its’ contract with New York State DEC. These funds will be used for processing and administering the program. Also on behalf of the Venison Donation Coalition a New York Senate member item Initiative application for \$30,000.00 has been submitted to Senator George Winner. The VDC recently was notified by the Office of the Secretary of the US Department of Agriculture that the VDC was one of four community based organizations from across the country which was recognized under the Secretary’s Fight Hunger Initiative.

AEM Reporting Project – Cheryl Faucett has completed her work on the NRCS “Toolkit” reporting project as of 12/31/08. On December 18th representatives from the NYS Soil & Water Conservation Committee met with Cheryl and Dick Winnett at which time Cheryl and Dick presented a final report describing the project results to the NYS S&WCC and NRCS. The project resulted in BMPs planned and/or implemented through Rounds 12, 13 & 14 of NYSEPF grants in Chemung, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben & Yates Counties being entered into NRCS’ “Toolkit” reporting program.

Funding Opportunity – The Great Lakes Commission’s Great Lakes Basin Program for soil erosion & sediment control recently release a Request for Proposals. The application deadline is March 1, 2009. Applications can’t exceed \$40,000.00 and require a 25% local match.

Newly elected Congressman Eric Massa of New York's 29th Congressional District has been appointed to the House's Agricultural Committee. Congressman Massa is only New York's second representative on the House's Ag Committee.

NRCS Report:

- **Continuing Resolution** - As of October 2008, NRCS has been operating on a continuing resolution, which means the same budget as last year.
- **Audit/Open Obligation Review** – NRCS/National Level received a report from the Office of the Investigative General stating some discrepancies in signed agreements. This created a nationwide review of all NRCS Grants (EQIP, WRP, AMA) for compliance issues. Review was completed in 3 weeks.
- **New York State Conservationist** – Astor Boozer, took the position in place of Ron Alvarado.
- **Retirees** – Al McGuffie, DC/Yates Co and Tom Lasater, DC/Chemung. Positions are currently vacant.

Old Business:

- **NY Fed of RC&D Council Annual Meeting/Teleconference 12/22/08** – Ken Bush reported that Sharon Ruggi was appointed as President, and the next meeting will be in Syracuse February 5th, 2009.

New Business:

- **Workshop/Symposium on Alternative Energy** – Cazenovia, NY April 18th, 2008. John Keidel will attend the one day event, and will give a brief report at a future board meeting. The attendance fee is \$40.00.
- *Taylor F. made a motion to pay the \$40.00 fee for John K. to attend the workshop, seconded by Ernie S., carried.*

Other Business:

- **National RC&D Conference** – Albuquerque, New Mexico, June 14th – 17th, 2009.

Approval/Cancellation Projects (measures):

- **Application for Hydro-seeding Demo** –
- *Velynda R. made a motion to approve the application for Hydro-seeding demo, Greg H. seconded, carried.*

Next meeting is scheduled on March 18th, 2009, @ 1:00pm at the Dormann Library, Bath, NY. Directions to the library will accompany next meeting notice.

Velynda R. made a motion to adjourn at 1:45pm and was seconded by PJ Emerick, carried.