



Finger Lakes
Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.
Chemung, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, and Yates counties, New York
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MINUTES

The Finger Lakes RC&D Council Meeting was held Wednesday, November 16, 2005 at the Rural Urban Center, Montour Falls, New York.

In attendance:

Chemung County

Ken Bush, SWCD Rep.
Dick Gunderman, Legislature Rep.

Ontario County

Tom DeRue, SWCD Rep.

Schuyler County

Jim Ochterski, Legislature Rep.

Seneca County

Nancy O'Connor, Alternate SWCD Rep.
Frank Sinicropi, Member at Large

Steuben County

Lola Tears, Legislature Rep.
Greg Heffner, Alternate Legislature Rep
Ernie Swift, SWCD Rep.
Velynda Risley, SWCD Rep. alternate

Yates County

Taylor Fitch, Legislature Rep.
Barb McGuffie, Alternate Member at Large Rep

RC&D Staff

Dick Winnett, Coordinator, Finger Lakes RC&D Council

Meeting called to order by President, Lola Tears at 1:00 P.M.

Introduction of guest Dick Gunderman, Chemung County legislator. Dick will be replacing John Flory

Approval of Minutes of September 14, 2005 Council Meeting.

Greg Heffner moved, seconded by Tom DeRue and carried to accept the Council meeting minutes of September 14, 2005.

Treasurer's Report

Dick Winnett provided a clarification to the minutes of September 14, 2005 with regard to the Statement of Revenues and Expenses for the current month and year-to-date. The accountant firm made a typo, thus the error. They were very apologetic for their error.

Treasurer Greg Heffner reviewed the Financial Statements dated October 31, 2005.

Frank Sinicropi moved, seconded by Ernie Swift and carried to approve Treasurer's Report.

Opening of Certificate of Deposits

Dick worked with Lola and Greg with regard to the renewal of two CD's. Dick was able to renew CD#1 for 6 months @ 3.75%. This CD will mature in May 2006. CD#2 renewed for 12 months @ 3.75% & will mature in October 2006. Together, the two CD's are less than \$3000. Brief discussion.

Communications

Received a letter from Seneca Trail RC&D Council on October 3rd. Seneca Trail was responsible for the silent auction at the Mid-Atlantic meeting held at West Point in late September. They acknowledged the Council's efforts in donating several bottles of wine to the auction. The donated wine was auctioned for \$84. The Silent Auction totaled \$1563 in earnings.

County Reports

Chemung County – Ken Bush reported on the following:

- Mark is working on a large wetland project in the town of Southport and also roadside seedings.

Ontario County – Tom DeRue reported on the following:

- District has received a substantial increase in funds from the County for 2006.
- District has continued to receive stormwater referrals from Region 8 and continues to follow-up on previous referrals as needed.
- Canandaigua Lake Watershed Commission will be adding a half time position in 2006 to assist in watershed inspection efforts.
- A draft watershed management plan has been developed for the Honeoye Lake Watershed, and the local lake associations and municipalities are completing the FEIS (Final Environmental Impact Statement under SEQRA) with the intent of implementing an alum treatment program.
- The SWCD Board of Directors will be experiencing some changes as three new directors will be appointed in January 2006.

Schuyler County – Jim Ochtorski reported on the following:

- AEM training in Waterloo for two days – Jim commented that this year's session was great. There have been a number of AEM meetings. There is emphasis on manure odor & manure management. In light of the failed lagoon in Lewis County, systems need to

be built to NRCS specs. In process now of encouraging farmers to get on board with AEM where an assessment is performed of environmental risks posed by their farm. We can assist with the implementation of the strategies and technical details to reduce these environmental risks.

- CCE still working on Grassland Bird Use Pastures Project. Education materials are nearly complete. Three new technical bulletins available by January, statewide, that relate to enhancing grassland bird habitat on idle ag land and pastures.
- Schuyler County NRCS, CCE and SWCD partnered to hold an evening program about conservation practices. 25 folks attended. Agenda items included: a review of what makes a conservation practice; SWCD explained services; NRCS reviewed Wetland Reserve, Forest Land Enhancement & Wildlife Habitat Incentive programs. Helped the rural landowners better understand what the programs cover so they are learning about the practices and what the programs can do to help with implementing these practices. Similar program for farmers will be held in the winter.
- It was noted that effective January 1, 2006, Robin Travis will be the executive director of Schuyler County CCE.

Seneca County – Nancy O’Connor reported on the following:

- Cayuga Lake Roadbank Stabilization Project complete and grant closed.
- Seeking quotes for Silver Creek Streambank Stabilization Project. Site visit took place November 1 and quotes due by November 28.
- Work has started on Seneca Lake Roadbank Project
- Weed harvesting is complete with 475 tons of total vegetation harvested. District’s two harvesters are almost 20 years old. Looking into funding sources to purchase a new harvester.
- The Seneca County Water Quality Committee is funding buses for student field trips to monitor the Canoga Marsh area in Cayuga Lake. The Seneca Falls School District middle and high school teachers and students will monitor on a long-term basis. The Cayuga Lake Network will absorb other expenses.
- Presentation was made to Seneca County Board of Supervisors which will enable the Seneca County Water Quality Committee to receive \$1000 in mini-grant funds.
- The Seneca County Water Quality Committee was recognized by Seneca Lake Pure Waters Association, Inc. for ongoing work and contributions to ensure water quality in the Seneca Lake Watershed.

Steuben County – Ernie Swift reported on the following:

- FEMA – Office staffs are working on closing out all projects with submittal of P4’s by February 28th.
- District Streambank – Sixteen have been completed FY 2005 totaling \$89,759. Fiscal year 2006 has a list of nineteen applicants totaling \$162,412.
- FL-LOWPA – To date, 199+ tanks of hydro seeding have been used for critical area treatment throughout Steuben County.
- Nonpoint Source Grant – SWCD completed the Cohocton River Streambank/Aquatic Restoration Project along the Cohocton River in the hamlet of Kanona. Closeout has begun with submittal to NYS-DEC by the end of the year.

SWCD requested no cost time extensions on Mead's Creek Streambank/Aquatic Habitat Restoration, Cohocton River Stream bank/Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Town of Pulteney Storm Water Control Project until December 31, 2006.

- Cooperator of the Year – Twenty-eight were in attendance honoring Chenang Farms as Cooperator of the Year 2005. Six county legislators were among the attendees. A PowerPoint presentation was given on how Chenang Farms evolved. SWCD Chair presented a plaque to Chenang Farms for the best management practices installed on the farm.
- Hazard Mitigation Grant – SWCD was approved for Hazard Mitigation grant, Vieley Road Storm Water Retrofit project in the township of Campbell. The project will be conducted in two phases. First phase, the engineering & design of the area surrounding storm water basin and, second, will be the implementation of the project. The project will consist of installing 9 check dams, stabilizing 1,010 feet of road ditch, 600 feet of underground outlet, 900 feet diversion ditch, installation of 3 feet x 40 feet culvert pipe, a storm water basin of 8 feet deep x 300 feet long x 125 feet wide and 3 acres of critical area seeding. The estimated grant is \$108,600.

Yates County reported the following:

- In 2005, USDA funding was approved for ten Agricultural Management Assistance Projects, one Wetland Reserve Project, and seven Conservation Reserve Program Projects.
- Thirty-one separate conservation cost-sharing practices were completed in 2005, including one large Wetland Reserve Program Project that resulted in eight acres of flooded shallow water in three separate impoundments.

Finger Lakes RC&D Council – Dick Winnett, coordinator, reported:

- Venison Donation Coalition – As of November 16, 2005, 4,352 pounds of venison has been processed and distributed through New York's Association of Food Banks. The New York Federation of RC&D Councils is awaiting a \$100,000 grant from NYS-DEC. This grant is currently at the NY Comptroller's office. Dick provided Venison Donation decals. Discussion.
- New York Environmental Protection Fund, Round 12 – Two grazing grants have been submitted to the NYS-EPF for consideration under Round 12 Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement Control Program. The first which is sponsored by the Steuben County SWCD has requested \$194,625 for 19 livestock producers in Chemung, Schuyler & Steuben counties. The second application which is sponsored by the Seneca County SWCD has requested \$192,300 for 19 livestock farms in Cayuga, Schuyler, Seneca & Yates counties. Each grant will provide a maximum of \$8,000 to each producer to install Best Management Practices associated with prescribed grazing systems. The participating livestock producers will be required to provide a match of 30% in the form of cash, labor, materials or use of equipment.
- National Fish & Wildlife Grant – A summary of this \$60,000 grant entitled *Enhancing Grassland Birds Habitat Through Grazing* was highlighted in NRCS November online newsletter. The article can be found at www.ny.nrcs.usda.gov/news/. CCE of Schuyler County which has been serving as project consultant has printed the results of this project Grassland Birds Regional Pasture Use Inventory. Three bulletins will be

released soon: *Enhancing Pastures for Grassland Bird Habitat in New York; Hayfield Management & Grassland Bird Conservation; & Improving Grassland Bird Habitat in Large Fields and Idle Cropland*. Bulletins and results report can be obtained by contacting CCE of Schuyler County, 208 Broadway, Montour Falls, NY 14865.

NRCS Report: no report

Old Business

Mid-Atlantic Association RC&D Meeting at West Point

Lola, Dick, and Ken and his wife attended. Facility was great; attendance was good. Brief discussion.

Update on National RC&D budget

Federal/USDA operating under a continuing resolution which means basically operating under last years' budget.

The letter writing campaign of Council members and partners did do a great deal of good. Both the Senate & House came to agreement in favor of retaining all RC&D Councils. Once National budget is approved, the Council will be operating on approximately the same level as last year. Discussion.

Update on temporary secretary situation

Using temp secretarial assistance through temporary services. Council has spent under \$2500 to date for services. Allocated through grants the Council is currently administering a little over \$4700 available. Discussed pending EPF grants and allocations for secretarial service, \$10,350. Waiting for action from employee as well as any direction out of Washington. This is ongoing and could take some time.

Tom DeRue and Jim Ochterski were thanked for composing the letter to Joseph DelVecchio, State Conservationist. The October 5th letter requested assistance in acquiring secretarial help at the Finger Lakes RC&D Council office. A response letter dated October 11 has been received. Tom DeRue suggested that in 3-6 months another letter should be written, to Congress representatives.

Dick suggested to revisit this issue in January to see outcome of 2 grants. If successful, go with both grants for secretarial funding.

National RC&D Conference in Savannah, Ga.; June 18-20, 2006

Councils are requested to provide a synopsis of projects they have been involved in for potential presentation at the National Conference. Dick has asked Jim Ochterski to make a presentation of the *Enhancing Grassland Birds Habitat Through Grazing Project* and represent the Council at the June 2006 conference. Estimated cost \$1600-1700 for one person. Cost includes registration, lodging & air fare.

Requested support of two people to go to National Conference at a total expense of approximately \$3500.

Moved by Barb McGuffie, seconded by Greg Heffner and carried, that two people from the Finger Lakes RC&D Council attend the National Conference, in Savannah, Georgia, June 18-20, 2006.

New Business

Sponsorship of Grazing Grant on behalf of Upper Susquehanna Coalition

Dick was approached by Upper Susquehanna Coalition coordinator Jim Curatola (an employee of State of New York) regarding an opportunity through EPA to sponsor a \$1.6 million Grazing Grant. Dick reviewed this 3-year project in detail. Briefly, \$400,000 to be applied to Best Management Practices to grazing systems; \$300,000 for monitoring effectiveness of stormwater retention basins & wetlands constructed by the Coalition & effectiveness of some of these BMP's on grazing. Binghamton University would do the monitoring; SUNY Oneonta to supply a coordinator, \$100,000; auditing, accounting, clerical, and insurance for 3-year project: \$40,000. Proposal is due in 2 days. Dick recommends the Council endorse this project **Moved by Greg Heffner, seconded by Ernie Swift** and carried that the Council endorse the Upper Susquehanna Coalition Grazing Grant.

Nancy O'Connor added that there are \$13.00 cookbooks available for sale with the proceeds to go toward support of 2007 Canon National Envirothon, to be held at Hobart & William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY.

Dick said to send something in writing to the Finger Lakes RC&D Council requesting financial sponsorship.

Contributions Agreements

All RC&D Coordinators will meet with Steve Machovec on November 29th to discuss contributions agreements.

The National Association of RC&D Councils will conduct a Leadership Forum in Washington, DC at the Crystal City Hyatt in mid-February. The Forum will provide training and an opportunity to meet with legislators. Estimated cost per person is \$500. If anyone is interested, let Dick know.

Date, Time, Place of Next Meeting: January 18, 2006, 1:00 P. M., Rural Urban Center, Montour Falls.

Greg Heffner moved, seconded by Ernie Swift that the meeting adjourn at 2:13 P. M.

Respectfully submitted by,

Nancy L. O'Connor

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Recorder