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NYS Soil & Water Conservation Committee

1 Winners Circle, Albany, NY 12235 – Telephone (518) 457-3738

STATE COMMITTEE MEETING

June 17, Ithaca

Present: C. Yunker, G. Proios, R. Aman, Voting Members; R. Kaplewicz, Executive Director; SWCC Staff; B. Steinmuller, Schenectady County SWCD; R. Zimmerman, S. Collins, D. Cordier, NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets; P. Black, SUNY-ESF; G. Chartier, NYS DEC; P. Kaczmarczyk, NYS DOH; T. Steenhuis, G. Albrecht, Q. Ketterings, H. Van Es, G. Poe, L. Agnew, M. T. Walter, D. Fox, L. Chase, Cornell University; K. Czymmek, CCE

Call to Order

C. Yunker called the meeting to order at 10:15. Introductions were made.

Review/Approval of Minutes

C. Yunker moved to approve the May 2003 minutes; seconded by G. Proios. Motion passed; carried.

Correspondence - R. Kaplewicz

R. Kaplewicz read a letter from Sandy Allen, DEC, Division of Water Director, to The State Committee, announcing Gerry Chartier as NYS DEC's designee to represent Commissioner Crotty on the State Committee. R. Kaplewicz also read an invitation to the Upper Susquehanna Coalition meeting on July 2nd, 2003.

Reports & News Letters

1. National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council 2002 Annual Report
2. Nuggets & Nibbles From the Cornell Local Roads Program, Volume XXII, Number 2, spring 2003
3. Rural Futures, The NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources Newsletter, May/June 2003
4. Keeping It On the Land, Information for the Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Community in the Great Lakes Region, Volume 5, Number 1, May 2003
5. N A C D News & Views, The National Association of Conservation Districts, May/June 2003
6. Bay Journal, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Volume 13, Number 4, June 2003
7. Oneida Lake State of the Lake and Watershed Report, final version, April 2003

Conferences & Seminars

1. From Brown to Green: Urban Forestry & Economic Development; July 17-19, 2003 Utica College/Historic Hotel Utica; New York State Urban and Community Forestry Council
2. Habitat Evaluation Procedures, July 14-18, 2003. Presented by Virginia Tech at the Sheraton Syracuse University Hotel and Conference Center
3. NYS GIS 2003, 19th Annual Conference, October 1 – 2, 2003 at the Holiday Inn Turf, Albany, NY
4. Environmental Innovations Summit, July 14 – 16, 2003, Crystal City Hilton, Arlington, VA
5. The Finger Lakes – Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance 12th Annual Spring Workshop, Friday, June 27, 2003, Lakeshore Yacht & Country Club, 6777 Lakeshore Rd., Cicero, NY

Annual Plans of Work

R. Aman moved to approve the following Soil and Water Conservation District Plans of Work; seconded by G. Proios. Motion passed; carried.

- Essex County SWCD
- Dutchess County SWCD

R. Aman recused himself from voting on the Tioga County SWCD Plan of Work. It was deferred until the next meeting.

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Current and Past Research Projects of CALS at Cornell and CCE – K. Czymmek, D. Fox, Q. Ketterings and others

D. Fox and Q. Ketterings, with the help of other Cornell University faculty members, gave a presentation highlighting the status of research projects that support AEM and other State Soil and Water Conservation Programs.

Presentation topics included the Cornell University Nutrient Management Program (CUNMPS), a tool for planners to develop comprehensive nutrient management plans. Also discussed was the Cornell Net Carbohydrate and Protein Systems project, which is a tool for feeding consultants to develop precision feeding rations. The Phosphorus (P) Index was also discussed. The P Index is a risk assessment tool to determine the amount and timing of manure application to minimize potential phosphorus runoff into water supplies.

Discussion ensued regarding the State Committee's priorities and long term goals as they relate to the research that Cornell has conducted. C. Yunker commended the faculty and staff of Cornell for their work on identifying and mitigating pollution concerns through their ongoing research programs. G. Proios asked if other Colleges are providing resources to identify key issues such as the loss of farmland, as well as economic and environmental issues. He stressed the importance of meeting with policy makers to determine where best to enlist resources from Cornell. C. Yunker responded that the range of Cornell's research is far greater than what was discussed at this meeting. He noted that the focus of this presentation is on nutrients and their effect on soil and water resources.

Principals Meeting Update-R. Zimmerman

R. Zimmerman distributed a handout from the Principal's Meeting planning committee. The date of the Principal's Meeting will be September 16th, 2003 followed by a State Committee meeting on September 17th, 2003. The general location will be in Central New York, Otisco Lake Watershed in Cortland and Onondaga Counties. The purpose of the meeting is to bring together the principal advisory members of the State Committee to showcase environmental leadership and stewardship by the State Soil and Water Conservation Committee, Soil and Water Conservation Districts and partner agencies and organizations. The proposed itinerary will include visits to farms to showcase AEM involvement, effective partnership benefits, research and development efforts, and farmland protection. An overview of the state stormwater program will also be provided by visiting the town of Cortlandville, who, with the help of the Cortland County SWCD, developed a model ordinance for erosion and sediment control.

Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program-B. Steinmuller

B. Steinmuller distributed an Ag. NPS Abatement and Control Grant Program report.

STATUS OF ROUNDS I-VIII

Of 275 projects, 104 are active and 171 are complete. All Round VIII projects are active. There is one pending contract in Round VI and one in Round VII.

ROUND IX

Of the 37 projects funded through Round IX, plans of work have been submitted for 29 and contract development is in progress. Contracts have been delayed because of the state budget. Only one executed contract has been received.

ROUND X

The Technical Advisory Committee has met to discuss several changes for the Round X RFP. The Committee will meet again on June 24th. We plan to submit the RFP to the State Committee for approval at the July meeting. We anticipate releasing the RFP in August.

AMENDMENT REQUEST → MOTION NEEDED

1. Suffolk SWCD – Wellhead Protection Demonstration Project – Round VII – C700655
Request: remove petroleum storage BMP, use funds for larger pesticide handling facility
Reason: landowner change resulted in need for larger pesticide handling facility
Previous amendments: one time extension

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(Time extension and landowner change approved by staff.)

This amendment was deferred to the next State Committee meeting pending a complete quorum.

Staff Approved Amendments

1. Seneca SWCD – Seneca Lake WS Prescribed Grazing Project – Round VIII – C700694
Request: change one landowner
Reason: original landowner moved outside watershed
Previous amendments: none
Approved by T. Brace/E. Svenson, 6/16/03
2. Tompkins SWCD – Eastern Susquehanna Basin Management Intensive Grazing – Round VII – C700658
Request: change landowners
Reason: landowner voluntarily withdrew
Previous amendments: none
Approved by J. Schumacher, 6/6/03

CEM Status-G. Chartier

G. Chartier noted that the State Committee voted to take the lead for this program at the last meeting. Chartier advised the Committee that Aseem Kumar, from the NPS Section of the Division of Water will be assisting the State Committee on developing the structure of the CEM website. William Morton has shown his dedication to the program by volunteering his time to develop a CEM PowerPoint presentation outlining the program's concepts and principles. At the upcoming Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) meeting, Rich Lewis will be using the new presentation to discuss the use of the Tier II assessment worksheets as a tool for the SWAP program. G. Chartier told the Committee that two new worksheets for fish and wildlife and aquatic resource protection are at the beginning stages of development. Chartier also advised the Committee that the Upper Susquehanna Coalition, as a follow up to the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS), will be addressing one priority issue per county using the CEM worksheets to resolve the issue. The Erie County SWCD is using CEM to develop a natural resource planning guide and community comprehensive land use master plan for the Town of Eden.

Complete versions of the CEM worksheet packets were made available.

Miscellaneous Program Reports-ALL

M. Latham gave a Mini-Grant report outlining the most current financial summary of the program. M. Latham noted that 23 Agricultural Pesticide Collection events will be funded through the 2002 WQCC Mini-Grant Program. The next RFP will include projects related to stormwater, specifically, helping MS4 communities implement the six minimum control measures. The tentative timing for release of the RFP will be mid-November. M. Latham added that the Operation Clean Sweep in the Lower Hudson Valley is moving ahead nicely. G. Proios noted that he would like to see pesticide collection as an annual funded event.

R. Kaplewicz noted that the State Committee is expecting a letter from Sandy Allen, Director of the Division of Water, regarding agricultural exemptions in the Stormwater Phase II Program. A Memorandum of Understanding is being proposed for this exemption.

R. Kaplewicz distributed county maps developed by Jim Lieberum, Division V Representative to the New York State Conservation District Employees' Association. The maps summarized SWCD county appropriations and reimbursable items. R. Kaplewicz noted that the State Committee Staff will be discussing annual reporting requirements at an upcoming staff meeting.

R. Kaplewicz advised the Committee that he has submitted a request for one staff person and one State Committee Member to attend the NACD Northeast Meeting on August 10, 11, 12 in Shepardstown, West Virginia. He asked to be emailed if there is any interest in attending.

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R. Zimmerman advised the Committee that the Department is looking carefully at any travel requests. Travel requests must be critical to the mission of the program.

R. Kaplewicz advised the Committee that the CAFO Rule will be up for renewal on July 1, 2004. He added that the State Committee Staff, the NYSDAM, the NYSDEC, and other interested partners are deliberating to develop recommendations for the new permit. Kaplewicz stressed the importance of making the new State rule consistent with the Federal rule without stopping the positive momentum that the State of New York has gained.

Kaplewicz advised the Committee that the NRCS Technical Service Provider (TSP) rule is in a state of flux and will be added to future State Committee meeting agendas.

R. Kaplewicz gave a CREP update. The agreement has been sent to the USDA's Counsel Office for review. Kaplewicz hopes to have an August signing of the CREP Agreement.

R. Kaplewicz advised the Committee that EQIP sign ups ended on Friday. NRCS in NYS has received more requests than they have resources. He added that we might have an opportunity to fund some of those farms that did not get selected through the Ag. NPS Grant Program. He also told the Committee that the staff is currently exploring ways to make existing state and federal grant programs more compatible to maximize available resources.

Other Reports and Comments-All

R. Kaplewicz advised the Committee of the upcoming NYACD hosted Conservation Partnership Leadership Institute in Raquette Lake on July 7-9.

R. Zimmerman told the Committee that discussions have begun between Ag. and Mkts. and the DEC regarding the EPF allocations for agriculture and non-agriculture. Presently there has been no final decision made.

R. Zimmerman advised the Committee that the Off House Farm Lawsuit is moving toward a settlement without penalty. On that issue, G. Proios noted that the State Committee must engage the Department of State (DOS). Through their work with communities who have the power to zone, the DOS can help them develop model ordinances that keep both the community and agriculture in harmony. P. Black noted that CEM may be an appropriate conduit for farmland protection. R. Zimmerman agreed, adding that CEM can play an instrumental role in preventing future problems where agriculture and the community come into conflict.

R. Zimmerman mentioned the looming agricultural credit crisis. With low commodity prices and the current economic outlook, banks are reluctant to loan to farmers. A lot of farmers are turning to the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) for assistance, but their funds are not adequate to meet the demand.

P. Black told the Committee that the AWRA International Water Congress, "Watershed Management for Water Supply Systems" conference is being held from June 29th –July 2nd in New York City at the Millennium Hotel. He encouraged all to attend.

G. Chartier announced the retirement of Grady Moore of the United States Geological Survey (USGS). He also advised the Committee that the Stormwater draft RFP will be made available by July 7th and the final will be released in mid July. The deadline for proposals is September 15th.

P. Kaczmarczyk advised the Committee that the Upstate SWAP Committee will be meeting for the last time on June 18th at the Troy office. He also told the Committee that the GIS Subcommittee met last Friday. They have finished collecting Tier I data. 37 Districts sent in data. He noted that the data collection is the first step in setting up an AEM database. He also advised the Committee that a pilot project to collect Tier II data from the Lake Champlain and Otsego Lake Watersheds is being developed.

G. Proios thanked Cornell for hosting the meeting. He mentioned a meeting he attended between the DEC and the Environmental Management Councils (EMCs). He was advised at that meeting that the DEC has lost a total of 300 people to retirements, 150 from field offices and 150 from the central office. He stressed the importance for improved communication and organization to effectively deal with problems using fewer resources.

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C. Yunker also thanked Cornell for hosting and presenting at the meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Next meeting will be on July 16, 2003 at the Department of Agriculture and Markets, Albany, NY.