

NYS Soil & Water Conservation Committee Meeting
March 15, 2005
Albany, NY

PRESENT: Voting Members – D. Hill, B. Aman, J. Dickinson, G. Proios; Executive Director – R. Kaplewicz; Assistant Director – M. Latham; SWCC Staff – R. Lewis, L. Miller, M. Moore, B. Steinmuller; NYSDA&M – J. Rusnica, R. Zimmerman, N. Rudgers; NRCS – M. Stephenson; NYACD – G. Bell; NYS CDEA – K. Lewis; NYFB – J. Tauzel; NYSDEC – L. King; NYSDOH – P. Kaczmarczyk; NYSDOS – B. Schmelz; SUNY ESF – P. Black.

CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS:

D. Hill called the meeting to order at 10:14 a.m.

REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES:

B. Aman moved to approve the minutes of the February meeting with the suggested changes; seconded by J. Dickinson.

Motion passed; carried.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Letters & Memos

1. Letter from Erin M. Crotty, DEC, RE: **Applications for Water Quality Improvements Projects.** (518) 402-8151; www.dec.state.ny.us/website/bondact/bamenu.html#wqipapp; Letter Dated January 24, 2005.
2. Memo from New York State Invasive Species Task Force Co-Chairs Lynette Stark and Rick Zimmerman, RE: Invitation to work with newly established **NYS Invasive Species Task Force (ISTF).** Memo dated January 24, 2005.
3. Letter from **Pinelands Nursery & Supply.** RE: Opening a branch location in Gloversville, NY in the Spring. Letter dated January 18, 2005.
4. Letter from NYS DOH to NYS Water Conservation District Managers. Re: **CDs-qualitative evaluation of the potential for source to become contaminated.** Letter dated February 2005.
5. Letter to State Conservation Committee from Niagara County SWCD. RE: **Eighteen Mile Creek Remedial Action Plan Partnership.** Letter dated February 22, 2005.
6. Letter to Don Lake from Sandra Allen, DEC. RE: 2004 **Stormwater Training Summary.** Letter dated February 22, 2005.
7. **Letter from Mark W. Grennan,** RC&D Coordinator announcing his acceptance to work for NRCS as Area Conservationist in Highland, NY, effective April 4, 2005. Letter dated March 4, 2005.
8. Letter from NYS Agricultural Society. RE: **Membership Campaign.** Letter dated January 17, 2005.

Reports & News Letters

1. **NRAES 2005 Book Catalog.** Practical Information for Farmers, Consumers and Public Officials.
2. **The Nor' Easter,** Vol. 6, Issue 2, December 2004.
3. **Susquehanna Guardian,** Vol. 13, No. 4, Winter 2004/2005.
4. **Agricultural News – January Release:** NY Egg Production in December; Milk Production in December; Turkey Production; Value of NY Vegetables-Ranks Sixth in Nation; First Annual Goat Inventory Complete; Value of NY Fruit Production Increases; NY Strawberry Production is Up. **February Release:** NY Farm Numbers Decrease; NY Livestock Operations; NY Sheep Inventory Up 7%; NY Cattle Inventory Down 1%.
5. **Forest Service Centennial Catalog – A New Century of Service 1904-2005.**
6. **CFA News,** Vol. 23, No. 1, Winter 2005.
7. **Pinelands Nursery & Supply, 2005 Wholesale Catalog.**
8. **Estuary News,** Vol. 15, Issue 2, Winter 2005.
9. **Partners,** January/February 2005, Vol. 23. No. 1.
10. **Central New York Regional Planning & Development Board 2004 Annual Report.**
11. **What's Cropping Up?** Vol. 15, No. 2, February 2005.

12. **Buffer Notes**, January 2005 and February 2005.
13. **Report Announcement – Susquehanna River Basin Commission**, January 2005.
14. **ELRC (Eastern Lands And Resources Council) Journal**, February 2005.
15. **NY FarmNet** 2004 Annual Report.
16. **FSA Updated** – March 2005.
17. Daily Gazette Newspaper Article: **Schoharie County: “Grants will aid water, soil quality efforts.”** Article dated Wednesday, March 9, 2005.
18. **CDEA News, February 2005.**
19. **ARCNews**, Winter 2004-2005.

Conferences & Seminars.

1. **Susquehanna Symposium** – June 8-10 2005. Hilton Harrisburg and Towers, Harrisburg, PA. (717) 238-0423, Ext. 316; www.srbc.net/RiverfrontSymposium.htm
2. **Cornell Local Roads Program** – 2005 Workshop Schedule.
3. **NY Urban and Community Forestry Council Conference** – July 28-30, 2005. LeMoyne College, Syracuse, NY. Additional info and program brochures to be mailed this spring.
4. **River Networks National River Rally 2005** – May 20-24, 2005, Keystone, Colorado. www.rivernetnetwork.org/rally
5. **Advanced Zoning and Land Use** – April 28, 2005 – Best Western Albany Airport Inn, 200 Wolf Rd., (888) 678-5565; www.lorman.com
6. **NYPA Meeting** – March 17, 2005, Ramada Inn Geneva Lakefront, Geneva, NY.
7. **USDA Farm Service Agency** – Madison County Service Center Open House Thursday, March 17, 2005. 6503 Wes Road, Hamilton, NY; (315) 824-0976, Ext. 204.
8. **NACD National Info** – Atlanta 2005.
9. **In Situ and On-Site Bioremediation Symposium** – June 6-9, 2005, Baltimore, Maryland, Marriott Waterfront Hotel. www.battelle.org/biosymp

G. Proios brought a copy of the *Long Island Horticultural Research & Extension Center 2004 Annual Report*, which provides a synopsis of work and research being done at this Cornell field lab. G. Proios suggested that reports from the other Cornell Labs, such as the New York Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, could be sent out to Districts so they are aware of what research activities are taking place that deal with soil and water concerns.

AEM REPORT:

R. Lewis reported the following:

- A news release was received from the NY Wine and Grape Foundation endorsing the AEM initiative and encouraging all NY vineyards to incorporate AEM into their operation.
- The State Committee staff is currently working with the Division of Agriculture Protection and Development on incorporating AEM into the evaluation for Farmland Viability eligibility.
- The AEM Strategic Plan Checklist was distributed and it was reported that 52 out of 58 Districts had submitted their County Strategic Plan. Although counties who did not send in their strategic Plan by the March 1st deadline are ineligible for the \$2,000 reimbursement, they are still eligible to receive the AEM Base Funding for this year as long as their strategic plan is submitted by April 15, 2005.
- Discussion ensued regarding the quality of the County AEM Strategic plans and how the Committee plans to encourage Districts to upgrade their strategies and redo their funding plan. Discussion also touched upon the contracting procedure for the next five years. Districts will have the ability to amend their strategies and their funding plans over the life of the five year contract, which will be contingent upon available funding. State Committee staff members will be working with Districts at regional managers meetings to further enhance the quality of the strategic plans. R. Zimmerman asked R. Lewis to give an update in June at the AEM Steering Committee Meeting.
- G. Proios shared concerns over the AEM Base Funding focus on AEM Tier 1 and 2. He suggested that Districts should be focusing their efforts on farms where further funding may be available or which could be tied into other federal programs. It is his hope that this initiative will in time, turn into a focus on implementation. R. Lewis noted that successful prioritized implementation is the objective of the program.

CREP

- R. Lewis distributed copies of the NYS CREP Annual Report for FFY 2004, the 2005 NYS CREP activities plan, and the Record of Referrals as of December 2004. He noted on the activities plan that one of the goals for 2005 is to engage NGOs that can help promote NYS CREP.
- The training session, which was cancelled in January has been rescheduled for Thursday, April 7, 2005 in Cortland County.
- Further work will be done to encourage District involvement in implementing NYS CREP. It was noted that there were 9 or 10 CREP contribution agreements statewide. The State Committee is exploring other ways to provide incentives and funding for District involvement in NYS CREP. In the mean time, Districts are encouraged to conduct outreach activities.
- B. Schmelz also suggested that the Committee look at ways in which NYS CREP could be tied into the Quality Communities initiative, and other local open space preservation programs. He suggested that we start looking at multiple ways to use funding sources which will tie otherwise separate programs into a full programmatic strategy.
- G. Proios also suggested finding ways to secure funding for additional hires at the District level in order to implement all these programs. Without additional staff, new initiatives simply turn into the reprioritization of other activities.
- R. Zimmerman suggested writing an article for NY Farm Bureau's *Grassroots*, and other general farm press like *Country Folks*, to get the word out about CREP beyond the District circles. He proposed that we further the discussion B. Schmelz began about funding sources at a CREP Steering Committee meeting and then follow up with the State Committee at a later date.
- K. Lewis suggested making CREP part of the AEM Base Funding Strategy for Districts. With \$10,000 a District could complete ten CREP plans, which also double as Tier 3A plans. He would encourage the State Committee to consider this idea, especially if many Districts will be looking to revise their original funding strategies.

AG NONPOINT SOURCE ABATEMENT AND CONTROL PROGRAM:

Status of Rounds I-X

Of 348 projects, 132 are active, 11 are pending, and 205 are complete.

Round XI

The Ranked list was approved by the State Committee at the December meeting approving projects for funding in ranked order. On March 7th, the award announcement was released authorizing a record level of funding at \$6,731,094.60. This total includes \$600,000 for the AEM Base Funding Program and \$6,131,094.60 for 32 Tier 3 planning or Tier 4 implementation projects.

Round VI Pending Contract

- The Columbia County Round VI contract entitled "Mill Creek Project" was awarded funding on 2/10/99 but was never executed due to the landowner's financial problems, and cattle health issues. In addition to the issues on the farm, the Bond Act award was substantially less than what the application requested.
- In October 2001, the State Committee sent the landowner a letter detailing requirements in order to resume processing of the contract. Presently, all requirements have been met. However, as a result of the financial issues, the animal units have decreased from 850 to 150.
- The DEC sent an award letter to the District outlining the eligible project cost of \$114,000 with a Bond Act share of \$100,000. The Bond Act award amount was substantially less than what was the application requested. Due to the decrease of the award amount, a revised scope was completed and approved by the Department and the Bond Act office. A clean water exclusion/barnyard water management system and a heavy use area protection system were prioritized as needed according to the revised plan of work. The proposed project appears to meet the original intent, which is to reduce nutrients, pathogens, and sediments entering Mill Creek, which drains directly into the Hudson River.
- The Department has received a revised plan of work, which appears to meet the approved scope. The Department is seeking a motion of support to move forward with this contract.

J. Dickinson moved to support moving forward with the contracting procedure for Columbia County's Round VI "Mill Creek Project," based on the new plan of work; seconded B. Aman. Motion passed; carried.

TAC Update

- The Technical Advisory Committee met on February 8, 2005. The main goal of the TAC meeting was to discuss and make recommendations on the Round XII RFP. The next meeting will be held on April 12th in Syracuse.
- B. Aman noted that any State Committee voting members who are considering applying for funding through Round XII will need to recuse themselves from any and all discussion regarding Round XII. He also mentioned that because there is a vacant seat on the State Committee only one voting member will be able to apply for Round XII funding.

State Committee voting members will discuss who among them may wish to apply for Round XII funding, until that point all discussion on Round XII will have to be tabled.

Amendment Discussion

- At the last State Committee meeting it was suggested that the SWCC staff research the amount of money that has been allocated as a result of approving amendment requests for the assignment of unused funds to add project deliverables.
- Since 2001, a total of \$120,122.05 has been allocated from 12 contracts out of 210 active and completed projects from Round VI through Round X. The frequency of this type of amendment was 13 out of 357 requests.
 - Mean: \$ 8,749.07
 - Median: \$6,666.67
 - Minimum: \$1,204.69
 - Maximum: \$25,073.29
- Discussion ensued regarding the assignment of unused funds to add project deliverables and the planning process that is required to implement such BMPs. It was noted that such requests, if not reviewed by the State Committee, should at least be reviewed by the Executive Director.

G. Proios moved to continue the practice of allowing field staff to approve requests to assign unused funds, under \$15,000 to add project deliverables. Such requests that are above \$15,000 will come back to the State Committee for approval, seconded J. Dickinson. Motion passed; carried.

Amendment for State Committee Consideration

1. Broome SWCD – Eastern Susquehanna River Basin Comprehensive Nutrient Management Planning – Round VII – C700621

Request: time extension from 2/28/05 to 2/28/06

Reason: additional time needed due to complete CNMPs due to problems securing private sector planners to provide services (see amendment for detail)

Previous Amendments: 2 time extensions

Note: A contract term longer than 5 years is only permitted by the Office of the State Comptroller under extenuating circumstances. J. Schumacher, Region 2 Associate Environmental Analyst recommends approval.

G. Proios moved to approve this amendment; seconded J. Dickinson. Motion passed; carried.

2. Columbia SWCD – Kinderhook Sub-basin CNMP Planning – Round VII – C700624

Request: time extension from 2/28/05 to 3/30/06

Reason: additional time needed to allow 1 of the 5 CNMP planning consultants to complete the AEM certification process (see amendment for detail)

Previous Amendments: 3 time extensions

Note: A contract term longer than 5 years is only permitted by the Office of the State Comptroller under extenuating circumstances. L. Miller, Region 1 Water Quality Specialist recommends approval.

B. Aman moved to approve this amendment; seconded by J. Dickinson. Motion passed; carried.

Staff Approved Amendments

1. Tompkins SWCD – E. Susquehanna River Basin Management Intensive Grazing – Round VII – C700658
Request: change of landowners
Reason: one landowner sold livestock and another was unable to meet match commitment
Approved by J. Schumacher 2/16/05
2. Wyoming SWCD – East Koy – Wiscoy Agricultural NPS Inventory – Round VIII – C700698
Request: time extension from 3/31/05 to 3/31/06
Reason: additional time needed to complete CNMPs
Approved by T. Brace/B. Steinmuller 3/2/05
3. Ulster SWCD – Esopus Creek – Farm Level Agricultural NPS Assessments, Tier I and II – Round IX – C700732
Request: time extension from 2/28/05 to 2/28/06
Reason: additional time needed to complete planning activities
Approved by L. Miller/B. Steinmuller 3/2/05
4. Schoharie SWCD – Schoharie County CAFO Farm Implementation – Round IX – C700725
Request: time extension from 12/31/04 to 12/31/05
Reason: additional time needed to complete construction activities
Approved by J. Schumacher 3/9/05
5. Oneida SWCD – Oriskany Creek Tier IIIB – Round VII – C700643
Request: time extension from 3/31/03 to 2/28/05
Reason: additional time was needed to complete planning activities
Approved by L. Travis 3/14/05

CLEAN AIR ACT FOLLOW UP – EPA CONSENT AGREEMENT COMMENTS:

R. Zimmerman distributed the comment documents submitted by Commissioner Rudgers and the Northeast Dairy Producers Association, Inc. (NEDPA) on the EPA Animal Feeding Operations Consent Agreement and Final Order. Commissioner Rudgers was present to provide brief comments on the Consent agreement along with R. Zimmerman and J. Rusnica.

- NEDPA has taken the lead role in terms of researching whether or not it makes sense for dairy farmers in NY to sign up for this unique agreement with EPA. Essentially, NEDPA has taken the position that it makes sense for NY dairy farmers to sign the Consent Agreement, as it should provide some reasonable insurance from enforcement of Clean Air Act (CAA), Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA/“Superfund”) and Emergency Planning & Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA) regulatory thresholds during the time period the research is being conducted. The agreement would require those that sign the Consent Agreement to pay a penalty based on the size of their farm, which would then be used to provide funding for air quality and air emissions research on animal feeding operations.
- The Department's position is that the Consent Agreement's definition of an animal feeding operation (AFO) does not provide any guidance as to the relationship between herd size and potential air emissions, thereby creating uncertainty for livestock operations that are very likely to fall well below CAA thresholds and possibly below CERCLA and EPCRA thresholds. It is the Department's opinion that the Consent Agreement, through the use of penalty fee and monitoring fee, has the greatest adverse impact on the smaller livestock operations.
- Skeptics within the legal community wonder whether or not this agreement really makes sense as far as protection against CAA, CERCLA, and EPCRA if animal agriculture were to be challenged. They also wonder whether or not animal agriculture will even be impacted by these three laws in the future.
- The Department has proposed the AEM framework as a viable and appropriate mechanism to address air quality issues using the voluntary partnership approach.

- The Department believes that EPA has placed farmers in the precarious position of determining whether or not to sign this Consent Agreement, without sufficient information to make an informed decision. They have strongly encouraged EPA to provide additional guidance to farmers as to the potential impacts of entering or not entering into the Agreement and to extend the signup deadline an additional 120 days.
- The Department is also looking into the Consent Agreement in terms of New York's Agricultural Districts Law, as the Consent Agreement seems to put state and local law in conflict. The Department has urged the EPA to modify this dispute to recognize State laws that may preempt local action that may unreasonably restrict farm operations.
- J. Tauzel stated that NY Farm Bureau is continuing to work on this issue but at this time, they have not yet taken a position on whether to sign the Consent Agreement or not. NYFB believes that overall the Consent Agreement poses environmental conflicts between air and water quality, and that CAA, CERCLA, and EPCRA were not intended for animal agriculture.

STORMWATER:

Stormwater Reimbursement

\$26,048.12 in Stormwater Reimbursement requests were received for the third reporting period (July 1 – December 31, 2004).

Stormwater Survey Results

48 Districts responded to the online survey.

- 89.58% were involved in Phase 2 Stormwater activities in the past year.
- 58.33% of Districts responding assisted DEC in stormwater activities outlined in the reimbursement program during 2004.
- Only one respondent indicated that they were not interested in participating in the DEC reimbursement program.

The State Committee Staff want to thank all Districts that participated in the survey, as it is an important indicator of District needs and involvement.

Correspondence to G. Chartier

In a letter dated March 8, 2005 the SWCC responded to concerns raised by DEC's G. Chartier in regards to the draft guidance on SWCD involvement with the private sector in regards to the NYSDEC Phase 2 Construction Permit. The letter indicates:

- It would be more beneficial and constructive for SWCDs to consult with their county attorneys to obtain guidance on the issue of liability and SWCD indemnification as it relates to their respective situations. The draft guidance emphasizes the need for each SWCD to discuss this issue with their private insurance administrator as well as their county attorney and local officials.
- In regards to conflicts with the State Stormwater Reimbursement program, SWCDs have provided both private sector assistance and complaint investigation services for DEC in the agricultural arena for many years. The SWCC is not aware of any conflict issues raised by DEC or others with respect to the District's role in this program. It is imperative that SWCDs use their unique abilities to develop relationships with the private sector to effectively address these problems at their source. The SWCC believes that good partnerships and effective communication between SWCDs and regional DEC offices are the best defense in avoiding any potential conflicts.
- Since SWCDs have the legal authority to perform this work, the SWCC cannot prohibit such activities. The SWCC's draft guidance to SWCDs strongly recommends that any SWCD considering providing inspection or SWPPP development services for the private sector consult their county attorney before deciding whether to do so. It will also be recommended that Districts working with a private sector developer, consultant, owner/operator set a 12 month period before they perform any inspection work with DEC on that same private sector firm or vice versa.

G. Proios moved to approve the draft guidance and allow the State Committee staff along with Counsel's Office to finalize the guidance and distribute it to Districts as soon as possible so they

may refer to it for the upcoming construction season; seconded J. Dickinson. Motion passed; carried.

OTHER REPORTS:

State Reimbursement to SWCDs

M. Latham is currently reviewing and processing reimbursement vouchers.

EQIP Listening Session

- M. Stephenson reported that NRCS had not received the feedback it had hoped for during the EQIP listening session held at the Farm Show in Syracuse. She distributed the news release regarding the request for feedback on New York’s EQIP and encouraged Committee members to provide feedback by March 23, 2005. NRCS asked two questions:
 1. What emerging natural resource issues are not addressed by the current national EQIP priorities?
 2. What modifications, if any, are needed to the four existing national priorities? Do these existing priorities continue to reflect the critical national resource needs and concerns? Should more/less emphasis be placed on each?
- B. Aman raised a question regarding the EQIP ranking procedure, which will now be based up on national template. R. Kaplewicz and M. Stephenson responded and said that although it is a national template, there is still a lot of room for locally led decision making and that they are confident it will be a fair and flexible process.

Other NRCS

- M. Stephenson distributed the RFP for Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP). New York now has over \$4 million in federal financial assistance for pending offers submitted this fiscal year. The deadline to be considered eligible is April 5, 2005. B. Aman asked if Districts were eligible to hold the easements for FRPP. M. Stephenson indicated that there is a statutory problem preventing that in NYS. K. Lewis suggested that a resolution be proposed that would allow Districts to hold easements.
- M. Stephenson updated the Committee regarding the Conservation Security Program (CSP). NRCS is expecting a 30–45 day nationwide signup for CSP beginning at the end of March, however they have not received the final rule on some issues that will need to be addressed. More details will be provided at the next meeting as there is more to come in the next two weeks.

Approval of SWCD Annual Work Plans

B. Aman moved to approve the following SWCD Annual Work Plans; seconded by G. Proios. Motion passed, carried.

Allegany	Columbia	New York City	Ulster
Broome	Dutchess	Orange	Warren
Cattaraugus	Genesee	Putnam	Wyoming
Cayuga	Hamilton	Rockland	
Chautauqua	Herkimer	St. Lawrence	
Chemung	Montgomery	Steuben	

Water Quality Mini-Grants

- 128 applications were received in response to the Mini-grant RFP. 43 applications for Level 1 were received. Almost all scores have been received in the State Committee office, and application scores will be tabulated and ranked for the next meeting.

EFARM

- M. Latham reported that 160 applications have been received over the past three weeks for EFARM. Due to the wide variability of invoicing being submitted, staff members are trying to develop a policy for documenting expenses and payment. Of the 160 applications at least 50 are being returned for insufficient information. It appears that concerns over the possible challenge of receiving municipal approval are not coming to fruition. However, it seems more should have been done to explain documenting of expenses. Reviewing these bills has been taking a lot of additional staff time; however EFC has agreed to fund a position for the next five years that would be responsible for working with the EFARM Program.

Other Reports

- G. Proios discussed the NACD Annual Meeting, which was held February 5-9, 2005 in Atlanta, GA. Overall he felt the meeting was a good exchange of information and provided reference materials for State Committee members to access. G. Proios summarized presentations given by NACD's Crystal Harden, Jim Cox, and NRCS Chief Knight.
- L. Miller remarked that the AEM Tier 2 Horse Worksheets and other educational materials were rolled at the Kingston Horse Conference, March 12-13, 2005.
- M. Stephenson pointed out the Second Circuit court of appeals in New York has issued a ruling regarding the new EPA Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) rules regarding the federal Clean Water Act and the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program. The ruling sided in part with farm groups that in the case of dairy farms, that a large farm (a dairy farm with more than 699 mature dairy cows) could not automatically be required to apply for a NPDES permit, as EPA was proposing.
 - R. Kaplewicz remarked that a meeting with DEC was scheduled for tomorrow, and a briefing will be provided at the next meeting.
- P. Kaczmarczyk shared that Michael Burke, Director, Bureau of Public Water Supply Protection has announced his retirement after 20 years and Jack Dunn is slated to take his place.
 - Also, following up on information presented at the last meeting by the Rensselaer County SWCD to support their amendment request in the Tomhannock Reservoir, DOH conducted an inquiry into the assertions that access shafts are left exposed and are located in the middle of the barnyards. DOH discovered that the city was in fact redoing the roofs to the access shafts and that contrary to what was reported, none of the tunnels are located within a barnyard.
- L. King reported that the DEC Division of Water was reorganizing and would be creating a new Bureau of Water Resources. This is mostly a reorganization, no new hires are planned.
- G. Bell cited Assembly Bill A05449 introduced by assemblyman Bill McGee which, relates to state aid reimbursement to soil and water conservation districts; sets forth a provision for the New York city soil and water conservation district and provides for reimbursement for additional activities; authorizes the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets to solicit and accept funds from any source to carry out the provisions.
 - Members of the association are quite happy as this was something they discussed at length at legislative days.
- K. Lewis thanked the Committee for the opportunity to work so closely with members over the past two years as NYSCDEA President. As outgoing president, this meeting will be his last official meeting. K. Lewis stated that he is looking forward to spending time with his District, but has gained tremendous insight into the work the Committee does. He extended an open invitation to all the Committee members to attend the Annual Water Quality Symposium, March 21-24, in Rochester.

D. Hill, R. Kaplewicz and other Committee members thanked K. Lewis for all of his hard work and valuable contributions he shared with the Committee during his presidency. K. Lewis was a tremendous asset, and will be missed.

- R. Kaplewicz distributed the 2003-2004 Annual Report on Districts, which was distributed during Legislative Days by NYACD to members of the state legislature.
 - R. Kaplewicz indicated that the State Committee was represented at today's Forestry Awareness Day at the state capital by B. Silvestri, who was there with the AEM display and other State Committee outreach materials.
 - R. Kaplewicz remarked that it may be helpful to have individual agency overviews from advisory members, so that Committee members have a better understanding of how the different agencies and departments are organized.
 - R. Kaplewicz also reported that Claire Johnson is currently working to update the District Directory, and some changes will be made for this edition; NRCS regions, Stormwater Regions, and everyone's email addresses will be included.
 - R. Kaplewicz also stated that the MOU with DEC is ready for sign off by the Department, and that the Committee was able to avoid any staff cuts due to the reduction of 319 funds. There will be subtle changes made to the program.

Meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date has been scheduled for Tuesday, April 19, 2005 at the Department of Agriculture & Markets.