

**NYS Soil & Water Conservation Committee**  
10B Airline Drive, Albany NY 12235 – Telephone (518) 457-3738

**STATE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**June 21, 2005—Ithaca, NY**

**PRESENT:** Voting Members – D. Hill, B. Aman, J. Dickinson, G. Proios; Executive Director – R. Kaplewicz; Assistant Director – M. Latham; SWCC Staff – T. Brace, C. Frasier, R. Lewis, L. Miller, M. Moore, J. Schumacher, B. Steinmuller, J. Ten Eyck; NYSDA&M – R. Christensen, J. Rusnica; CCE – K. Czymmek; Cornell – L. Chase; NRCS – J. Del Vecchio; NYSCDEA – A. Barber, J. Carmichael; NYSDEC – G. Chartier; NYSDOH – P. Kaczmarczyk; SUNY ESF – P. Black; Tompkins County SWCD – C. Schutt.

**CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS:**

D. Hill called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

R. Kaplewicz introduced new Associate Environmental Analyst Cliff Frasier, who joined the State Committee Staff in the Albany office June 9<sup>th</sup>.

R. Kaplewicz also welcomed L. Chase to the State Committee as the new representative for Cornell University's Dean Henry.

**REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES:**

**G. Proios moved to approve the minutes of the March meeting; seconded by J. Dickinson. Motion passed; carried.**

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

*Letters & Memos*

1. Letter from Linda Coffin, NYACD President to Ron Kaplewicz, Director, regarding various soil & water district questions. **Letter Dated June 2005.**

*Reports & News Letters*

1. **Agricultural News: NY Agricultural Statistics Service: Regarding:** May prices decrease for selected commodities; NY Dairy Farms examined by type or organization; NY egg production for April; NY maple syrup production; April milk production; NY equine inventories; NY egg production for January; February milk production; February prices increase for selected commodities; NY red meat production.
2. **Bay Journal**, Vol. 15. No. 3, May 2005; Vol. 15, No. 4, June 2005
3. **Agricultural Research, US Dept. of Agriculture**, May 2005.
4. **2004 Annual Report: National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council.**
5. **ERS Report Summary-Resources and Environment;** March 2005.
6. **Bay Journal**, Vol. 15, No. 1, March 2005.
7. **What's Cropping Up?**, Vol. 15, No. 3, Mar-Apr, 2005.
8. **Partners**, Vol. 23. No. 1, Jan-Feb 2005.
9. **The Cultivator, NY State Agricultural Society**, Spring 2005.
10. **2004 Annual Report: Watershed Agricultural Council in the NYC Watershed;** Special Edition 2005, Vol. 3.1.
11. **USDA: Inside Agroforestry;** Winter 2005.
12. **Partners**, now available by e-mail. Go to [www.ctic.purdue.edu/PartnersEmail.html](http://www.ctic.purdue.edu/PartnersEmail.html) and enter contact information.
13. **Economic Research Service:** U.S. Dept. of Agriculture [www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves](http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves).
14. **The New York State Conservationist:** April 2005.
15. **Buffer Notes:** March 2005 and May 2005.
16. **CDEA News:** May 2005.
17. **CFA News, The Newsletter of the Catskill Forest Association, Inc.,** Vol. 23, No. 2, Spring 2005.
18. **FYI: NYACD Newsletter:** March 2005, May 2005.
19. **NRCS: Minutes – State Technical Committee Meeting,** June 6, 2005.

20. **Estuary News:** Vol. 15, Issue 3 – Spring 2005.
21. **2004 Annual Report: Wyoming County SWCD.**
22. **Taking Root:** A Newsletter for the NYS Urban and Community Forestry Council Winter 2005.

Conferences & Seminars

1. **The 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance:** Spring Workshop; June 22, 2005, Geneva, NY; [blandre@eznet.net](mailto:blandre@eznet.net)
2. **Canon Envirothon New York 2007:**
3. **Convention South:** Meetings, conferences, seminars and similar events held in the South. June 2005; Vol. 21, No. 11

Correspondence Discussion

R. Kaplewicz stated that in an email received on June 10<sup>th</sup>, B. Schmelz, State Committee Representative for the Department of State, has accepted a position with the Virginia Department of Transportation and will be leaving effective June 24<sup>th</sup>. B. Schmelz wished to convey his personal thanks to D. Hill and the State Committee for all the hard work the Committee does on behalf of the people of New York State. In his message B. Schmelz also stated that “it is the partnerships which we lay the groundwork for that sustain us over time, and the willingness of everyone to listen to, think about, and incorporate divergent thinking and a different way of doing business that has brought such positive results.”

R. Kaplewicz reviewed the letter sent from NYACD President L. Coffin regarding various Soil and Water Conservation District questions. The following items were discussed:

1. The need to amend certain state statutes which would then allow for SWCDs to hold conservation easements if they choose. Additional alternatives regarding this issue would be to form a nonprofit organization that would look to Districts to provide management plans for conservation easements. NYACD requested assistance from the Department’s counsel for a legal interpretation on this matter.
  - R. Christensen urged the Committee to fully take into account the kind of commitment that Districts would be obligated to and the long term consequences that may come with the easements.
  - G. Proios stated that there is a need to oversee and monitor what all land trusts are doing, Districts may be able to bring these different groups together.
  - K. Czymmek suggested that the Committee look to Districts in other states that have the ability to hold conservation easements for guidance and suggestions.
  - A. Barber pointed out that Districts need an official opinion regarding easements in general in order to bring closure to it. She suggested that another option might be to look at changing General Municipal Law so Districts can be considered a municipality. A. Barber suggested that a legal interpretation of this matter be sought and that the unintended consequences of changing GML need to be understood.
  - G. Proios indicated that once a legal position has been established it can be brought to NYACDs annual meeting for a possible resolution. He also suggested that the State Committee needs to write a letter to DEC to request an opinion on the **Environmental Conservation Law with regard to easements**.
  - R. Kaplewicz will work with Counsel’s office and request continuing assistance on this issue and determine what the legal boundaries are in respects to Districts holding easements.
  - J. Rusnica noted that Counsel’s office already has this in writing so it may need to be looked at again.
  - R. Kaplewicz agreed and suggested that the Committee will continue to work with American Farmland Trust regarding the practical and programmatic ramifications.
  - K. Czymmek suggested engaging D. Haight from AFT for training to Districts regarding what is involved to properly steward an easement.
  - R. Kaplewicz recommended that A. Barber contact D. Haight to coordinate a session statewide to talk about conservation easements.
2. NYACD also suggested that a survey be completed that would be sent to Districts to determine the type of forestry programs that are being implemented throughout the State. The purpose is to expand the survey to ask about other program areas outside of the traditional District programs.

3. The resolution passed at the NYACD annual meeting regarding the need for the Empire State Development Corporation to have agricultural marketing experts located within their organization and to actively support and expand local farmers' markets throughout New York State. A request was made that a meeting be convened for the purpose of developing a strategy and supporting program that will help farmers produce new agricultural commodities that will serve the new ethnic population of New York State.

G. Proios remarked that there is a definite need to monitor the economic activity surrounding agriculture in order to find out how to best preserve the industry.

4. The resolution passed urging the Governor and Commissioner Rudgers to convene an agriculture summit for the purpose of developing a set of specific recommendations and programs that will help maintain, preserve and enhance the agriculture industry in New York State.

G. Proios suggested that the Lower RC&D take the lead to conduct a regional summit and use that as a pilot for a statewide meeting.

R. Christensen asked if there had been any discussion with the Commissioner regarding a summit. G. Proios replied that follow up was to occur with D. Conable.

G. Proios reiterated the fact that there is a real need to make sure there are not state or local policies out there that are hindering agriculture's economic development and to make sure that there are toolkits available to help local towns and villages make favorable decisions regarding agriculture.

5. The resolution passed to look into the need to request a change to the SWCD law in regards to the members of the State Committee and the need for alternate voting representatives.

B. Aman reiterated the need to come up with alternates of some other strategy relative to the voting members

G. Proios agreed and remarked that alternates are important so that representation is not lost if a voting member must recuse themselves from certain discussions. He also mentioned that specific recommendations should be made to the Department regarding this issue.

R. Kaplewicz indicated that he hopes that NYACD and the Department have a unified approach to this matter if NYACD decides to take legislative action.

6. NYACD is also looking for more information regarding Watershed Ag Councils and their activities.

R. Kaplewicz noted that the Committee will be working with Department to get a better understanding of the issues and recommendations identified in the letter.

#### **SUMMARY OF MEETING WITH CORNELL UNIVERSITY & CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION:**

R. Kaplewicz summarized the meeting that was held with Cornell and CCE representatives June 20, 2005, as a follow up to the November 2004 meeting. There was discussion about several activities at the university, and about building stronger partnerships between CCE and Districts.

*The State Committee was invited to develop a list of research issues that Cornell can respond to in order to assist District programs and complement current efforts.*

It was mentioned that regional manager's meeting would be a good forum to seek input from Districts and identify possible research objectives.

R. Kaplewicz stated that D. Grantham offered to do a presentation regarding the strategic vision for the Cornell College of Ag & Life Sciences at the September meeting. It was also suggested to set time on the agenda at the Committee's organizational meeting to discuss meeting with advisory members to continue to foster partnerships.

G. Proios added that it was interesting to see the inner working of a large university with both a private and state system, and said that the State Committee, through NYACD, can help assist the University in areas that they may have issues with. He also suggested that the Cornell Research Labs be requested to send copies of their annual report to the Committee so that Districts can be kept informed.



## **AEM REPORT:**

J. Ten Eyck briefly described the AEM Base Funding Program policies and procedures. He distributed a table that summarizes District involvement in the program at this time. 55 of 58 counties attended the mandatory rollout training in November 2004. 54 of 58 counties submitted AEM Strategic Plans and Funding Strategies. 53 have opted to participate during the first year of funding (2005-06). \$999,310 has been requested to implement AEM Tier 1, 2, 3A and 5A/B in the first year. The contract period for year one runs from May 7, 2005 to May 6, 2006. Districts will then have two months to provide final reports to the State Committee office. Each county is eligible to receive 25% upfront to initiate their program. If they finish with their deliverable ahead of schedule, they may send in their final report and request final payment at that time. Districts will only be paid for work completed based on the eligible payments per tier. One progress report will be due October 31, 2005 to help serve as a reminder of the work to be completed. There will be no incremental payments and no time extensions to complete work.

Regional training meetings were held throughout the state in May and SWCC staff members are looking at ways to strengthen local partnerships and the County Strategies and are currently conducting outreach programs including; Tier 2 training for new and inexperienced employees, and additional Tier 3A and 5 training.

J. Ten Eyck also mentioned that \$100,000 has also been allocated to support the AEM Engineer's position through NRCS to address BMP implementation issues within the Ag. NPS Grant and EQIP programs. A second congressional earmark, \$50,000 more than last year, has been secured for year 2 of the AEM Base Funding Program. J. Ten Eyck distributed and discussed the Spending Proposal for FFY 2005 and the \$796,800 AEM Congressional Appropriation. Discussion ensued regarding the earmark and spending proposal. J. Ten Eyck discussed what the AEM program gains by allowing every District to participate on an equal level with the noncompetitive program. Participating in the Base Program starts to get people involved with AEM and puts Districts in a better position to compete in other levels of the Ag. NPS Grant Program. The success demonstrated in the AEM Base program will help expand financial support for all programs and lead to improved water quality. Year 1 of the program will be evaluated, and appropriate changes will be made to make for a stronger program. AEM lends itself well to address emerging issues in other areas beyond water quality, so a strong foundation must be established to support continued activity. Discussion ensued regarding the benefits of the AEM Base Funding Program, and the possible impacts it may also have on programs such as CREP and CSP.

A. Barber commended the Committee for understanding the value of the Base Program and suggested that the program be evaluated once the interim reports have been filed. She also raised some questions as to whether the funding should be equal or equitable and suggested further discussion regarding the ability to secure further funding if there is more work to be completed in some counties, while other counties leave portions of their funding unused. She also mentioned that some Districts are working together to achieve some cooperative agreements. A. Barber also noted that managing all of this new information is important and issues with the database management tool should be addressed.

R. Kaplewicz noted that a conscious effort needs to be made to engage District Directors as well.

Discussion ensued regarding the ability to manage and measure the impact the program has on the environment.

## **AG NONPOINT SOURCE ABATEMENT & CONTROL PROGRAM:**

*Please note: B. Aman, J. Carmichael, and C. Schutt recused themselves from the meeting and subsequent discussion.*

### Status of Rounds I-X

Of 380 projects, 129 are active, 39 are pending, and 212 are complete.

### Round XI

Plans of work are being received in the Albany office. Contract development has begun. Currently 8 plans of work have been sent to the Department's Fiscal Management and Counsel's office for review.

### Round XII

The draft RFP and Evaluation Instrument were made available to the Committee for their review.

B. Steinmuller reported that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) convened on June 7, 2005 to finalize discussion and make recommendations for the Round XII RFP. A potential policy change regarding the CNMP requirements for the implementation of agricultural waste storage BMPs was discussed at length. The current policy requires that applicants requesting State funding for implementation of Agricultural Waste Storage BMPs must demonstrate that a CNMP, which meets the requirements of NRCS Standard 312, will be certified before a contract is issued. Some members of the TAC are concerned that requiring a CNMP to be completed prior to the construction of a waste storage structure may pose an undue burden on non-CAFOs that are not required by law to complete and implement such a comprehensive plan. In addition, NRCS is under an extensive workload and is relying on Technical Service Providers (TSPs) to provide CNMP services, increasing the cost to farmers. The TAC reached a consensus, at the February meeting, to explore a minimum set of requirements to determine the need for a storage system, the components of the system, and what the farmer needs to do to properly manage the system.

A proposal to establish a progressive planning alternative was developed and presented at the TAC meeting in April. The progressive planning approach outlined in the proposal included the completion of an AEM Tier 3A plan for the priority waste management issues identified from the Tier 2 assessment of the farm. The proposed alternative would be used as a "pre-plan" completed prior to a SWCD submitting an application to construct an agricultural waste storage system. If the application is selected for funding, a CNMP would still need to be completed, but could be done in conjunction with the implementation of the structure and the CNMP costs may be used as the landowner's match. The rationale behind the pre-planning effort is to assure that the structure is needed for the specific operation, that adequate survey and planning has been completed before the submission of the application, and that the landowner is educated on the proper management required to operate and maintain the system. The CNMP would then be developed or modified with the management of the storage system in place.

At the April TAC meeting, The TAC recommended using the preplanning approach before the submittal of an application if the farm has not developed a CNMP before the application deadline. The TAC further recommended maintaining the current policy of requiring a CNMP to be completed before a contract can be issued to the successful applicant. The AEM Technical Committee was asked to finalize the Tier 3A planning tool. The plan is mostly complete but is still under development.

At the June TAC meeting, the draft Tier 3A plan was distributed and the policy recommendation from the April meeting was revisited. The TAC recommends the following policies for the Round XII RFP:

- Applicants requesting State funding for implementation of Agricultural Waste Storage BMPs must demonstrate that an AEM Tier 3A, Agricultural Waste Management Plan, or a CNMP, which meets the requirements of NRCS Standard 312, has been completed prior to submission of an application. In all cases an AEM Tier 3A checklist must be completed and submitted with each application.
- If the application is selected for funding, a CNMP, which meets the requirements of NRCS Standard 312, must be certified before payment can be issued for the completed BMP.
- As a requirement for Agricultural Waste Storage BMPs, CNMP development costs may be utilized as landowner/operator match only when applying for Agricultural Waste Storage BMPs. *(please note: by allowing CNMP costs to be used as match for the implementation of Ag. Waste Storage BMPs, an exception would be made to the current policy of not mixing planning and implementation. The TAC considered this fact and recommends allowing the exception because the CNMP is an important component of the storage and is vital for the proper management of the system.)*
- Modifications to an existing CNMP for the purpose of implementing the Agricultural Waste Storage BMPs may also be utilized as landowner or operator match.

A. Barber suggested that the language be changed from Agricultural Waste Storage BMPs to Manure Storage System so not to confuse the requirements for this particular practice with other Agricultural Waste BMPs.

**G. Proios moved to adopt the TACs recommendations with suggested changes, regarding the planning requirements for Manure Storage System; seconded J. Dickinson. Motion passed; carried.**

- The TAC recommends establishing a recommended rate for NRCS Area Engineers. The Federal Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has a website that indicates federal engineer rates. This will serve as the basis for establishing the recommended rate for the Round XII RFP.

**J. Dickinson moved to accept the recommendations regarding the establishment of a recommended rate for NRCS Area Engineers based on information obtained from the OPM website and in consultation with the NRCS State Conservationist; seconded G. Proios. Motion Passed; carried.**

- The TAC recommends that the State Committee allocate \$600,000 from the FY '05 EPF to support the noncompetitive AEM Base Funding program.

**G. Proios moved to allocate \$600,000 from the FY '05 EPF to continue to support the noncompetitive AEM Base Funding program; seconded J. Dickinson. Motion passed; carried.**

Other language and procedural changes to the Round XII RFP were discussed. These procedural changes were identified to improve the proposal reviewer's ability to rank proposals. Procedural and language changes were highlighted in the draft RFP and Evaluation Instrument.

The TAC recommends the following language be inserted in question 17 of the application: *"Discuss how this project will further the objectives and goals outlined in your County AEM Strategy."*

The TAC recommends the following language to be included in the Proposal Rating Sheet under the considerations for addressing identified need or opportunity: *"The project will further the objectives and goals outlined in your County AEM Strategy."*

The Operation and Maintenance Guidelines that appear on page 14 of the RFP were revised during the updating of the Agricultural Management Practices Catalogue. The TAC recommends omitting points 2-4 on the Operation and Maintenance Guidelines. Points 2-4 explain special circumstances that exempt the landowner from fulfilling requirements for the O&M of funded BMPs. These policies would still be in effect. However, the TAC felt that these policies do not need to be highlighted in the RFP.

**G. Proios moved to adopt the Round XII RFP and evaluation instrument, subject to minor changes within the Department; seconded J. Dickinson. Motion passed, carried.**

#### Staff Approved Amendments

1. Tompkins SWCD – Pasture Management Cayuga and Owasco Lake Watersheds – Round X – C700768  
*Request:* change of 9 landowners  
*Reason:* 4 original landowners voluntarily withdrew, 5 landowners sold operation. New landowners were determined priorities through the AEM Tier 1 and 2 process.  
*Approved by J. Schumacher 5/18/05*
2. Tompkins SWCD (Tioga SWCD) – Rotational Grazing Implementation: Upper Susquehanna Watershed – Round IX – C700737  
*Request:* change of 1 landowner  
*Reason:* original landowner sold operation. New landowner was determined a priority through AEM Tier 1 and 2 process.  
*Approved by J. Schumacher 5/18/05*
3. Orange SWCD – Ag Waste & Nutrient Management in Wallkill – Round IX – C700718  
*Request:* change of 1 landowner  
*Reason:* original landowner is no longer operating the farm. The BMPs will be completed by the new operator.  
*Approved by L. Miller/B. Steinmuller 6/6/05*
4. Orange SWCD – Ag Waste & Nutrient Management in Wallkill – Round X – C700762  
*Request:* change of 2 landowners  
*Reason:* original landowners are no longer operating the farm. BMPs will be completed by the new operators.  
*Approved by L. Miller/B. Steinmuller 6/9/05*
5. Chenango SWCD – Otselic River Corridor Reach No. 1 Implementation Project – Round X – C700746  
*Request:* change to budget

*Reason:* district expressed a need to reallocate state funds from the contractual services line item to the BMP and engineering line items on the budget.

*Approved by J. Schumacher 6/10/05*

6. Suffolk SWCD – Irrigation Wellhead Protection – Round IX – C700739

*Request:* add one petroleum storage containment unit BMP on one farm

*Reason:* funds are available to add an additional petroleum storage containment unit

*Approved by L. Miller/B. Steinmuller 6/17/05*

7. Broome SWCD – Susquehanna River Corridor Agricultural Implementation Project, Phase II – Round VIII – C700670

*Request:* change of BMPs

*Reason:* original BMPs no longer needed, new BMPs identified as a priority

*Approved by J. Schumacher 6/13/05*

8. Rensselaer SWCD – Tomhannock Reservoir – Ag. NPS Partner III – Round VI – C700617

*Request:* change of BMP size

*Reason:* planned size of the manure storage structure has been reduced by NRCS to comply with new guidelines

*Approved by R. Lewis 6/17/05*

**CAFO – RECENT COURT RULING:**

J. Rusnica distributed a Department of Agriculture & Markets Case Summary for the *Waterkeeper Alliance, Inc., et al v. United States Environmental Protection Agency*. The petitioners challenged various provisions of EPA's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit Regulation and Effluent Limitation Guidelines (ELGs) and Standards for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations. The Department is investigating potential impacts of this decision and the effects of how future CAFO permits are issued. DEC will shoulder the burden of the Court's decision, however there was good discussion at the last CAFO workgroup meeting. DEC will have to wait for EPA to issue its guidance as the Court has denied an appeal.

Further discussion regarding this topic will be held at the July meeting.

**STORMWATER UPDATE:**

L. Miller reported that at the Stormwater Sub-committee meeting held on June 20<sup>th</sup>, Rebecca Snyder presented a research project dealing with roadside ditches impact on total sediment load. The results from this study will be important information for Districts. The project plans to have all of their monitors in place by fall.

Stormwater Hires

L. Miller indicated that the Region 3 Stormwater Specialist has been hired and will work with MS4 communities.

L. Miller also reported that D. Caraco has resigned and R. Kaplewicz is working together with A. Barber and G. Chartier to redefine that position's role to be more of a training coordinator.

DEC Stormwater Construction Group

The DEC Stormwater Construction Group would like to take a closer look at District perspectives surrounding the stormwater program and develop protocol for stormwater compliance. They are asking for State Committee involvement with that activity. L. Miller suggested that the State Committee needs to be actively involved and help redefine Districts' roles in the reimbursement process.

G. Proios remarked that the difficulty lies in the fact that there is little consistency across the state or coordination amongst the regions with respect to the stormwater program.

It was suggested that stormwater specialists attend the State Committee meetings on occasion to report on activities in order to gain further perspective into the stormwater program.

### Mini-grants

Levels 3-7 have been awarded. Level 2 is being held pending completion of a checklist that addresses site plan review processes, planning and zoning regulations and subdivision review processes outlining consistency with the State Construction Permit.

G. Chartier reported that a total of \$965,000 was requested and more than half the applications were accepted awarding \$482,000.

### Stormwater Training

L. Miller reported that the sub-committee is now looking at District priorities for stormwater training. D. Lake scheduled trainings in each region but received low attendance. The idea of holding a director training session was mentioned, so directors are better informed about the program.

G. Proios was going to ask NYACD to survey directors about how they would best receive the training.

R. Kaplewicz suggested that SWCC staff could hold one-on-one meetings in their areas.

G. Proios suggested having D. Lake's updated training schedule posted on the State Committee Website.

### Other

G. Proios pointed out that some directors are troubled by the developments surrounding the allocation of permit fees to the NYS General fund rather than to Districts and the DECt. Many supported the idea because they thought there was an understanding that the money would remain in the Stormwater Management Program. However, now with retroactive fees being imposed, many are upset.

G. Chartier indicated that the DEC did not make this decision as it was part of the overall budget negotiation process.

## **OTHER REPORTS:**

### EFARM

M. Latham reported that of 270 applications that have been submitted, 60 have been approved for payment. M. Latham estimates that approximately two staff hours are spent reviewing each application. The review process was stalled for approximately two or three weeks with an issue regarding overdue payment of federal and state taxes. This however, has now been resolved.

The program is approximately half way through year one and the State is pleased with the current outcome. The program will now move into phase two which includes an emphasis on outreach activities in order to draw in more applications. Phase 3 of the outreach activities will involve Districts.

M. Latham and B. Steinmuller are currently working on ways to streamline the application review process for CNMP update reimbursement.

R. Kaplewicz indicated that EFC is committed to provide 5 years of funding for additional staffing to help ease the burden of this application review process.

### CREP

R. Lewis reported that each county FSA office has been charged by their new Director, Brymer Humphreys, to complete 3 CREP plans by August of this year. This initiative will be a good shot in the arm for NYS CREP, because currently only 18 counties are participating statewide.

More on CREP will be discussed at the July meeting.

### Forestry Update

R. Kaplewicz acknowledged P. Black for all of his efforts to make the meeting at SUNYESF successful.

R. Kaplewicz distributed a copy of the MOU between DEC and the State Committee regarding forestry activities, which was signed back in 1982. R. Kaplewicz suggested that when the partnership puts together the survey that they ask Districts to go back through their records to see if they had any involvement with this MOU in the past.

R. Christensen indicated that the Department is working with DEC on a new MOU. R. Kaplewicz added that along with that they are also working to secure funds to hire a forester that would be working with the Department of Ag and Mkts, DEC and the State Committee.

R. Kaplewicz remarked that DEC is willing to continue this discussion however DEC is looking towards a September/October time frame to further discuss these issues.

EPA Consent Agreement

K. Czymmek noted that the deadline for sign-up for the Air Quality Consent Agreement has received a second time extension. The deadline is now July 29, 2005.

NRCS

J. Del Vecchio reported that the damaging rain that was received this past month in certain areas has prompted Emergency Watershed Protection work in many NYS counties. Because of this emergency work, many NRCS resources have been redirected to get the work done within the time frame allowed.

CSP – The first sign-up period has come to a close. Approximately 80 eligible producers have been identified and their data has been submitted to the national database. Once the national ranking has been completed, chosen producers will be awarded contracts beginning with this year.

The CSP sub-committee met to review data and recommend watersheds for the 2006 sign-up. Recommended watersheds include: Oak Orchard-Twelvemile, Upper Delaware, East Branch Delaware, Middle Delaware, Mongaup-Brodhead.

AMA – 303 contracts, with an average contract payment of \$4500 have been approved.

NYCDEA

A. Barber reminded the Committee that the Executive Board meeting will be held June 29–30, 2005.

Other

J. Del Vecchio also reminded the Committee that the Soil & Water Conservation Society's annual meeting will be held in Rochester, July 31 – August 3, 2005. Early registration needs to be in by the end of June.

G. Proios informed the Committee that the Mid-Atlantic RC&D meeting will be held September 20–23 at the West Point Military Academy. They are hoping to have at least one county from every RC&D represented at the meeting.

R. Kaplewicz thanked the Committee and Districts for all of the expressions of sympathy he received with the passing of his father earlier in the month.

D. Hill mentioned the successful Susquehanna Watershed meeting recently held to inform representatives from Congress that more money is needed from the Farm Bill to go into activities to improve the quality of the Susquehanna Watershed. It was an opportunity to share concerns and demonstrate additional need.

Next Meeting Date

**The next meeting date has been scheduled for Monday, July 18<sup>th</sup> – Tuesday, July 19<sup>th</sup> in Suffolk County, Long Island. Further details will follow.**

**Meeting adjourned at 3:21 p.m.**