

# DRAFT

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## **New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee** 10B Airline Drive, Albany, NY 12235 -- Telephone (518) 457-3738

### **STATE COMMITTEE MINUTES**

November 13, 2012  
Cayuga County SWCD  
7413 County House Road  
Auburn, NY 13021

#### **Present:**

G. Proios, Chair; D. Stein, C. Colby, J. Dickinson, D. Brass, Voting Members; M. Latham, Director; B. Steinmuller, Assistant Director; D. DeWeese, NRCS; R. Rausch, DAM; D. Ashline, DEC; J. Littrell, NYACD; D. Hill, L. Underwood, Delaware SWCD; S. Lorraine, Madison SWCD (CDEA); D. Reckahn, Essex SWCD; G. Albrecht, B. Brower, SWCC Staff; J. Clifford, Dutchess SWCD.

#### **Call to Order**

G. Proios called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

#### **Review/Approval of Minutes**

**D. Stein moved to approve the September 18, 2012 minutes as presented; seconded by J. Dickinson. Motion passed; carried.**

#### **Correspondence**

M. Latham made the correspondence available. G. Proios commented on the high quality of Conservation District Annual Reports.

#### **Hurricane Sandy Update – M. Latham**

M. Latham advised the group on the Department's role in emergency relief in response to Hurricane Sandy making landfall in late October. Before the storm the Division of Land and Water Resources worked with the Department's Emergency Management Coordinator and other Division heads to prepare for the storm and the Department's components of statewide response. As a result of the storms of 2011, the State Committee and Districts met in September 2012 to review the Districts response and recommend areas for improvement. One recommendation made was to develop and disseminate a standard form that can be used by Districts to assess agricultural damages. In the days preceding the storm, the Division worked with the Delaware County SWCD to prepare a form for use after Hurricane Sandy. The form was emailed to all Districts and used extensively by Suffolk County. All Districts were asked to provide a general assessment of agricultural damages the day after the storm and most reported little to no damage.

M. Latham advised the group on the extent of devastation experienced downstate because of Hurricane Sandy that came ashore in Downstate and New Jersey areas. The agricultural sector was mainly spared unlike the aftereffects of Hurricane Irene and TS Lee of 2011. However, agricultural impacts were experienced on the eastern end of the North Fork of Suffolk County. The most serious impact was to a number of dike breaches that occurred on vegetable and fruit farms that are located on the coast. The breached dikes allowed extreme coastal surge and tidal flooding to the agricultural fields. The farmers are worried that the salt intrusion will have a long term impact on the health of the soil and are actively seeking funding and resources to repair and rebuild the extensive dike systems.

# DRAFT

## **AEM / Yogurt Summit Update – Michael Latham**

M. Latham provided an update on the AEM / EBM project that has been on-going for the last two years. Nearly all AEM Tier 2 Worksheets have been updated incorporating EBM principles. The AEM Tier 2 Worksheet revisions have been coordinated with groups of technical experts and District practitioners to ensure that they are scientifically accurate and user-friendly. The AEM Training that commenced the day of the Committee meeting, down the road at the Holiday Inn, focused on those updated worksheets and will serve as a launching event for statewide use.

M. Latham provided an update on the policy discussions that resulted from the Yogurt Summit that occurred in August 2012. The Department of Agriculture and Markets, Division of Land and Water Resources is currently assisting the Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Water with the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pertaining to the proposed revisions to the definition of Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit requirements (6 NYCRR Part 750 regulation). The proposed rulemaking will also modify 6 NYCRR Part 360 to address new solid waste management technologies. M. Latham noted that the EIS should be out next week. Consistent updates on this policy process will be made to the State Committee.

## **NRCS Standard 590 Revisions Update – Greg Albrecht**

G. Albrecht provided an update on the revisions to the NRCS-NY 590 standard. G. Albrecht noted that the draft standard is being developed by an interagency team of NRCS, SWCC, Districts, DEC, CCE, and CALS. The NRCS-NY 590 Standard pertains to managing the amount (rate), source, placement (method of application), and timing of plant nutrients and soil amendments. G. Albrecht is taking an active role coordinating comments, editing the draft and distributing copies to the group.

The current draft provides an approach to the timing and placement of manure during the winter months. The NRCS-NY 590 Standard does not include a winter manure spreading ban. The current draft consists of a number of safeguards to minimize the agricultural nonpoint source pollution of surface and groundwater resources, such as precluding spreading when field conditions are frozen and/or snow-covered or when soils are saturated from rainfall or snow melt. Nutrient applications may be made to frozen and/or snow covered soil under limited criteria and with proper conservation methods.

The final 590 Standard should be released in January 2013.

## **State Aid to Districts Update – Jennifer Clifford**

Jennifer Clifford gave a report updating the Committee on the three program levels and a status of accomplishments to date. The presentation J. Clifford delivered will be made into a District Director Training Module and should be presented for partnership review sometime in December. The presentation adds clarity to the various rules and guidelines pertaining to each program level. J. Clifford also took the time to update the Committee on a number of projects that she is working on related to Director training and District operations. The presentation was well received and discussion ensued regarding the available appropriations for the State Aid to Districts Program.

## **Ag Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program - Brian Steinmuller**

### **STATUS OF ROUNDS 1-18**

Of 650 contracts, 159 are active, and 448 are complete. 22 contracts have been cancelled during the life of the program. There are 20 Round 18 NPS projects and 1 Round 17 NPS project pending. There have been 34 contracts closed out in 2012.

# DRAFT

## **Amendment for State Committee Consideration**

Albany SWCD – Hilltop Farm CNMP Tier IV Imp Project – Round 14 – C700930

Request: time extension from 10/31/12 to 10/31/13

Reason: extension needed due to contractors unable to work the entire construction season. In addition the landowner is waiting for EQIP reimbursement which has delayed the start due to cash flow issues.

*Note: Cliff Frasier, Region 5 AEA, supports the time extension*

*Previous amendments: none*

**D. Stein moved to approve the time extension; seconded by D. Brass. Motion passed; carried.**

## **Staff Approved Amendment**

Orange SWCD – Nutrient & Ag Waster in the Wallkill River WS – Round 14 – C700922

Request: change in budget

Reason: change from 2 acres of filter strips to 100 acres of cover and green manure crop

*Note: Brian Steinmuller, Region 6 AEA, supports this change in budget*

*Previous amendments: 1 time extension, 1 landowner change*

## **Round 19**

**Before B. Steinmuller began discussion of the Round 19 RFP, he asked that any farmers or District's personnel in the room that plan to apply for Round 19 grants please recuse by leaving the meeting room pursuant to the New York Ethics Advisory Opinion No. 03-09.**

The SWCC recently held a webinar for Conservation Districts regarding the highlights of Round 19. Many questions were fielded as a result of the webinar and the Q&A was developed as a result. Round 19 proposals are due on December 10, 2012 by 4:30 p.m.

**D. Stein moved to approve the Q&A as presented; seconded by J. Dickinson. Motion approved; carried.**

**The members representing Districts returned to the meeting at this time.**

## **Advisory Member / Partnership Reports / Public Comments - ALL**

**USDA-NRCS** – D. DeWeese told the Committee that D. Pettit is currently in Washington D.C. at training. D. DeWeese discussed a number of items including the pending federal Farm Bill, the Field Office of the Future discussion, and the potential impacts of the so called "Fiscal Cliff", the term used for the automatic funding cuts and tax increases that could go into effect if the President and Congress do not compromise on a deficit-cutting deal. DeWeese told the group that the 4-Way Partnership has been engaged in many of these discussions and a meeting is proposed for early December.

**NYS Ag&Mkts** – R. Rausch updated the Committee on the Wine, Beer, and Spirits Summit that was recently held on the heels of the Yogurt Summit. The goal of the Summit was to identify economic incentives to foster growth in the State's wine, craft beer and spirits industries. Rausch also advised the Committee on the Department's roles in the emergency relief for Hurricane Sandy.

**Delaware County SWCD** – D. Hill, Chair of the Delaware County SWCD and former Chair of the State Committee, addressed the State Committee stating that it was nice to attend and see familiar faces again. D. Hill commented on the yogurt boom in NYS and the associated increase in milk demand and production.

## DRAFT

**NYACD** – J. Littrell briefed the Committee on the 2012 Annual NYACD Conference that was held in Auburn in October. J. Littrell updated the Committee on the approval of all proposed resolutions. For a list of the approved resolutions, please contact Judy Littrell, NYACD. J. Littrell also discussed the pending political make-up of the State Senate, noting that one election has not yet been settled, making the majority unable to determine at this time.

**Chair** – G. Proios noted that there needs to be an analysis conducted that would evaluate water quality impacts as a result of flood and high intensity rainfall events.

**Voting Member** - D. Stein also commented on the milk production issues in NYS as a result of the increasing yogurt industry.

**NYSDEC** – D. Ashline briefed the Committee on some of the discussions regarding the draft CAFO modifications and the pending Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

**Next Meeting – December 18, 2012 at the Department of Agriculture and Markets**

**The Meeting adjourned at 12:50 pm.**

**Audiocast available at: <http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/webcasting.html>**