

New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee
10B Airline Drive, Albany, NY 12235 -- Telephone (518) 457-3738
State Committee Meeting
NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets
10B Airline Drive
Albany, NY 12235
March 18, 2014

Present:

G. Proios, Chair; D. Stein, C. Colby, D. Brass, J. Dickinson, Voting Members; M. Latham, Director; B. Steinmuller, Assistant Director; K. Roberts, DEC; N. Billhardt, CDEA; D. Pettit, T. Willis, NRCS; P. Kaczmarczyk, DOH; T. Sweeney, DAM.

Call to Order

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

Review/Approval of Minutes

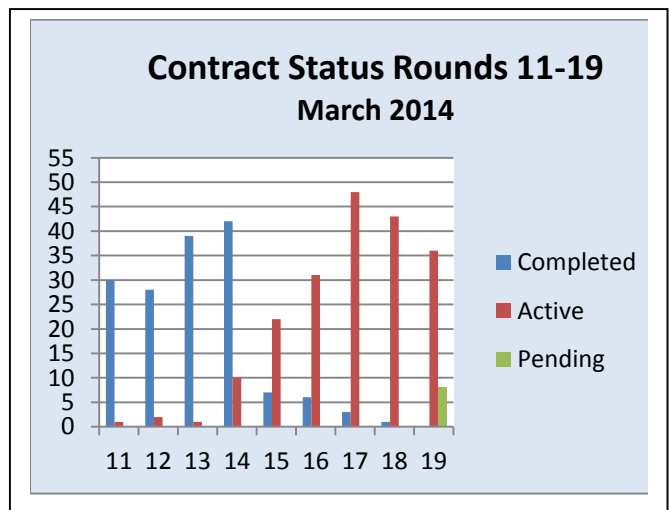
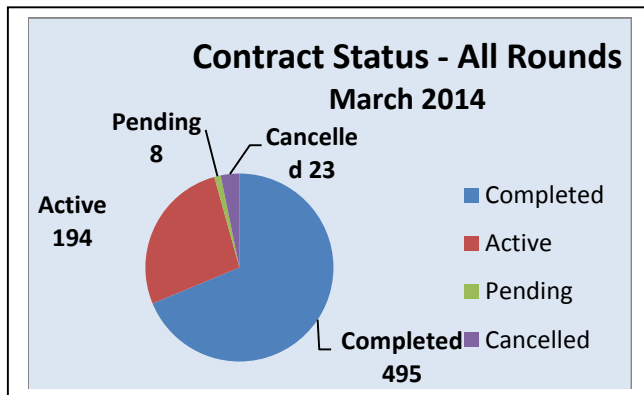
D. Stein moved to approve the February 2014 minutes; seconded by J. Dickinson. Motion passed; carried.

Correspondence

B. Steinmuller made the correspondence available. Correspondence included a variety of Soil and Water Conservation periodicals, reports, Newsletters and Reports.

Agricultural NPS Abatement & Control Grant Program – B. Steinmuller

STATUS OF ROUNDS 1-19



Amendments for State Committee Consideration

Albany SWCD – La Grange Brothers Dairy CAFO CNMP Tier IV – Round 15 – T700933

Request: time extension from 3/15/2014 to 3/15/2015

Reason: Farm has dropped below CAFO size and had to reevaluate the business plan and environmental footprint. WQIP funds were obtained to address a section of the farmstead and delayed the implementation.

Note: Cliff Frasier, Region 3 AEA, supports the time extension.

Previous amendments: none

J. Dickinson moved to approve the time extension; seconded by D. Brass. Motion passed; carried.

Delaware SWCD –Controlled/Ltd Livestock Acc. Using Riparian Forest Buffers 2010 –Round 16 – C700970

Request: time extension from 5/15/14 to 7/14/15

Reason: One Landowner has passed away. His son is operating the farm now and has committed to completing the project. Severe storms in 2012 and 2013 held up construction on another farm. Unstable streams resulted in modifications to planned buffer areas. Implementation now scheduled for spring 2014.

Note: Cliff Frasier, Region 3 AEA, supports the time extension

Previous amendments: none

J. Dickinson moved to approve the time extension; seconded by D. Brass. Motion passed; carried.

Madison SWCD – Upper Chenango River Ag NPS Reduction Project – Round 15 – C700941

Request: time extension from 12/31/2013 to 12/31/2014

Reason: One farm (CAFO) experienced some economic hardships over the past few years resulting in the delay of implementing this project. Farm is committed to completing the project in 2014.

Note: Cliff Frasier, Region 3 AEA, support the time extension

Previous amendments: none

J. Dickinson moved to approve the time extension; seconded by D. Brass. Motion passed; carried.

Montgomery SWCD –Canajoharie Creek – Round 16 – C700978

Request: time extension from 5/15/2014 to 12/31/2015

Reason: Implementation has begun on one farm. District has reviewed implementation schedule on the other farm. Farmer would like to complete implementation early next year. With a time extension, District will not have any trouble completing all facets of the grant.

Note: Cliff Frasier, Region 3 AEA, supports the time extension

Previous amendments: none

J. Dickinson moved to approve the time extension; seconded by D. Brass. Motion passed; carried.

Montgomery SWCD – Fonda Reservoir – Round 15 – C700944

Request: time extension from 3/15/2014 to 12/31/2014

Reason: All BMPs completed except for laneways. Contractor delays and extremely cold weather has pushed completion of this BMP to spring 2014.

Note: Cliff Frasier, Region 3 AEA, supports this time extension

Previous amendments: none

J. Dickinson moved to approve the time extension; seconded by D. Brass. Motion passed; carried.

Staff Approved Amendment

Ontario SWCD – Canandaigua Lake Watershed Ag Program – Round 15 – C700946

Request: change in budget

Reason: OCSWCD had a personnel change during the contract period (new technician hired). As a result, the District exceeded the available engineering and personnel hours. The request is to move \$986 from the NWNV contractual state requested funds into the personal services state requested-funds to offset additional hours worked by the OCSWD to complete the deliverables of the contract.

Note: Jeff Ten Eyck, Region 2 AEA, approved the change in budget

Previous amendments: none

Advisory Members / Partnership Reports – All

DOH – P. Kaczmarczyk spoke about the Filtration Avoidance Determination (FAD) that is being finalized in the New York City Watershed.

NRCS – D. Pettit spoke about the federal budget. Pettit advised the Committee that the three-way Cooperative Working Agreement between the SWCC/NRCS/SWCDs is complete. Pettit provided an overview of the agreement and a background on the cooperation between the 4-way Conservation Partnership in its development. Pettit advised the Committee that a letter has been drafted to be signed by the 4-Way Partnership to be sent to each Conservation District Chair. Pettit has copies of the letter and asked for signature from the CDEA President, and the Chair of the SWCC. It is D. Pettit’s hope that the cover letter and CWAs will start to go out to Districts in the next few weeks. Pettit advised the Committee that the rental agreements and leased space has come up again and currently is a central issue at USDA headquarters in Washington D.C. Pettit encouraged all co-located SWCDs to work on becoming self-sufficient as the authority for rental agreements is becoming a more central function.

Pettit also spoke about the Soil Health Campaign. Pettit is pleased that the topic of Soil Health is a big interest nationwide and here in NYS.

D. Pettit introduced Tammy Willis, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, who advised the Committee on the Conservation Title of the recently passed Federal Farm Bill. Willis distributed two fact sheets that were made available from Washington D.C. that summarizes the consolidation of programs and new initiatives present in the Farm Bill. For more information, please see the attached fact sheets.

D. Pettit and T. Willis gave the Committee a brief on the National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) that was recently approved for specific sub-watersheds of the Genesee River Basin. The NWQI is a partnership between NRCS and the state water quality agency, DEC. The intent is to target EQIP funds in these watersheds coupling these efforts with DEC water quality information and edge of field monitoring in an attempt to demonstrate improvement in the watershed. Discussion ensued regarding the SUNY Brockport study led by Professor Joseph C. Makarewicz. This study proved to be helpful in modeling water quality improvements associated with agricultural BMPs within the Great Lakes and subwatersheds.

DEC – K. Roberts advised the SWCC that the Nonpoint Source Coordinating Committee (NPSCC) plans to meet in April 2014.

Voting Member Report – G. Proios provided an update on the water quality legislation making its way through the State Legislature that would reduce the tolerable nitrogen levels in drinking water supplies.

D. Stein reported on manure and nutrient management issues related to the weather conditions. Stein reported that with a long and frozen winter coupled with recent local high intensity rain events, reports of manure contamination have started to surface. Discussion ensued.

SFY 2014-2015 Priorities – G. Proios

G. Proios facilitated a discussion on priorities to address in the upcoming State Fiscal Year and potential meeting topics, agenda items, and special meeting events.

Discussion ensued. A number of potential priorities based on the Strategic Plan were discussed. The Committee agreed that a meeting at Cornell University should be set in July. B. Steinmuller will reach out to D. Grantham to start developing an agenda and program. Other items were discussed including prioritizing the revisions of the Conservation District Administrative Manual. This would be a cooperative effort with the CDEA.

2014 Water Quality Symposium Report – N. Billhardt

N. Billhardt, re-elected President of the NYS Conservation District Employees’ Association reported on the recently held 2014 Water Quality Symposium. Although numbers of participants continue to decrease, Billhardt reported on a very successful Water Quality Symposium. Initial assessment of the course evaluations indicate that the sessions were very well received. Billhardt talked about the challenges posed with a mid-week storm that led to a few courses being cancelled. Billhardt reported that Kevin Lewis, Oneida County Conservation District Executive Director, was the recipient of the Willard F. Crony Award. The Committee extends a big congratulations to Mr. Lewis.

Billhardt reported on the new CDEA Division Reps. Finally, Billhardt spoke about the budget challenges with the NYS Envirothon and made a plea for assistance to all partners for support.

Conservation District Annual Plan of Work Approval

The following Conservation District Annual Plans of Work have been reviewed and recommended for approval by SWCC Field Staff:

Allegany	Chautauqua	Erie	Livingston	Orleans
Broome	Chemung	Essex	Monroe	Oswego
Cattaraugus	Chenango	Jefferson	Niagara	St. Lawrence
Cayuga	Cortland	Lewis	Ontario	Schuyler
Steuben	Warren	Wayne	Yates	
Tioga	Washington	Wyoming		

C. Colby moved to approve the above referenced Annual Plans of Work; seconded by D. Stein. Motion approved; carried.

Next Meeting – May, TBD, 2014. NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, 10B Airline Drive, Albany.

The Meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

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

