



State Conservation Committee

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nh.gov/SCC

STATE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE BYLAWS, PROCEDURES, AND POLICIES

As of February 2024

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BYLAWS OF THE NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Italicized text indicates by-laws that represent language in NH RSA 432.

I. NAME

The name of this agency shall be the New Hampshire State Conservation Committee established under Chapter 432 of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated.

II. PURPOSE/MISSION

The State Conservation Committee (SCC) is an agency of the State of New Hampshire established to provide guidance, coordination, and assistance to the county conservation districts in planning and implementing their programs and to facilitate coordination of the activities of federal, state, county, and local governments/agencies in natural resource conservation matters.

III. MEMBERSHIP

- A. *The SCC membership shall consist of 12 members:*
1. *Coos/Grafton Conservation District appointee*
 2. *Belknap/Carroll Conservation District appointee*
 3. *Hillsborough/Merrimack Conservation District appointee*
 4. *Cheshire/Sullivan Conservation District appointee*
 5. *Rockingham/Strafford Conservation District appointee*
 6. *Commissioner, NH Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food (DAMF)*
 7. *Commissioner, NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR)*
 8. *Commissioner, NH Department of Environmental Services (DES)*
 9. *Director, University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension*
 10. *Director, NH Agriculture Experiment Station*
 11. *Executive Director, NH Department of Fish and Game (F&G)*
 12. *Executive Director, New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions*
- B. Appointments *The five appointed members shall be district supervisors or former district supervisors nominated from within the districts they represent to the governor who makes appointments with advice and consent of the executive council.*
1. Nominations *Each district may nominate up to two candidates for appointment. These nominations shall be sent to the governor for consideration and final selection.*
 2. Terms *Terms of appointed members shall be for four years commencing August 1 and/or until qualified successors are appointed.*
 3. Vacancies *A vacancy created by an unexpired term shall be filled by normal appointment procedures as in items B. and B.1.*
- C. Designees *Each agency member, 6 through 11 above, may appoint a designee to officially represent his/her agency. This appointment shall be made annually (August 1) in writing to the chair of the SCC.*
- D. Advisory Members *The State Conservationist, United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, and others appointed by the SCC, as deemed appropriate, shall serve as advisory members to the SCC.*

- E. Voting Each member (including *each official* designee) shall have one vote. *Advisory members do not have voting privileges.*
- F. Membership Removal
 - 1. Appointees who no longer reside within the districts they represent shall submit their resignations in writing to the governor, with a copy to the SCC, in a timely manner.
 - 2. Appointees who miss two consecutive, regularly scheduled, SCC meetings without just cause may be asked by the SCC to submit their resignations to the governor as in F.1.
 - 3. Resignations for other reasons shall be submitted as in F.1 and F.2.
 - 4. The SCC may request replacement of an agency designee who has missed two consecutive regularly scheduled SCC meetings without just cause.
- G. Compensation *All appointed members are entitled to expenses, including travel, incurred in the discharge of their duties. Agency members serve without compensation from the SCC.*

IV. MEETINGS

- A. The SCC shall meet quarterly in the months of February, May, August, and November. Special meetings may be scheduled as deemed necessary by the Chair.
- A. Location The regularly scheduled SCC meetings shall be held at the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food conference room, State House Annex, 25 Capitol Street, Concord, NH, unless otherwise designated.
- B. Notice Notification of all meetings and agenda shall be sent to all members at least one week prior to the meeting date.
- C. Quorum Seven voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- D. Rules Meetings will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.
- E. Annual Plan of Work An annual plan of work shall be prepared for approval at the May meeting.

V. OFFICERS

- A. The officers of the SCC shall consist of the following:
 - 1. Chair
 - 2. Vice Chair
 - 3. Secretary/Treasurer
- B. Terms of Office A *chair* and vice chair shall be elected annually at the May meeting *from the five appointed members*. The chair and vice chair shall serve in the same position for no more than three (3) consecutive terms. A secretary/treasurer shall be elected annually from the 12 members at the May meeting. Newly elected officers shall commence duties at the end of the meeting at which they are elected.
- C. Election Procedures Officers shall be nominated from the floor by the members present and voting at the May meeting. Election shall be by simple majority.
- D. Vacancies The chair shall appoint a member to fill the vacancy of any unexpired term of an officer.
- E. Duties The chair shall be responsible for the normal operations of the SCC including presiding at all meetings and the overall direction of the SCC. The vice chair shall assume the duties of the chair in his/her absence. The secretary/treasurer shall be responsible for all

record keeping to include minutes of meetings and financial reports. Administrative support shall be provided to the SCC through the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food.

- F. Committees The chair shall be empowered to appoint, with the approval of the membership, any person or ad hoc committee deemed necessary to fulfill the objectives of the SCC.
1. The chair shall appoint the following standing committees at the February meeting:
 - i. Plan of Work, Allocation of Hours, Budget
 - ii. Bylaws
 - iii. Procedures
- G. Staff *The SCC may employ such employees as it requires and fix their compensation subject to the rules and regulations of the division of personnel.*

VI. DUTIES OF STATE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

- A. *Appoint/remove supervisors.*
- B. *Assist districts.*
- C. *Facilitate coordination and communication among districts.*
- D. *Facilitate coordination and communication between districts and other state, federal, local, and private agencies/organizations.*
- E. *Facilitate cooperation between districts and other governmental and private agencies/organizations to further natural resources conservation.*
- F. Implement the annual plan of work.
- G. *Request from conservation districts and review annual audit reports and Form SSCC#4.*
- H. *Request from conservation districts and review annual proofs of bonding.*
- I. Disperse funds to conservation districts upon acceptance of audit reports when funds are available.
- J. Maintain a current supervisor handbook that is updated periodically.

VII. FUNDING

- A. The SCC fiscal year shall be July 1 to June 30.
- B. At its May meeting, the SCC shall adopt a proposed budget to implement its work plan in the next fiscal year, or biennium if appropriate, for submission to the Commissioner of Agriculture.
- C. The SCC may receive funds from agencies of local, state, and federal governments or any other sources and may use such funds to carry out its duties.

VIII. AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

These bylaws may be amended as deemed necessary by a majority vote of the membership. Notice of any proposed changes shall be sent to the membership 30 days prior to the meeting at which they will be acted upon.

STATE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

Adopted May 16, 1996. Amended November 21, 1996; February 28, 2002

I. APPOINTMENT OF SCC MEMBERS

Procedures:

- A. Nominations from each district should be sent to Governor's office, and carbon copy sent to SCC.
- B. Governor's appointment is sent to Executive Council for approval.
- C. Term of office is four years (RSA 432:10)
- D. Terms begin August 1
- E. Serves until successor is appointed and qualified appointment made by Governor and Executive Council.
- F. Resignation from SCC requires a letter by appointee sent to the Governor, SCC, and each district represented.

II. APPOINTMENT OF DISTRICT SUPERVISORS

Procedures:

- A. Original Supervisor Nomination Form (Appendix 1) sent by District to SCC with current address, phone, fax, and email. Carbon copy should be sent to SCC representative.
- B. Representatives will be responsible for speaking to the appointment at the SCC meeting (presenting biography, term, who replacing, etc.).
- C. A term of office is 3 years, beginning on August 1st.
- D. Supervisors serve until replacement is appointed by the SCC.
- E. Unexpired terms to be filled by the same procedure.
- F. Resignations of supervisors requires a letter of resignation sent to the SCC, and a carbon copy sent to the district.

III. ANNUAL DISTRICT FINANCIAL REPORTING

Procedure adopted February 16, 2023

- A. Districts are required to submit annual financial reports, which demonstrate compliance with RSA 432:15.
- B. District will submit the following documentation; SCC Form #5 (Appendix 2); fiscal year profit and loss report; end of fiscal year balance sheet; and proof of surety bonding. Form 5 must be signed by current District Chair or Treasurer.
- C. Document is due to the SCC Executive Director by June 1st for districts utilizing a January-December fiscal year, and December 1st for districts utilizing a July-June fiscal year. Districts who need an extension to this deadline should contact the SCC Executive Director prior to the deadline.

- D. Upon receipt of all required documentation, the SCC Executive Director will review the documentation for completeness, and, upon certifying completion of the submission, will send a letter of completion to the district.
- E. Districts may request a more thorough review of their financial records from the SCC. If a request is received by the SCC Chair or Executive Director, a subcommittee of SCC members will be formed to conduct the review.
- F. The SCC does not require an audit of district financial records by a certified public accountant prior to submission, but it is encouraged. Districts pursuing a financial audit may request an extension to the reporting deadline from the SCC Executive Director.
- G. Districts applying for SCC funding (including Conservation License Plate Grants) must have filed all required documentation for the most recent fiscal year prior to the application. Applications received by districts who have not submitted required documentation will not be considered. Those with active grant contracts must continue filing each year throughout the grant contract to receive funding.

V. CORD SURPLUS LAND REVIEW PROCEDURE

Procedure adopted May 18th, 2023

Objective: The State Conservation Committee (SCC, the Committee) is given the opportunity to provide a response to sales of real property by state entities. The standing guideline creates a procedure for how the SCC will review and potentially respond to CORD Surplus Land Review (SLR) requests. This procedure is necessary as CORD SLR request notification to response deadline often occur between SCC meetings.

Upon receipt of CORD review the following procedure will be followed:

- A. CORD information will be sent by the Executive Director to the members of the SCC.
- B. Committee members will be given one week to conduct their own review of the available materials. If a SCC member would like to make a suggestion for comment about the sale, they should send their comments to the SCC Executive Director. Comment should be sent directly to the Executive Director, and not the entire Committee. These comments may include:
 1. Recommend the sale of the property.
 2. Advise against the sale of the property.
 3. Provide a response that is not for, or against, the sale, but provides additional information or a suggestion related to the sale.
- C. If the response deadline occurs after a SCC Quarterly Meeting, the suggested response will be added to the agenda and brought as a motion to the meeting. If the motion is adopted by the Committee, the Executive Director will provide the Committee's response to CORD by the deadline.
- D. If the response window (time of notification to deadline) does not overlap with a SCC quarterly meeting, the Executive Director, in consultation with the Chair, may provide a representative response to CORD. This will only be done if the response promotes informed decision-making related to clear agricultural and/or natural resource conservation interests at the property that align with the SCC's conservation priorities. The Executive Director's response will not recommend for or against the sale of the property, and will include a clear

statement that the response does not represent an adopted position of the Committee. The response will be submitted to CORD by the deadline.

- E. If a SCC member wants an emergency meeting of the Committee to consider a motion related to a SLR review, a special meeting of the full State Conservation Committee can be called with approval of the Chair and Vice Chair, with the Executive Director posting and organizing the meeting.

RESOLVED POLICIES

The following policies have been excerpted from minutes of State Committee meetings. They have been arranged according to subject matter.

I. POLICIES ON SUPERVISOR APPOINTMENTS

- A. It was agreed to develop a certificate of appointment as a district supervisor and as a member of the State Conservation Committee. It was also agreed to award certificates of service upon completion of term of office. April 11, 1975
- B. It was moved, seconded, and passed that the State Committee not give certificates for recognition of service unless the retiring supervisor had served a full three-year term. January 14, 1977
- C. It was moved, seconded, and passed that the State Committee accept the NHACD resolution adopted November 29-30, 1976, concerning absenteeism. "Any supervisor having 3 consecutive unexcused absences may be removed by the State Committee." January 14, 1977
- D. Eligible voters in district elections shall be land occupiers in the county, as defined by state law, who attend the district annual meeting. January 14, 1977
- E. The Committee voted to abolish the present system for appointment of district supervisors requiring the nomination of two people for each expiring term by the respective districts and in its place accept one nomination from the district boards for each vacancy. If the board feels it should submit two names, it may do so. The State Committee will exercise its option to request two names if it deems it necessary. A biographical sketch will still be required for each nominee. June 4, 1981
 - i. ~~The State Committee directed the secretary to inform the chairman of the boards of supervisors that the Committee requests each district board send two names for each vacancy, a biographical sketch for each new nominee and a priority for selection. Elections for the selection of nominees are optional. The district boards are to inform the Committee of their selections no later than May 31. (Superseded by June 4, 1981 policy.)~~
- F. It was unanimously agreed that a supervisor or associate supervisor must be a resident of the county in order to serve and when a residency changes to outside the county, the term expires. April 26, 1979

II. POLICY ON SUPERVISORS' HANDBOOK

- A. It was motioned, seconded, and passed that the proposed edition of the Supervisors' Handbook be accepted in its present form and distributed, both in print and digitally, to the conservation districts and newly appointed supervisors. May 19, 2022

III. STATE COMMITTEE AND DISTRICTS WORKING RELATIONS

- A. It was moved, seconded, and passed that draft and approved minutes of Conservation District board meetings should be sent to all Supervisors of the district and the SCC Executive Director within 5 business days. The Executive Director will forward minutes to SCC Chair, NHACD President and Administrative Assistant, the NRCS State Conservationist, any others designated by the SCC, and any member of the SCC who has made a request to receive them. August 19, 2021
- B. The Committee agreed that the agenda of State Committee meetings be sent to Districts so supervisors could contact their representatives on the Committee with any input they might have. Supervisors were invited to attend the State Committee meetings. January 14, 1977
- C. The Committee discussed having an advisory member from the N.H. Water Supply and Pollution Control Commission on the State Committee. It was voted that the secretary be directed to write a letter to Mr. William Healy, Executive Director, requesting that he select someone to serve as an advisory member. January 26, 1979
- D. Be it resolved the State Conservation Committee, State of New Hampshire, encourages and supports the ten conservation districts activities in actively advocating the preservation of important agricultural land in the State of New Hampshire. The motion was seconded, and passed. May 29, 1980
- E. The District Operations Committee of NHACD asked that the minutes of State Committee meetings be furnished to each conservation district board of supervisors as a way of improving and/or maintaining communications. *The State Committee approved this request. (Reaffirmation of July 9, 1976 policy vote.)* Oct. 12, 1982

IV. FISCAL POLICIES AND FUNDING

- A. It shall be the policy of the State Conservation Committee that supervisors shall provide the SCC current proof of surety bonds annually for all employees and officers who shall be entrusted with funds or property in keeping with RSA 432:15. November 15, 2001
- B. It shall be the policy of the State Conservation Committee that districts shall provide the SCC with an annual financial report in keeping with RSA 432:15, which shall consist of SCC Form 5 (2023), fiscal year-end Balance Sheet, fiscal year-end Profit & Loss Statement. It is recommended that districts undergo annual financial audit. These items are due to the SCC by June 1st for conservation districts with a fiscal year ending December 31, or by December 1st for conservation districts with a fiscal year ending June 30. February 16, 2023
- C. It shall be the policy of the State Conservation Committee that any state appropriated funds shall not be distributed nor grant contracts signed with a district unless and until that district is current with all financial reports required under RSA 432:15 by the SCC. August 18, 2018

- D. The special project for the Connecticut Valley Targeting and funds for a State Committee employee to work on this was accepted by the State Committee. October 12, 1982

V. SCC REPRESENTATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Adopted 2/15/2024

Objective: The State Conservation Committee Representatives are appointed to represent the interests of their two districts at activities and votes of the Committee. They also communicate relevant information from the Committee to their represented districts. This document should provide consistent guidance to conservation district supervisors and former supervisors who serve as a district representative on the State Conservation Committee (SCC) as to the responsibilities of the position.

Responsibilities

- Attend SCC meetings (third Thursday of February, May, August, and November), in-person preferred, remotely if necessary.
- Contact both represented district boards prior to SCC meeting to ensure a quarterly report is presented at meeting.
- Ensure district supervisors receive SCC meeting minutes from SCC Executive Director (published via email once prepared and posted on SCC website).
- Maintain communication with both represented districts in order to help facilitate communication with SCC and be aware of ongoing collaborative efforts.
- Provide SCC updates at district meetings, either in-person or written report (can coordinate with SCC Executive Director to ensure district gets an update).

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Supervisor Nomination Form

Updated 2/15/2024

Supervisor Nomination Form

Name of Supervisor Nominee: _____

Submitted by: _____

_____ New appointment

- Term ending: _____

_____ Reappointment for next term

- Term ending: _____
- Attended _____ meetings out of _____ scheduled meetings during past term.

_____ Filling an unexpired term (ie. filling a supervisor seat after a resignation)

- Term ending: _____
- Name of previous supervisor _____
- SCC notified of departure _____ (date)

When nominated?

Date: _____ Annual Meeting _____ Supervisors' Meeting

Nominee Address

Street: _____

Mailing Address (if different): _____

Town: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

A brief biography:

How is the nominee engaged with the mission of the Conservation District?

For a re-appointment, please indicate the nominee's participation in District or partner events, and other instances of leadership (e.g. testified at county budget hearing, fundraising, volunteering at display booths, etc.)

For a new appointment, please have the nominee explain why s/he wants to become a supervisor and what they would like to achieve in this role.

Signature of Chair*

Please mail this form to:
NH State Conservation Committee
P.O. Box 2042
Concord, NH 03302-2042

Please mail a copy to your SCC representative. Your SCC representative is responsible for speaking to the appointment at the SCC meeting.

*When nominating a supervisor, the Chair, Vice Chair, or other officer must sign. No one may sign their own nomination.

APPENDIX 2: SCC Form 5 (Annual Financial Reporting)

Adopted 2/16/2023

District Financial Overview

Part 1: Personnel

Please indicate how the following expenditures are funded.

	District*	County	NRCS	Other (please specify below)
Full Time Employees (#)				
Part Time Employees (#)				

**This includes positions hired and employed through the district, including those funded by earned income and grants.*

Additional details may be provided here:

Part 2: Office Space, Storage, and Utilities

Please indicate how the following expenditures are funded.

	District	County	NRCS	Other (please specify below)
Office Space (# or check)				
Equipment Storage or Other Space (# or check)				
Utilities (electricity, heat, cooling, water)				
Utilities (internet and phone)				

Additional details may be provided here:

Part 3: Easements

Does your district hold conservation easements: Yes _____ No _____
 If so, does your district have a stewardship fund, or other funds set aside for purpose of holding easements? Yes _____ No _____

Part 4: Signature

Form signed by District Chair or Treasurer certifying accuracy of the form to the best of their knowledge:

_____ (signature of District Chair or Treasurer) Date: _____

SCC Executive Director Records

- All required documentation received: _____
- Required documentation reviewed: _____
- Written confirmation of standing sent to district: _____