

State Conservation Committee

PO Box 2042 • Concord NH 03302-2042

August 18, 2016 • Meeting Summary

NH Department of Environmental Services, Concord, NH

Members/designees/advisors present:

Dea Brickner-Wood, Moose Plate
Grant Coordinator
Linda Brownson, Coos and Grafton
CCDs & NH Association of
Conservation Districts
Bruce Cilley, Farm Service Agency
Rich Cook, NH Fish and Game
Department
Rick Ellsmore, USDA Natural
Resources Conservation Service
Bob Goodrich, Rockingham and
Strafford CCDs
Jennifer Gornert, NH Department of
Agriculture, Markets & Food
Jack Parker, Hillsborough and
Merrimack CCDs
Barbara Richter, NH Association of
Conservation Commissions
Sabrina Stanwood, Department of
Resources and
Economic Development

Lori Sommer, NH Department of
Environmental Services
Peter Throop, Cheshire and Sullivan
CCDs

Member/designees/advisors absent:

Earle Chase, Belknap and Carroll
CCDs
Ted Howard, University of NH
Agricultural Experiment Station
Amanda Littleton, CDEA-NH
Amanda Stone, UNH Cooperative
Extension

Guests:

Donna Hepp, Belknap CCD
Marilyn Norton, Farm Service Agency
Peter Steckler, The Nature Conservancy-
NH Chapter

Minutes Recorder:

Stacy Luke, Merrimack CCD

Linda Brownson, Chair, opened the meeting at 9:11 am and welcomed everyone.

Consent Agenda

Cook motioned to adopt a consent agenda including the May 2016 meeting minutes. Parker seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Districts, agencies, and organizations added the following information not included in the Consent Agenda agency reports.

- Stanwood reported on workshops in conjunction with USDA NRCS, draft revisions to the rare plant list, and that they are working on the backlog of NHB landowner letters.
- Cook recognized NRCS with the important partnership with NRCS on the New England Cottontail program.
- Richter reported on the NHACC Annual Meeting coming up in November, the conservation district potluck on September 14th, and work with towns in extended leases on town owned agricultural land.
- Ellsmore reported that there will be \$25MM in additional land protection available nationwide; NH has asked for \$500,000. Ellsmore reported on RCPP projects, WMI's young forests project with NH as the lead state, Monadnock Conservancy's \$650,000

funding for agricultural land protection, a drinking water partnership with the Forest Service, WRP programs with the Southeast Land Trust, and NRCS will hire four student interns over the summer. Next month, Ellsmore will be reporting to DC for a detail.

- Norton and Cilley reported on the drought situation, the declaration for drought, emergency loans for farmers, and the emergency conservation program. Norton also discussed the CRP program that sets aside cropland and marginal pasture land, which is not a large program in New Hampshire.
- Brownson reported that Coos had a summer erosion control workshop in Colebrook with 57 participants. Grafton CCD received a wood ash spreader with a presentation occurring on Thursday and is working on cover crop projects.
- Sommer reported that DES has been busy on the PFOA contamination, that the 2018/2019 budget is being prepared, work on several big energy projects, an EPA grant to improve NWI mapping, and funding for culvert assessments in the Merrimack River watershed and the seacoast.
- Throop reported on Cheshire CCDs interseeding and key line plowing demonstration projects, equipment rentals, replacement of the skidder bridges, a nutrient management grant for Windyhurst Farm, and the Cheshire County pollinator project education plan. Cheshire CCD also held a Local Work Group meeting with Sullivan CCD.
- Gornnert reported that they are proposing to change the ANM grant program to a once a year deadline with a \$5,000 maximum amount. Gornnert also reported on the Soil Field Day with NRCS on August 23d, that the division filled their two inspector positions but one resigned this summer, and discussed invasive species work.
- Goodrich discussed the drought situation, that Strafford and Rockingham CCDs are very busy with projects, and Rockingham CCD is doing much invasive species work.
- Hepp reported that Belknap CCD's gleaning program is going well. Belknap CCD also received a NFWF grant for the Gunstock Brook Project as well as using Gunstock Resort as a conservation demonstration area.

Conservation "Moose Plate" Grant Program Coordinator's Update

Brickner-Wood gave her coordinator's report including:

- Moose Plate is working on necessary Moose Plate grant forms available to grantees on an on-line platform;
- Moose Plate has more money to give out this year than originally expected;
- The committee will be meeting on November 10th;
- Altos, the new marketing company, is working on a partnership with the Fisher Cats;
- Outreach will be provided at the Town Clerk Conference;
- Stanwood has Moose Plate marketing materials, including new temporary tattoos.

Conservation "Moose Plate" Grant Presentation- Peter Seckler, NH Chapter of The Nature Conservancy

Peter Seckler presented on the results of their 2014 funded Mooseplate project *Camera Trapping to Advance Wildlife Connectivity Implementation in Coos County*. Seckler reported that this could be the poster child for the Mooseplate grant program. The grant gave the seed money for a larger project. The initial project proposed ten cameras but the project ended up with the

capacity for 30 cameras. The goals for this project were to learn about how to use the cameras, ground truth the computer modeling they used, and to work towards maintaining wildlife connections in Northern Appalachia. Currently, TNC is working with DOT to assess road kill monitoring to find out what is not making it across the roads. A longer presentation was given to NH DOT and at a conference in Lake Placid. TNC is meeting with North Country council's transportation committee as well.

Disposition of State Lands Review Report

Brownson reported that the SCC submitted a letter regarding the State-Owned Land, Surplus Land Review, Town of Epping, NH SLR 16-003. The SLR was tabled and later withdrawn.

RCCP and CIG for Districts

Brownson reported on NHACD's work on a roller crimper project funded by the Conservation Innovation Grant. Brownson also reported that NHACD submitted a proposal to hire an agronomist for technical assistance for three years to work on nutrient management in the CT River watershed.

SCC Annual Report Form Review

The SCC discussed the SCC Annual Report Form, which few CCDs submit for review to the SCC. As part of the discussion, Cheshire CCD's recently submitted form was distributed as an example, where most their expenses were placed in the "Other" category.

Discussion about the form included that it only asks for expenses but is missing revenues. There are no procedures for the form related to how the SCC will use the form. Comments were related to how the categories do not appear to fully reflect District finances and how the deadline (April 15th) only correlates to the Districts that have a January – December fiscal year.

Throop asked what the purpose of the form is and whether it gives the SCC the information needed to assess District health, which is what the SCC should be concerned about. Throop suggested having the Districts annual budgets submitted would be helpful as well as a follow-up on the projected versus actual for the year.

Goodrich stated that the information requested should assist the SCC in helping the Districts. Goodrich also commented that the current form does not show how much support the Districts are receiving from their respective counties. Brownson stated the form needs revisions.

NH Association of Conservation Districts Annual Meeting

Brownson reported that the NHACD Annual Meeting will be on October 13th and 14th at the Common Man in Claremont. The focus will be on soil health with Steve Groff as the lead speaker. Representative Kuster is invited. Ellsmore stated that NRCS's new soil scan unit will be available for display at the meeting.

NASCA Dues

Brownson reported that Luke and Brownson were working on a justification to pay for the NASCA dues to submit to Commissioner Merrill.

Supervisor appointments, re-appointments, and filling unexpired terms

Hepp presented the re-appointments for Belknap and Carroll CCDs by reading a brief description of the nominated supervisors.

- A nomination for re-appointment was submitted for Earle Chase, Belknap County Conservation District.
- A nomination for re-appointment was submitted for Todd Marshall, Carroll County Conservation District.

Throop presented the re-appointment for Cheshire CCDs by reading a brief description of the nominated supervisors.

- A nomination for re-appointment was submitted for John Treat, Cheshire County Conservation District.
- A nomination for re-appointment was submitted for Richard Mellor, Cheshire County Conservation District.

Brownson presented the re-appointment for Grafton and Rockingham CCDs by reading a brief description of the nominated supervisors.

- A nomination for re-appointment was submitted for Harry McGovern, Grafton County Conservation District.
- A nomination for re-appointment was submitted for Bob Goodrich, Rockingham County Conservation District.
- A nomination for re-appointment was submitted for Dick Lutz, Cheshire County Conservation District.

Throop motioned to approve the above nominations. Parker seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Parker presented the re-appointments for Hillsborough CCDs by reading a brief description of the nominated supervisor.

- A nomination for re-appointment was submitted for Roger Noonan, Hillsborough County Conservation District.

Following discussion, Throop motioned to approve the nomination of Roger Noonan. Parker seconded the motion. The motion passed: 8 in favor, 1 opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.

The next meeting will be held on November 17, 2016, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm in the conference room at NH Department of Environmental Services, 29 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH.