



## State Conservation Committee

PO Box 2042 • Concord NH 03302-2042  
nh.gov/SCC

March 8, 2021 - 9:30 am to 11:30 am  
Hosted by Zoom Conference

### **Members/Designees/Advisors present:**

Scott Deblois, Coös and Grafton CCDs  
Jennifer Gornnert, NH Department of  
Agriculture, Markets & Food  
Donna Hepp, Belknap and Carroll CCDs  
Shawn Jasper, NH Department of Agriculture,  
Markets & Food  
Audra Klumb, Hillsborough and Merrimack  
CCDs  
Dick Lutz, Rockingham and Strafford CCDs/  
NH Association of Conservation Districts  
Barbara Richter, NH Association of  
Conservation Commissions  
Sabrina Stanwood, Department of Natural and  
Cultural Resources  
Lori Sommer, NH Department of Environmental  
Services

Pete Throop, Cheshire and Sullivan CCDs

### **Members/Designees/Advisors absent:**

Dea Brickner-Wood, Moose Plate Grant  
Coordinator  
Ted Howard, University of NH Agricultural  
Experiment Station  
Amanda Littleton, CDEA-NH  
Betsey McNaughten, NH Fish and Game  
Department  
Marilyn Milne, Farm Service Agency  
Becky Ross, USDA NRCS State Conservationist  
Amanda Stone, UNH Cooperative Extension

### **Minutes Recorders:**

Jessica Newnan, Merrimack CCD

Hepp opened the meeting at 9:30 and welcomed the group.

### **Adopt SCC Vision, Mission and Values**

Hepp went over the edited version of the mission, vision, and values. Hepp noted that the mission statement was largely unchanged except for capitalizing "County Conservation Districts" and adding an "and" at the end of the penultimate bullet point. Hepp asked if there were suggestions and none were offered.

Stanwood motioned to accept the mission, as presented. Throop seconded the motion.

### **Roll Call Vote:**

Deblois- Aye  
Hepp- Aye  
Jasper- Aye  
Klumb- Aye  
Lutz- Aye

Richter- Aye  
Sommer- Aye  
Stanwood- Aye  
Throop- Aye

The motion carried.

Hepp moved on to the vision statement and acknowledged that the intention was to make the vision more visionary. Hepp stated that she had incorporated some suggestions, but wanted to revisit it. Hepp explained that the concept for the Vision for New Hampshire evolved from two separate statements about agriculture and forestry to one sentence that incorporated both using the phrase “NH farms and open space.” Richter made a suggestion to change “open space” to “natural areas”. Stanwood suggested “NH farms, forests, and open areas” because Natural Heritage Bureau has a natural areas program and the definition may get confusing as that program gets built up. Hepp pointed out that natural areas is an official designation. Lutz and Throop discussed whether or not wetlands and water resources was included in this list. Throop suggested “forest lands” instead of “forests.” Jasper expressed concern over the term “open areas” and what it means. Stanwood suggested changing “open areas” to “open space.” Hepp suggested adding language to further define open space. Gornnert suggested adding mention of wood products in second half of first sentence. Throop and Hepp stated that fiber included wood products to them. Lutz asked about recharge areas for local watersheds and how they fit into the vision. Throop suggested that “respecting and protecting our natural resources” covers this topic. Jasper suggested changing “are” to “can be” both productive and profitable. Throop and Hepp suggested that “are” is an affirmative. Richter agreed.

Hepp walked through second sentence. Hepp stated the fact that the Vision for New Hampshire’s Future and SCC’s Future were separated and that the two paragraphs for SCC had been combined. Hepp explained the changes from the previous version included making it active voice instead of passive voice, changing “community” to “communities,” and adding a portion to the end that had already been stated. Klumb expressed concern over sentence structure of first sentence. “Enhancing” was changed to “enhance” to make the sentence flow better.

Throop expressed that SCC could have created more specific goals, but decided not to because those should be made in concert with all other departments, but would love to be in a position to do that while convening a symposium with partners. Richter suggested those could be metrics later in the plan. Hepp suggested they could be objectives later on. Throop suggested a request to the Governor to convene a summit to create those goals, and many expressed support for this idea. Lutz asked who would be invited. Throop suggested all of the land use departments including Office of Strategic Initiatives, Cooperative Extension, and UNH. Hepp suggested representatives from towns, land trusts, conservation organizations such as SPNHF, timber owners’ associations, and watershed associations. Lutz expressed that he was under the impression that as the government agency that has the most coordinating powers for natural resources that everything is available at regular meetings. Hepp expressed that SCC could be inviting many others to join the meetings or sending notes on SCC’s work to these organizations. Throop pointed out that this aligns with the accepted mission statement and this could be a task for an executive director.

Hepp asked for comments on the separated vision statement. Throop suggested that it was helpful to have it separated. Richter suggested it was good to break it up to include all components. Gornnert asked if SCC tracked when goals are accomplished and suggested that it might have more value to report accomplishments out to a broader audience. Hepp agreed that more could be done to share through a website and Mailchimp, both of which could be a helpful resource for the general public as well as the state legislature. Klumb said it sounds like a Director’s newsletter after meetings and requested a comma

after “forest lands.” Hepp suggested adding wood to make it all inclusive, supported by Klumb and Gornnert. Richter suggested adding “have” before “access” in the last sentence. Throop suggested adding “open space” under “access.” Gornnert suggested that recreation was a great way to get the public involved in this work. Lutz asked about whether recreation was a wise use. The consensus was that it was wise depending on how it was done, but that it was an important component.

Hepp moved onto the second paragraph and asked if “conservation” should be added before “organizations.” Throop suggested that there may be other types of organizations involved. Klumb asked if there was something that could be added between “advises” and “supports.” Hepp suggested “promotes” and was supported. Throop suggested replacing “As” with “The SCC is the” and adding a period after “watershed.” Throop also suggested adding “In this role, the” before “SCC” in the second sentence and Gornnert suggested removing “also”. Klumb requested removing the notes before voting.

Lori had to leave.

Hepp called for a motion to approve the vision. Throop motioned to approve the vision, as amended. Richter seconded the motion. Klumb commented to remove notes in the previous paragraph. They were removed and a vote was called.

#### **Roll Call Vote:**

Deblois- Aye

Hepp- Aye

Jasper- Aye

Klumb- Aye

Lutz- Aye

Richter- Aye

Stanwood- Aye

Throop- Aye

The motion carried.

Hepp moved onto the values and expressed Lionel’s comments that sustainability was not specific enough. Hepp suggested that the goal is to be more sustainable in terms of what percentage of food consumed is produced locally. Gornnert expressed that the way the values were presented seemed inconsistent because on some of the points, the value was presented and then what it means to the group, but on some points, it was not presented in this way. Jasper agreed, and expressed that he thinks of it as “We value...” before each point. Throop suggested changing “inform” to “transparency/open communication.” Lutz suggested “a knowledgeable public and decision makers”. Gornnert suggested “transparency.” Gornnert suggested that we look at these as guides to the actions of the group. Lutz asked if the goal was to have a process or a product. Throop suggested adding a qualifying statement to keep the format the same and suggested “education” as a one-word option. Throop suggested that the third bullet could be changed to “Sustainability” with “increasing productivity” being added to the qualifying statement. Richter suggested that sustainability and productivity might be separate. Throop agreed. Throop suggested “Resource Productivity” as one and “Sustainability” in the context of business sustainability as the second. Hepp brought up that a new role for CDs that came out of a national conference was to be a third-party monitor of carbon sequestration. Gornnert suggested adding “Soil” before “Health.” Klumb suggested “Natural Resource” instead of “Soil” and adding “land” at the end of the next bullet point. Richter suggested “Ecological Health” instead of “Natural Resource Health.” Throop agreed. Throop suggested that this would allow “Sustainability” to take on the business context rather than the ecological sense. Throop asked if “producers” should be added after “forestry,” but Lutz

said he liked the idea of recognizing businesses. Throop suggested in the “Sustainability” description that we add “local” before “markets.”

Sabrina had to leave.

The group decided to focus on NH markets because SCC does not have the ability to work on markets across state borders. Gornnert pointed out that there is no local place to process meat. Klumb asked if “farming” should be changed to “agriculture” to make it more inclusive. Gornnert suggested adding “Business” before “Sustainability” to clarify and the qualifying statement was changed to “Viable agriculture, forestry, and local markets.” Richter suggested “Working across organizations with mutual respect and assisting CDs when needed” under the “Collaboration” bullet point. Throop suggested “Respectfully working across organizations.” Klumb asked if it was necessary or if it was already implied. Hepp suggested that it was needed. Throop suggested “assisting” instead of “assist.” Gornnert suggested “Stakeholder Collaboration,” but the group determined it was not needed. Lutz expressed that the word “across” seems hostile. Hepp expressed that “across” helped with the convener role. Throop suggested “Convening organizations.” Klumb suggested “along with.” Hepp suggested “in mutual respect.” Richter suggested “together with” and it was accepted. Gornnert suggested spelling out CDs in the final version. Throop asked if the whole document would provide the direction for a new executive director, or at least a context. Hepp expressed that it was a start, but that it is necessary to press on as a committee to establish some key goals and priorities. Gornnert asked if anything needed to be added to the last bullet because it wasn’t related back to SCC. Hepp said SCC wants to promote equity, inclusiveness, and diversity as an organization. Gornnert asked how and to whom. Hepp suggested considering these things during the process of approving CD board members as an example. Richter suggested “Promote equity, inclusiveness and diversity among board membership.” Hepp suggested “in our actions.” Throop suggested that it is a bigger conversation, and expressed that CDs in some counties are struggling to get anyone. Throop also pointed out that social justice is its own movement within the American Farmland Trust. Richter suggested that the existing bullet point captured the general picture of what SCC is trying to do and that “Promote equity, inclusiveness, and diversity in our actions and partnerships” was sufficient. The group decided that there should be no periods after each bullet point. Klumb suggested spelling out “BMP” and was supported by Gornnert.

Hepp called for a motion for the values. Richter made a motion to accept the values as listed. Klumb seconded the motion.

#### **Roll Call Vote:**

Deblois- Aye

Hepp- Aye

Jasper- Aye

Klumb- Aye

Lutz- Aye

Richter- Aye

Throop- Aye

The motion carried.

Hepp stated that she has been told that SCC can now advertise for the executive director position and asked for suggestions from the group.

## **Adjournment**

Hepp closed the meeting at 10:42 a.m.