



## **State Conservation Committee**

PO Box 2042 • Concord NH 03302-2042

[nh.gov/SCC](http://nh.gov/SCC)

August 19, 2021 - 9:00 to 11:50 am

Hosted by Department of Natural & Cultural Resources  
Concord, NH

### **Members/Designees/Advisors present at Department of Natural & Cultural Resources**

Ian Hanley, SCC Executive Director  
Donna Hepp, Belknap and Carroll CCDs  
Shawn Jasper, NH Department of Agriculture,  
Markets & Food  
Audra Klumb, Hillsborough and Merrimack  
CCDs  
Amanda Littleton, CDEA-NH  
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

### **Minutes Recorders:**

Stacy Luke, Merrimack CCD  
Jessica Newnan, Merrimack CCD

### **Members/Designees/Advisors attending via Zoom**

Scott Deblois, Coös and Grafton CCDs  
Anton Bekkerman, University of NH  
Agricultural Experiment Station  
Becky Ross, USDA NRCS State Conservationist  
Amanda Stone, UNH Cooperative Extension  
Pete Throop, Cheshire and Sullivan CCDs

### **Attendees:**

Dea Brickner-Wood, Moose Plate Grant  
Coordinator  
Pam Gilbert, Grafton CCD  
Catherine Dufault, Carroll CD  
Robert Larocque, Merrimack CCD  
Whitney Lewis, Coos CCD

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

Betsey McNaughten, NH Fish and Game  
Department  
Marilyn Milne, Farm Service Agency

Hepp opened the meeting at 9:07 and welcomed the group.

## **Minutes of the May 18, 2021 Quarterly Meeting**

Jasper motioned to approve the minutes from May 18, 2021. Stanwood seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## District/ Organization/ Agency Updates

Districts, agencies, and organizations discussed the highlights of items on the Consent Agenda and the following additions.

- Hanley introduced himself to the group and stated that he has been working on getting to know people, working on creating a website, and working on SCC visibility.
- Hepp reported that Belknap CCD has funding for a volunteer coordination network and has a special appreciation day on September 19<sup>th</sup> at Gunstock as well as a volunteer job fair. Hepp also discussed their seven minute in-stream wood video in collaboration with NH Fish & Game. Hepp also reported that Carroll CCD is working on an upcoming legislative tour, which will focus on agriculture and stream restoration. Sommer suggested that Carroll CCD invite the Executive Councilors.
- Lewis reported that Coos CCD conducted a plant sale, which was very busy. For coming fundraisers, they will be recruiting volunteers. Coos CCD received a Tillotson grant for a 10' no-till drill. They conducted an Erosion Control workshop. They are partnering with Belknap CCD in a fall bulb sale. They are also working on outreach at the Lancaster Fair.
- Gilbert reported that Grafton CCD has two upcoming workshops related to cover crops and wood lot management.
- Klumb reported that Hillsborough and Merrimack CCDs are busy with their plant fundraisers, gleaning seasons, bulk cover crop sales, and renting equipment. They both conducted their Local Work Group meetings recently. Merrimack CCD has recently published the 2021 Local Food Guide. Klumb introduced Robert Larocque who, after approval from the Governor & Council, will be replacing Klumb on the board.
- Lutz reported that Strafford CCD is doing a Fall bulb sale, easement monitoring, cover crop bulk buy, and equipment rentals and demonstration workshops. They have conducted their Local Work Group meeting and the lead on the Northeast Regional Meeting, which is happening on October 31<sup>st</sup>-November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Lutz also reported that Rockingham CCD is working on a pollinator planting, easement monitoring, and the demonstration agreement. Lutz reported Jodie Pellerin is retiring from the RCCD board. Lutz also reported that NHACD has hired a third conservation planner and a new NH Envirothon coordinator. NHACD is working on this year's legislative tour. Other NHACD highlights include the Right to Know Zoom they just conducted, a NHACD registry, position papers, identifying needs for the NRCS/ NHACD agreement, and a Fishercats networking event.
- Jasper reported that DAMF has been treated well by the legislature including money for easements, which hasn't been funded in 20 years. The next step is to get the easement committee re-established. DAM will soon have a IT employee and they are doing well in staffing in general. DAMF is currently working with the legislature for future legislation; the filing period is in September.
- Sommer reported that DES also fared well in their budget. They also have new staff including the new Assistant Commissioner Mark Sanborn. Currently there is no director for the water division. Vacancies are high with about 25-50% of the jobs not filled. The intern season is wrapping up. In terms of big projects, there is a big landfill project in Dalton, Eversource reliability projects, and Amazon facilities. There is a 2021 ARM grant round for the Seacoast region for which they received 10 pre-proposals. There are

new members on the site-selection committee including Kim McCabe for NRCS, Jennifer Gilbert, and Bill Thomas.

- Richter reported that NHACC is planning an outdoors 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary at Bear Brook State Park with Rebecca Rule presenting and hiking in the afternoon. Also presenting are former executive directors Carol Andrews and Tink Taylor. The annual conference will be on November 6<sup>th</sup> and on-line with Florence Williams, author of The Nature Fix, as the main speaker. NHACC is working on their Lunch and Learn series and a grant to update the website.
- Stone reported on the statewide bioblitz and reported on the retirements at UNH Cooperative Extension. UNH is open for the Fall with a COVID testing program in place.
- Throop reported on Cheshire CCD's equipment rentals, corn planter retrofit program, IPM project, and wildlife habitat promotion program. Cheshire CCD has also provided a program giving CSA shares to food insecure individuals and is participating in the Granite State Market Match program. Throop discussed the Farm Futures Fund grant program. Hanley reported on Sullivan CCD including a fall cider event, the Claremont Growers Collective, and their annual meeting the following week. Littleton reported on the Radically Rural event, which will be hybrid this year.
- Bekkerman reported that the UNH Agricultural Experiment Station has been a busier field season and that they are easing back into the field days. Bekkerman also reported on the organic dairy project where they will be collecting data on greenhouse gas emissions, taking soil samples, and animal data to which they will compare with data sets from five (5) and ten years ago.
- Ross stated that NRCS is wrapping up the 2021 season. They will have meetings with the State Technical Committee for ideas relating to climate resiliency. They have new staff coming on board including state level specialists in GIS and Archaeology. Ross reported on NRCS travel restrictions and inability to go to indoor meetings of greater than 50. Ross thanked the conservation districts for their work conducting the Local Work Group meetings.
- Littleton reported that CDEA has been conducting meetings and training, including trainings on grants and e-commerce. CDEA is working with NRCS and NHACD regarding future agreements.
- Morin reported on the activities of the LMAC, which has been meeting virtually. Morin has been sending out legislative updates to the conservation districts.

## **Conservation “Moose Plate” Grant Coordinator’s Update**

Brickner-Wood reported on the Conservation Grant Program. Highlights included:

- New and renewals of Moosplates is up 30%
- Translates into more money for all five state agencies, how much is to be determined.
- All 21 SCC Mooseplate grants made it through Governor and Council
- On track for grant closeouts

- 2022 grant cycle was launched July 1st, already getting calls and inquiries. September 10th is the due date. Recommendations will be made at the November meeting. Happy to talk to districts about projects

### **Ability and/or Restrictions to Districts Investing Funds**

Hepp reviewed the email from Stacie Moser of the NH Department of Justice that Hepp forwarded to the SCC last night regarding conservation district investing. The email is based off of county funds. Lutz asked whether this pertains to conservation districts as this guidance specifically names county government. Jasper suggested proposed legislation that would allow conservation districts to invest but that would have to occur quickly. Luke and Larocque addressed concerns as to how conservation districts investing their funds would affect their funding by and relationships with the County government.

Hepp suggested a subcommittee to investigate this further. Lutz volunteered for this subcommittee. Throop suggested that Hanley send an email out to the conservation districts seeing if anyone else would like to join this subcommittee. Hepp will reach out to the NH Department of Justice for clarification if the references about county funds pertain to county conservation districts.

### **Right to Know/ Meeting Minutes Discussion**

The SCC discussed county conservation districts, Right to Know requests, and the distribution of meeting minutes before they are approved by the individual county conservation district Boards. Lutz stated having the unapproved minutes helps him know the expectations districts have of NHACD. Jasper reiterated this is all public information. Others discussed distributing draft meeting minutes as they have not been reviewed nor approved by the Boards

Jasper motioned that draft minutes as well as approved minutes of all Board of Supervisor's Meetings shall be distributed to each supervisor of the sending district and the State Conservation Committee Executive Director within five (5) business days of the meeting at which they were taken or approved. Approved meeting minutes shall be kept on file permanently. The SCC Executive Director will forward both the draft and approved minutes to the SCC Chair, NHACD President and NHACD Administrative Assistant, the NRCS State Conservationist, and others designated by the State Conservation Committee as well as to any member of the State Conservation Committee who has made such a request. Lutz seconded the motion.

### **Roll Call Vote:**

Bekkerman- Aye

Deblois- Nay

Jasper- Aye

Klumb- Nay

Lutz- Aye

Richter- Aye

Stanwood- Aye

Stone- Aye

Throop- Aye  
Hepp- Nay

The motion carried.

### **Ability and or Restrictions to Districts Investing Funds to Maintaining Easements, Scholarships or Other Long-Term Projects**

Hepp reported on the Zoom meeting Hepp, Gilbert, and Luke had with the Attorney General's office regarding conservation district money management. The SCC is awaiting additional information and/ or questions from the Attorney General's office.

### **LMAC Reappointment**

Lisa Morin, Program Coordinator of Belknap CCD, has been the SCC representative of the Lakes Management Advisory Committee and is up for reappointment. Morin has indicated her willingness to continue representing the SCC.

Klumb motioned to reappoint Lisa Morin as the State Conservation Committee's representative to the Lakes Management Advisory Committee. Richter seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

### **Supervisor Appointments and Re-appointments**

Jasper motioned to approve the slate of appointments and reappointments submitted to the SCC and to list the new term expiration dates henceforth in the meeting minutes. Lutz seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- Jessica Bailey, Belknap CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Donna Hepp, Belknap CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Stephen Scapicchio, Carroll CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Bert von Dohrmann, Coos CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Kris von Dohrmann, Coos CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Linda Brownson, Grafton CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Gary Peters, Grafton CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Chris Connelly, Hillsborough CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Tom Dufresne, Hillsborough CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Robert Bradbury, Merrimack CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Jeffrey Moore, Merrimack CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Greg Balog, Rockingham CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Samantha Cyr, Rockingham CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Robin Aikman, Strafford CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Dorn Cox, Strafford CCD, new term expires 8/1/2023
- Bill Hunt, Strafford CCD, new term expires 8/1/2023
- Mark Perry, Strafford CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Jim Grenier, Sullivan CCD, new term expires 8/1/2022

- David Grobe, Sullivan CCD, new term expires 8/1/2023
- John Luther, Sullivan CCD, new term expires 8/1/2023
- Robert Porter, Sullivan CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Cornelia Sargent, Sullivan CCD new term expires 8/1/2024

### **Other Business**

Throop discussed concerns related to this year's hay production and supports that may be possible for agricultural producers who may have difficulties accessing hay this year. Deblois stated this may be a better discussion for the FSA County Committees as they may be in a better place to offer assistance.

### **Adjournment**

Lutz motioned to adjourn the meeting. Jasper seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Hepp closed the meeting at 11:45 a.m.