



State Conservation Committee

PO Box 2042 • Concord NH 03302-2042

nh.gov/SCC

December 2, 2021 - 1:00 to 3:30pm

Hosted by Department of Natural & Cultural Resources
Concord, NH

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

Anton Bekkerman, University of NH
Agricultural Experiment Station
Peter Bowman in place of Sabrina Stanwood,
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
Dea Brickner-Wood, Moose Plate Grant
Coordinator
Ian Hanley, SCC Executive Director
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
Lori Sommer, NH Department of Environmental
Services
Betsey McNaughten, NH Fish and Game
Department
Amanda Stone, UNH Cooperative Extension

Members/Designees/Advisors attending via Zoom

Scott Deblois, Coös and Grafton CCDs
Donna Hepp, Belknap and Carroll CCDs
Becky Ross, USDA NRCS State Conservationist
Pete Throop, Cheshire and Sullivan CCDs

Members/Designees/Advisors absent:

Amanda Littleton, CDEA-NH
Marilyn Milne, Farm Service Agency

Minutes Recorders:

Stacy Luke, Merrimack CCD
Jessica Newnan, Merrimack CCD

Guests via Zoom:

Pam Gilbert, Grafton CCD
Catherine Dufault, Carroll CD
Whitney Lewis, Coos CCD
Kerry Rickrode, Hillsborough CCD
Bill Fosher, NH Association of Conservation
Districts

Hanley opened the meeting at 1:10 and welcomed the group.

Minutes of the August 19, 2021 Quarterly Meeting

Jasper motioned to approve the minutes from August 19, 2021. Klumb seconded the motion.

Role Call Vote

Bekkermann-Aye

Klumb-Aye

Bowman-Aye

Stone-Aye

Richter-Aye

Sommers-Aye

Hepp-Aye

Dublois-Aye

Jasper-Aye

Lutz-Aye

McNaughten-Abstained

The motion carried.

Conservation “Moose Plate” Grant Coordinator’s Update

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

- 17 applications were received in the 2022 Conservation Grant Program cycle.
- The grant committee was comprised of SCC members Stone, Stanwood, McNaughten, Throop, and Sommers, as well as Brooke Smart from NRCS.
- Overall, the applications were good and the committee agreed that the changes made to the application were successful.
- The increase in the fundable amount was matched by the increase in revenue from moose plate sales.
- 15 applications are recommended by the committee for approval.
 - Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust, *Wood Farm*, \$29,000
 - Belknap County Conservation District, *No-Till Seed Drill*, \$27,350
 - Belknap County Conservation District, *Stream Restoration in Meredith with Community Involvement*, \$25,790
 - Carrol County Conservation District, *Restoration of Two Carroll County Streams*, \$24,750
 - Five Rivers Conservation Trust, *Potter Family Farm*, \$30,000
 - Grafton County Conservation District, *Beebe River Tributary Bridge Crossing Project*, \$29,000
 - Hillsborough County Conservation District, *Supporting Soil Health Management in Hillsborough County*, \$29,648
 - Merrimack County Conservation District, *Improving Aquatic Organism Passage at Rocky Pond*, \$30,000
 - Merrimack County Conservation District, *Making No-Till Practices Accessible Through Rental Equipment*, \$27,000
 - Moose Mountain Regional Greenways, *Schlenker Conservation Easement*, \$25,000
 - Moose Mountain Regional Greenways, *Teneriffe Mountain Forest Project*, \$20,000
 - Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire, *Killam-Hog Hill Brook*, \$10,000

- The Nature Conservancy, *Oyster River Restoration: Topaz Drive Culvert Replacement*, \$30,000
- Upper Saco Valley Land Trust, *10-year Strategic Conservation Plan Update*, \$14,375
- Upper Valley Land Trust, *Maple Leaf Farm*, \$30,000

Sommers motioned to accept the recommendations as proposed. Stone 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. Richter seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- Dennis Ward, Grafton CCD, new term expires 8/1/2023
- Chris Bowen, Cheshire CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024
- Andy Pressman, Cheshire CCD, new term expires 8/1/2024

SCC Strategic Planning Update

Hanley presented the updates that resulted from working with the strategic planning consultants, primarily regarding the short- and medium-term tasks. He invited members to join Hepp and Jasper in putting together the executive director performance evaluations. One of the updates to the strategic plan was focused on creating a working group to define the relationship between SCC and the conservation districts. Lewis and Gilbert expressed that more district managers from the conservation districts should be involved since it will affect the districts. Stone suggested allocating spots in the working group for district managers and putting a call out to all the districts.

Hanley reviewed his working plan for 2022 which involved continuing to revise the long version of the supervisor's handbook, developing a district support and communication plan, updating the website, exploring funding opportunities for SCC and district projects, and continuing the strategic planning process. He has already revised the short version of the supervisor's handbook and is looking for feedback. Stone recommended defining conservation on the last page of the strategic plan under long-term outcomes. Hepp suggested hosting a calendar of grant opportunities on the SCC website.

District/ Organization/ Agency Updates

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

- Hanley reviewed that he had been working on strategic planning, general administration, and revising the supervisor's handbook. He stated that the new method of collecting meeting minutes had been working well. A discussion of the new method ensued.
- Bekkermann reported that the NH Agricultural Experiment Station and UNH COLSA are working on a strategic plan together, as well as working on a stronger integration with

UNH Cooperative Extension. He also noted that they are hiring for several positions including a plant breeder and a visiting forestry economics professor.

- Klumb reported that Hillsborough and Merrimack CCDs are both ending their gleaning season, have each held an erosion control workshop, and had successful fall bulb sales. In Hillsborough, they have been working on their 2021 Moose Plate grant and have been selling cover crop seeds. In Merrimack, they've been working to provide Granite State Market Match at winter farmers' markets, finished their Moose Plate grant to put wood in Mill Brook, and have been working with a number of school gardens.
- Stone reported that due to the early retirement program at UNH Extension, there were some positions open and they are in the process of hiring. She also noted that the Saving Special Places Annual Land Conservation Conference will be virtual again next year on April 1st and 2nd, both half days.
- Richter reported that the NH Association of Conservation Commissions has been working on an outreach plan which includes a website update, expanding resources, promotional materials, and continuing the Lunch and Learn programs.
- Lutz reported that the NH Association of Conservation Districts has a new administrative assistant. He also reported that the Northeast Regional Meeting of NACD went very well despite there being fewer districts than normal attending. NHACD will be at the Farm and Forest Expo in February, as well as continuing to run the Zoom in on Conservation series. In March, there will be a legislative walk-in. On June 23, there will be a conservation night at the NH Fisher Cats game. Coos and Hillsborough CCDs are going to do the state legislative tour next year. Carroll CCD did it this year and it went really well. Rockingham and Strafford CCDs' updates are in the consent agenda.
- Jasper reported that NH DAMF was finally back to full staffing at the beginning of November. They will begin doing fertilizer and feed analysis upon request starting in the spring, but will be discontinuing some of the organic certification for animals and processors. He is also continuing to watch for relevant legislation. LCHIP has had more money come in than ever before, but less was requested than what they had.
- McNaughten reported that NH Fish & Game Department is working on a few conservation projects. They also have quite a few vacancies in higher up positions. She also reported that they are working with DHHS and a homeless shelter to evacuate homeless people off conserved land.
- Sommers reported that NHDES has several positions open and a few new hires. She also reported that they just finished up the Aquatic Resource Mitigation grant round for 2021. She mentioned that they received \$6 million in funding for high priority culverts and stormwater projects as well as finishing culvert assessments along the Merrimack River.
- Hepp reported that Belknap and Carroll CCDs have been very busy and are just buttoning up their projects for the winter. In Belknap, 2.7 miles of stream restoration in two communities was done and another mile was assessed. They also finished culvert assessments, started a three-year grant, held a county-wide volunteer recognition day and volunteer job fair, have plans to do town forest plans for three towns, and are updating their strategic plan. In Carroll, they held a successful legislative tour as well as several workshops. Both counties are anticipating a tough budget year.
- Throop reported that Cheshire CCD had a busy year with equipment rentals and sold one of their skidder bridges. They hosted a river cleanup program which had 60 volunteers and removed 1000lbs of trash from the river. They are working on a grant for integrated

pest management, offering a small grant for landowners who want to work on wildlife habitat, and opening the 3rd round of the NH Farm Future grant and the 6th round of the Monadnock Food Co-op Farm Fund. They are offering a community supported solar signup for farms, as well as a farm planning opportunity for specialty crops.

- Lewis reported that Coos CCD had a table at the Lancaster Fair where they received inquiries about their new no-till drill and extended their contact list. Their fall bulb sale went well, and they are excited to offer the sale online next year after their website is updated. She reported that they held a forestry workshop in Lancaster and hope to do more in the future. They are working with multiple land trusts outside of the county since there are none in Coos, and have identified that there is a need for education around land trusts, easements, and monitoring.
- Gilbert reported that Grafton CCD was happy about the gathering for the legacy awards and excited to have Dennis Ward joining them as a supervisor. She welcomes any questions via email.
- Ross reported that NRCS field offices are continuing to work with producers. They have received several hundred applications for their programs and are still taking applications for EQIP CIC. NRCS has a new outreach coordinator whose primary role is to keep in contact with partners. One of the new NRCS priorities is regarding urban and small farms, so they are looking at either creating a new subcommittee for this or adding it to an existing one. Offices are still working under covid protocols.

Other Business

Lutz reminded the SCC that the draft meeting minutes need to be available within 5 days. Jasper mentioned that the next cycle of budget planning will be coming up and he wants everyone to think about how Hanley's position can become full-time. Jasper and McNaughten expressed appreciation for the work Hanley has done so far.

Adjournment

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

Hanley closed the meeting at 3:23p.m.