



State Conservation Committee

PO Box 2042 • Concord NH 03302-2042

August 20, 2015 • 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
Earle Chase, Belknap and Carroll
CCDs
Nik Coates, NH Association of
Conservation Commissions
Rich Cook, NH Fish and Game
Department
Ted Howard, University of NH
Agricultural Experiment Station
Jennifer Gornert, NH Department of
Agriculture, Markets & Food
Lorraine Merrill, NH Department of
Agriculture, Markets & Food
Jade Nield, Natural Resources
Conservation Service
Roger Noonan, NH Association of
Conservation Districts
Lori Sommer, NH Department of
Environmental Services

Sabrina Stanwood, Department of
Resources and
Economic Development
Amanda Stone, UNH Cooperative
Extension

Member/designees/advisors absent:

Amanda Littleton, CDEA-NH
John Parker, Hillsborough and
Merrimack CCDs
Jay Phinizy, Farm Service Agency
Peter Throop, Cheshire and Sullivan
CCDs
Vacant, Rockingham and Strafford
CCDs

Guests:

Pam Gilbert, Grafton CCD
Lisa Morin, Belknap CCD
Alena Warren, Strafford CCD

Minutes Recorder:

Stacy Luke, Merrimack CCD

Linda Brownson, Chair, opened the meeting at 9:04 am and welcomed everyone.

Consent Agenda

SCC members went around the table highlighting aspects of their Agency/ Organization/ District reports or added theirs at this point. Highlights include:

- Nield reported a 14% cut to the TA in the budget. The state office is moving to Locust Street in Dover. AMA funded six applications at \$65,000. EQIP funding was just under

\$5MM. CIG applications funded for \$230,000. Seven applications were funded under ALE.

- Gornert announced the ANM grant deadline is September 1st. There will be pesticide credits available at the November 2nd Pollinator Summit. Gornert also discussed Japanese knotweed work and the Avian Influenza situation nationally.
- Stanwood discussed the wetland assessment trainings in July and the Ecological Integrity Assessment.
- Stone discussed Carroll County's funding freeze and that Saving Special Places will be on April 9, 2016 in Alton.
- Coates stated technical assistance requests are up as well as requests for conservation fund and wetland protection information requests. Coates stated he is on the Land Conservation Committee created by SB 38 and that the NHACC Annual Meeting will be on November 7th.
- Noonan discussed the NHACD/ NRCS Agreements for engineering services, demonstration projects and Farm Bill outreach. A New England Cottontail announcement will be made the first week of September. The NHACD Annual Meeting will be on November 3rd.
- Sommers discussed the DOT's new wetland permit and \$2MM going to the Merrimack River Watershed. Sommer discussed the new Clean Water Rule; a workshop will be held at DES in September. DES received an EPA grant that will add more tools for wetland identification and mapping for enhanced NWI maps. DES is busy with all of the utility projects across the State.
- Merrill stated that the budget is in limbo causing some pauses until it is settled, September 4th is NH Apple Day at Mack's Apples, and DAMF filled the pesticide control division vacancy with the new person starting on October 2nd. Merrill discussed the NH Supreme Court decision regarding the Henniker Agri-tourism issue; two legislative groups are working on providing clarity on the pertinent definitions.
- Cook passed out the NH Fish & Game report and discussed the public hearings in September regarding raising license fees by \$10.
- Howard discussed UNH's increased emphasis on career advising, planning, and promoting more internships for its students. UNH is addressing its personnel deficits and has picked up an Agriculture Engineer, Environmental Economist, Quantitative Ecologist, and Forester specifying in forest health. They are finishing up a Wildlife Ecology and Environmental Microbiology search.
- Chase reported on Belknap County's 5% cut to the BCCD budget and BCCD's move to a county office at the courthouse. Belknap CCD is undergoing a strategic planning process. Carroll CCD is also experiencing a funding freeze due to the County budget woes.
- Brownson stated Coos CCD has a new District manager, held a conservation field day, and is completing its pollinator project at the New Earth Farm. Grafton CCD completed its pollinator project in non-productive sites and hosted the national roll-out for the NRCS Client Gateway at Brownson's farm.

May 21, 2015 Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the May 21, 2015, meeting were reviewed. Sommer motioned to accept the minutes. Stanwood seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Conservation “Moose Plate” Grant Program Coordinator’s Update

Brickner-Wood reported that the Conservation Grant Program is going well. In the last quarter, there has been one closings and all new grants have agreements now. Moose Mountain has withdrawn from their grant. Brickner-Wood attended the Conservation District Employees’ Association quarterly meeting. The new application package is on the website in both Word and PDF. Brickner-Wood is answering the inquiry calls coming in. There will be approximately \$230,000 available but that could fluctuate.

Stanwood reported on the Mooseplate Marketing Committee and the new marketing firm hired. They are working on a new website and new products to market the Mooseplate. The marketing firm is also working with the town clerks.

Partnership Memorandum of Agreement

Nield presented the Memorandum of Agreement among the State Conservation Committee and partners. Nield reported that this is the first MOA in New England to go through the process, there is no money involved, it is a five-year agreement, and basically an agreement stating parties will cooperate with each other.

Merrill stated that the MOA needed to be reviewed by the Assistant Attorney General.

Howard motioned to approve the Partnership Memorandum of Agreement, pending approval by the Attorney General’s office. Sommer seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Cooperative Inter-District Memorandum of Understanding

Noonan reported on the draft Cooperative Inter-District MOU allowing districts to work amongst each other. Noonan is working with Assistant AG Christopher Aslin on the draft. The current draft is too descriptive. The consensus of the SCC was to move forward with the MOU and looking at the mechanism that forwards cooperation among the county conservation districts.

Website

Brownson went over the changes to the SCC’s website. There are more details about what a conservation district is with a typeface change and added links. The website needs more pictures and an updated directory. All changes to the new website will be delayed until the budget is passed. Please send pictures to Brownson for inclusion in the website.

NASCA Membership

Brownson discussed the NASCA membership dues, which the SCC had paid in the past. The dues are \$3,000 to join but they would accept \$300. NASCA has considerable resources and assistance for the SCC. Noonan stated the MOU with NRCS gives leverage for outreach funds.

Cook motioned to join NASCA. Sommer seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Easement Stewardship

Brownson and Gilbert discussed an easement that Grafton CCD holds. Grafton CCD sent a letter to the Society for the Protection of NH Forests to take primary stewardship of an easement but there is disinterest unless there are stewardship funds. Brickner-Wood stated to bundle a group of easements and look for funders. Sommer asked if there were restoration opportunities that would make them eligible for ARM funds. Cook suggested looking at the most recent edition of the Land Trust Alliance handbook. The most recent edition has specific information on the duties of co-holders. Stone suggested that Grafton CCD talk to Tom How at the Forest Society, too.

District Grant Writing Workshop

Brownson proposed a grant writing workshop for conservation district managers; a need assessed by the Mooseplate Grant Subcommittee. Following discussion with Brickner-Wood, a three hour workshop will cost \$1,800. Merrill stated that these funds could come from the Mooseplate grant funds.

Cook motioned to expend up to \$1,800 of Mooseplate grant funds for a conservation district grant writing workshop in early 2016. Chase seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Supervisor appointments, reappointments, and filling unexpired terms

Brownson presented the qualifications for the candidates nominated for Rockingham County.

A nomination for reappointment was submitted for Joanna Pellerin, Rockingham County Conservation District.

A nomination for reappointment was submitted for Heidi Seaverns, Rockingham County Conservation District.

A nomination for appointment was submitted for Richard Lutz, Rockingham County Conservation District.

Cook moved to approve the above nominations. Stanwood seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Brownson presented the qualifications for the candidates nominated for Coos County.

A nomination for reappointment was submitted for Kristina vonDohrmann, Coos County Conservation District.

A nomination for reappointment was submitted for Albert vonDohrmann, Coos County Conservation District.

Coates moved to approve the above nominations. Gornnert seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Brownson presented the qualifications for the reappointment submitted for Gary Peters, Grafton County Conservation District.

Gilbert presented the qualifications for the reappointment submitted for Linda Brownson, Grafton County Conservation District.

Coates moved to approve the above nominations. Chase seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Adjournment

Gornnert motioned to adjourn the meeting. Cook seconded the motion. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:51 am.

The next meeting will be held on November 19, 2015, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at NH Department of Environmental Services in Concord, NH.