

**STATE SOIL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
DRAFT MINUTES
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY
SEPTEMBER 11, 2011**

The September meeting of the State Soil Conservation Committee was called to order by Chairwoman Monique Purcell at 9:52 a.m. in the Auditorium the Health-Agriculture Building in Trenton, New Jersey.

Mr. Minch stated that the Open Public Meetings Act requirements have been met. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq. adequate notice of this meeting was provided by giving the time, date, location and to the extent known the agenda of this meeting. At least 48 hours in advance this notice has been posted on the third floor bulletin board, Health and Agriculture Building in Trenton; mailed to The Star Ledger, the Courier Post and filed with the Office of Secretary of State.

The Flag Salute was recited.

Call of the Membership Roll indicated the following:

Members Present

Monique Purcell
Ken Marsh
Louise Davis
Barbara Rosko
Dr. Stephanie Murphy (rep. R Goodman)
Don Pettit
Don Knezick
Priscilla E. Hayes
Sean Moriarity, Deputy Attorney General
Frank Minch, Administrative Analyst

Associate Members and Others

Kerry Jennings, Ocean SCD
Tim Fekete, SSCC
Rich Belcher, SSCC
John Showler, SSCC
Dr. Ferdows Ali, SSCC
Paul Hlubik, FSA
Bob Dobbs, Camden SCD
Victor DeVasto, Gloucester SCD
Robert Reitmeyer, Burlington SCD
Ines Grimm, Freehold SCD
Charlie Buscaglia, Freehold SCD
Raymond Cywinski, Bergen SCD
Ed Wengryn, NJFB
Amy Karpati, PPA
Maria Collazo, USDA-NRCS

Minutes of July Meeting

On motion by Ms. Davis, second by Ms. Hayes, the Minutes of July 11, 2011 were approved.

CHAIRWOMAN'S COMMENTS

Ms. Purcell indicated that staff is working on the revised standards and hopefully this document will be published in the NJ Register shortly. A meeting is scheduled for this afternoon with the Fiscal Division concerning the FY '12 budget. Final arrangements are being made to extend the recently expire CAP agreement for 16 months.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT

Mr. Minch reported on the following:

- 1 **Ag Water Certifications** – the Ag Water Certifications processed within the timeframe July 1, 2011 to August 31, 2011. 27 registrations and certifications were processed and approved from the following counties, Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cumberland, Gloucester, Hunterdon, Monmouth and Morris.
- 2 **Animal Waste Plans** – 391 animal waste plans have been received. The majority of plans are from Hunterdon, Warren and Salem counties.
- 3 **Annual Conference**- Plans are being finalized for the Annual Conservation Conference to be held at the Holiday Inn, Clinton, NJ, 10/5 & 10/6.

SOIL EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL ACT

- 1 **Cape-Atlantic Supervisor Appointment**– Due to business conflicts, Don Hamer, district supervisor in the Cape-Atlantic SCD, has stepped down from the position. The Supervisor Nominating Committee met and proposed two (2) nominees, Allen Carter, Jr. and Bob Eisle, Jr. The Cape-Atlantic SCD expressed a preference in appointing Alan Carter, Jr.

On motion by Dr. Murphy, second by Ms. Davis, Mr. Carter was approved and appointed to the unexpired term of Don Hamer.

- 2 **Warren SCD Supervisor Vacancy**- Within the next week to ten (10) days a teleconference will be set up to interview the candidates for the Warren SCD Supervisor vacancy.
- 3 **Russo Farms**- This property is located in Plumstead Township, Ocean County. The heart of the issue is centered on whether Russo Farms is protected under the Right to Farm Act or is the activity taking place at the site governed by the 251 regulations. Mr. Showler visited the site and provided an overview of this visit to the committee. The site is 90 to 100 acres and there are various activities taking place at the site. It appears Mr. Russo is accepting acid producing soils (thousands of cubic yards) from the NJ Turnpike widening project. Concrete and debris appear to be strewn over the entire property. Stockpiles of soil are anywhere from 5 to 10 feet in height. Mr. Showler quoted NJAC 2:0-1.8 (a) which states which situations qualify as an agricultural exemption under Chapter 251. Clearly, the activity taking place does not appear to fit under this exemption. Mr. Jennings of the Ocean SCD spoke briefly and relayed that a Stop Work Order and relayed that a Stop Work order was issued to Mr. Russo. There is discussion among the Ocean SCD Board about pursuing this issue in court. The Ocean SCD has received a letter from Mr. Russo's attorney requesting that the district not access the property. Mr. Minch and SSCC staff will continue to co-ordinate and monitor this issue.

Barbara Rosko arrived at 10:06 AM

4. **Solar Projects-** The Attorney General's office received a call from a solar installer in the Cumberland/Salem area questioning the fee charged for a large scale solar project. In Addition, the installer questioned the newest Technical Bulletin regarding solar arrays. Mr. Minch recommended that managers and staff meet and discuss how fees are assessed against these projects.
5. **SADC AMP on Solar Projects-** This AMP was distributed to the SSCC and addresses Various standards for installation of solar projects on preserved farm property.
6. **H & H Database-** Mr. Showler indicated that there may be financial assistance for SCDs To enter historic hydraulic and hydrologic data (there are approximately 50,000 records going back to 1990) into the database.
7. **Stormwater Ordinance Review-** NJ DEP is required to perform municipal audits of the Implementation of the Stormwater Rule. There may possibly be a role for the districts in verifying accuracy of the information provided by the municipalities.
8. **Engineering Assistance-** Mr. Showler provided an overview of the engineering report submitted to the SSCC regarding projects he has worked on and assisted the districts during the last two (2) months including a slide presentation regarding the significant rainfall event (Hurricane Irene) in the state last month, the Russo Farm situation in Ocean County, etc.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND COST SHARE PROGRAM (FPCSP)

Mr. Fekete reported on the following:

Cost Share Payments Processed – Since July eleven (11) payment requests were processed to the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) totaling \$104,969.78 representing the State share for completed and functioning practices. These practices include 7 irrigation projects, 2 animal waste storage facility projects, 1 land grading project and 1 underground drainage project. The value of these projects exceeds \$264,011.61.

CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CREP) *

Mr. Fekete reported the following regarding the CREP program.

Conservation Practices	Contracts Approved		Payments Processed	
	This Period	Cumulative	This Period	Cumulative
Filter Strips (acres)	0	310.3	5.8	277.66
Grassed Waterway (acres)	1.1	117.3	3.4	93.12
Lined Waterway (feet)	0	61,477	144	3,528
Riparian Forest Buffer (acres)	0	221.9	0	191.1
Number of Contracts	1	154	7	136
Funds Obligated/Expended	\$1,595.30	\$343,593.87	\$10,130.10	\$260,536.06

*On February 3, 2004 at the N.J. Agricultural Convention the CREP Program Agreement was signed by the Governor and USDA Farm Services Agency Administrator to establish 30,000 acres of vegetative filter strips with 10-15 year contracts on ag land to protect water quality.

CONSERVATION EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Mr. Belcher reported on the following:

- 1 **Envirothon** – The 2011 NJ Envirothon winner, Marine Academy of Technology and Marine Sciences was one of 46 US entries and 8 Canadian entries in the national event which was held in New Brunswick, Canada from July 24th - July 27th. The NJ team placed 25th overall.
- 2 **2012 Envirothon-** Next year's event will be hosted by the Freehold SCD and will take place at Camp Sacajawea in Monmouth County.
- 3 **2011 Poster Contest-** District Poster Contest winning entries are due in Trenton by 11/1 for statewide consideration.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) REPORT

Mr. Pettit reported on the following:

- 1 **Emergency Watershed Program (EWP)** - There is a limited amount of funding available. Currently the agency is trying to determine if there are any projects that fit the criteria. This program is administered in conjunction with FEMA.
- 2 **Partner Agreement-** As the Federal Fiscal year winds down, funds have been released by NRCS National Office specifically for partnership agreements. This has enabled NJ-NRCS to pursue several agreements including the continuation of the CAP Agreement. In addition an agreement is being finalized with Rutgers regarding energy projects and one with the Audubon Society for forestry projects.
- 3 **Accomplishments summary-** Ms. Collazo provided a brief summary of accomplishments to date in Fiscal Year 2011. In addition, she handed out and reviewed several promotional brochures promoting NRCS programs and services.

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

Mr. Hlubik reported on the following:

- 1 FSA is extremely busy with loss adjustments, emergency loans etc.
- 2 The Senate is working on the Ag Appropriations Bill. It is anticipated that there will be additional funds for the Emergency Conservation Program and the Emergency Forest Restoration Program.
- 3 Mr. Hlubik co-ordinated the Watershed Protection Meeting which was extremely well attended.

NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Ms. Davis reported on the following:

- 1 2nd Supervisor training session in the continuing district supervisor education training series was held recently. There were approximately 20 attendees.
- 2 The Annual Conservation Conference will be held in Clinton, NJ 10/5 & 10/6.
- 3 The legislative delegation sent to Washington, DC met with NJ legislators and staff & also the US Secretary of Agriculture.
- 4 The "Project Soils" curriculum for grades K through 6 is being tested in various schools.
- 5 Two (2) \$1,500 scholarships will be awarded to college bound teens studying in the field of natural resource conservation.

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

No report.

SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES (SEBS)

Dr. Murphy reported on the following:

- 1 **Student Body Profile** – There are 3,488 students enrolled in SEBS. 91.4% are NJ residents and 53.6% are commuters.
- 2 **New Dean Undergraduate Studies**- Newly appointed Dean, Barbara Turpin, pledges to enhance the core academic mission of SEBS by developing strategic programming to enrich the undergraduate education beyond the classroom, fostering an engaged student community and expanding interaction between students and faculty in research work.
- 3 **Upcoming Events** – 100th anniversary of plant pathology at Rutgers University- 10/14
Cranberry Festival, Chatsworth, NJ- 10/15
NJ Wine Tasting & Bus Tour- 9/16
- 4 **NJAES/ Rutgers Cooperative Extension**- NJAES is close to hiring a new specialist in tree fruit entomology.
- 5 **Upcoming NJAES Continuing Professional Education Courses** –
 - Vegetation Identification for Wetland Delineation – 9/15 – 9/16
 - NJ Compost Operator Certification Course- 9/16
 - Soil & Site Evaluation for Septic Disposal Systems & Stormwater BMPs – 10/3 – 10/5
 - Stormwater Management for Engineers- 10/5 – 10/7
 - Alternate Recycling Certification- 10/5,12,19 & 26- Exam- 11/9
 - Geology, Hydrology & Chemistry- 10/12

PUBLIC AND AGENCY COMMENTS

No additional comments were received.

On motion by Ms. Davis, second by Dr. Murphy, the meeting was adjourned at 11:07 AM.
All actions were by unanimous vote unless otherwise noted.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Minch, Administrative Analyst