



Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District
 103 County View Drive, PO Box 166
 Lake Pleasant NY 12108 518-548-3991
 hcswcd@frontiernet.net www.hcswcd.com
 Find us on Facebook and You Tube

Working to manage and promote the wise use of natural resources in Hamilton County since 1965.

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

April 3, 2023

Hamilton County SWCD office, 103 County View Drive, Lake Pleasant NY 12108
 and on Zoom

Board of Directors

Victoria Buyce, Chairperson
 John M. Stortecky, Vice Chairperson
 Chris D. Rhodes, Town Supervisor
 Shawn Hansen, Member-at-Large (via Zoom)

Absent

Betsy Bain, Town Supervisor
 Ryan Cunningham, Associate Environmental Analyst,
 New York State Soil and Water Conservation
 Committee

Absent

Tom Bielli, District Conservationist,
 Natural Resources and Conservation
 Service

District Staff

Caitlin Stewart, District Manager
 Marjorie Remias, Clerk and Secretary to
 the Board
 Leonard Croote, District Technician
 Katie WhitKovits, District Technician

- I. Call to order with introductions** – Buyce called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance**
- III. Roll Call** conducted.
- IV. Reading and approval of the March 8, 2023, meeting minutes** – The minutes were provided in advance of the meeting.
 - **A motion was made by Stortecky, seconded by Buyce to approve the March 8, 2023, meeting minutes with the date for Envirothon corrected from May 1st to May 3rd. All voted in favor, motion carried.**
- V. Treasurer’s Report** – Remias reviewed the Treasurer’s Report, transfer request of \$200,000.00 from general checking to general savings, and bills to be paid. She also asked for approval to pay Vermont Wildflower Farm \$200.64 for the bill that was received this morning.

Balance	2/28/23	\$276,449.79
Receipts		246,970.10
Disbursements		35,701.42
Balance	3/31/23	\$487,718.47

- **A motion was made by Stortecky, seconded by Rhodes to accept the Treasurer’s report, and approve the bills to be paid, including the Vermont Wildflower Farm bill in the amount of \$200.64, and for the transfer request of \$200,000.00 from general checking to general savings. All voted in favor, motion carried.**

VI. Executive Session to discuss personnel matter –

- **A motion was made by Stortecky, seconded by Rhodes to enter Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter at 9:38 a.m. All in favor, motion carried.**
- **A motion was made by Buyce, seconded by Stortecky to exit Executive Session at 9:55 a.m. All in favor, motion carried.**

The Board of Directors reported no action to be taken at this time.

VII. Interactive Display Board – WhitKovitz reviewed and explained the three quotes with various options. Discussion ensued.

- **A motion made by Stortecky, seconded by Buyce to purchase a Touch board in the amount of \$7,920.40. All in favor, motion carried.**

VIII. District Activities

- Water Quality Symposium Review –** Stewart reported that as CDEA Vice President, her main duty was to organize and host the Water Quality Symposium. Over 340 people from across the Northeast attended the 4-day training event in Syracuse. 34 classes were held across tracks including agriculture, non-agriculture, forestry, clerk / admin, and education to enhance knowledge and facilitate partnership discussions. She thanked the HCSWCD team, as well as all those involved with making this year’s event a tremendous success, including Conservation District and State Committee staff, and instructors.
- Draft watershed health and farming justice legislation update –** Stewart reported that the New York Association of Counties voted unanimously to pass a resolution opposing changes to District Law. She will attend the Board of Supervisors meeting on Thursday April 6 to review the proposed Hamilton County resolution and answer any questions.
- Adirondack Tree and Shrub Sale –** Croote reported that orders were due on March 17. We have a few items left over to sell. Overall sales were down a bit from previous years. Customer pick up for orders is scheduled for Saturday May 6th.

- d. **Lake Monitoring Program** – Stewart reported that she reviewed a draft manuscript for Dr. Paul Bukaveckas, Virginia Commonwealth University, describing changes in temperature and dissolved oxygen of Hamilton County lakes. WhitKovits and Croote met with Adirondack Watershed Institute’s Laboratory Director Elizabeth Yerger to discuss our 2023 Lake Monitoring Program. Yerger also provided a tour of the lab and detailed how our samples are analyzed. Stewart and Croote will meet with Yerger this week to discuss updates to this year’s program.
- e. **Agricultural Environmental Management** – WhitKovits reported that she is still in the organizational process. She has reviewed tier 1 applications from 2003 through present in the hopes of possibly reactivating and updating some prior applicants. Caitlin is working with another district to conduct a joint training session.
- f. **Trail Stewardship Program** – Stewart reported that the vacancy announcement was promoted on Facebook and the District’s website, will be advertised for two weeks in the *Hamilton County Express*, and was promoted at 2 job fairs. She and Lenny spoke with last year’s Seasonal Technician, who does not know if he will be in the area again this year, but if he is, may take the position. No applications have been received yet. Rhodes suggested excess applicants from DEC and AWI might be an option for finding applicants.
- g. **Watershed partnership update**
 - 1. **FLLOWPA** – Remias finalized close-out materials and Stewart sent documents to DEC and FLOWPA. Once documents are reviewed and approved, we will receive the final 25% retention payment of \$22,300.00.
 - 2. **Upper Hudson River Watershed Coalition** – A grant was received to write a plan for Elbow Creek, and we also received the 25% funding for the Upper Hudson Watershed Roadside Erosion Remediation Program.
 - 3. **St. Lawrence River Watershed Project** – Nothing new to report.
 - 4. **Mohawk River Watershed Coalition** – Stewart reported that she attended a meeting with DEC and Fulton County SWCD to review Action Agenda proposal for 1.5 million dollars.
 - 5. **Black River Watershed** – WhitKovits attended Black River Adaptive Modeling meetings. Stewart attended a conference planning meeting which will be held in June.
- h. **Hamilton County Envirothon** – WhitKovitz reported that the Envirothon is scheduled for May 3rd. She has reached out to sponsors and some have confirmed they will make donations. Instructors are lined up for 5 stations and she has also invited our legislators to the event. We have 9 teams signed up, which may be the most we have ever had.

- i. **Arbor Day Poetry Contest** – Stewart reported that this year, the annual contest for Senior Citizens turns 15. The poetry style is Japanese Lantern poems with the theme “Hope Grows Through Trees.” She distributed the poster. Entries are due by April 24th.
- j. **Conservation Education**
 - 1. WhitKovitz and Stewart are developing a presentation for Lake Pleasant Central School in partnership with Lake Pleasant Sacandaga Association for May or June of this year, focused on lake and stream monitoring. Katie has been working with the “Maintain the Chain” presentation in Inlet and will co-host a stream table demonstration with Herkimer County Soil & Water District at the event on Saturday, August 5th.
- k. **Other**
 - 1. **Hydroseeding Supplies** – Croote presented quotes and prices for grass seed and fertilizer for hydroseeding for the upcoming season.
 - **A motion was made by Rhodes, seconded by Stortecky to approve the purchase of grass seed and fertilizer in the amount of \$4,725.00. All in favor, motion carried.**
 - 2. **Quarter 1 Annual Plan of Work** – Stewart disseminated the document and reported that the quarter was productive with many accomplishments, and we are on track with our programs, services, and events.
- IX. **Staff reports** – Stewart disseminated and emailed copies of the staff reports. They are also appended to the minutes.
- X. **District Conservationist’s report** – No report.
- XI. **New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee report** – appended to minutes.
- XII. **Correspondence** – Thank you notes from NYACD for attending legislative day.
- XIII. **Next meeting date** – Tuesday May 2, 2023, 9:30 AM, Hamilton County SWCD office, 103 County View Drive, Lake Pleasant NY 12108 and virtually on Zoom.
- XIV. **Adjournment** – **A motion was made by Buyce, seconded by Stortecky to adjourn the meeting at 10:28 a.m. All in favor, carried.**

Respectfully Submitted



Marjorie Remias
Secretary to the Board/Treasurer

**District Manager's report
Submitted by Caitlin Stewart**

- **Administration**
 - Board of Directors meeting preparation
 - Staff meetings
 - Reviewed budget with Marj
 - Board of Supervisors meeting preparation
 - Assisted with computer maintenance and updates
 - Updated District Law resolution for Board of Supervisors
 - Completed Q1 Annual Plan of Work
- **Technical Assistance**
 - Assisted the public with other conservation inquiries
 - Lake Association requested 2022 monitoring data
- **Watershed Coalitions**
 - FLOWPA –finalized and mailed close-out materials
 - Mohawk River Watershed Coalition – meeting with DEC and Fulton County SWCD to review Action Agenda proposal
 - Black River Watershed – Provided information for Black River Adaptive Modeling, attended conference planning meeting.
- **Hemlock Woolly Adelgid** survey with Katie
- **Conservation Field Day** – submitted press release that was published in the Hamilton County Express and Adirondack Almanack
- **Adirondack Tree and Shrub Sale** – Facebook advertisement, updated info for PayPal
- **Hamilton County Envirothon** – assisted Katie with inviting legislators to the event and with sponsorship requests.
- **Arbor Day Poetry Contest** – updated materials for the 15th annual event, invited senior citizens to participate
- **Conservation Education**
 - Assisted with coordinating a stream table demo with Herkimer County SWCD for Maintain the Chain

- Working with Katie to coordinate a lake and stream monitoring place-based learning day for Lake Pleasant Central School in partnership with Lake Pleasant Sacandaga Association
- **Hamilton County Trail Stewardship Program** – Updated vacancy announcement, Facebook and website promotion, advertisement for Hamilton County Express, promoted vacancy at 2 job fairs.
- **Septic System Replacement Fund**
 - Replied to inquiries, updated materials for Round 3
- **New York State Conservation District Employees Association**
 - Save the Date for May meeting, updated contact list
 - Water Quality Symposium – organized and hosted the Water Quality Symposium. Over 340 people from across the Northeast attended the 4-day training event in Syracuse. 34 classes were held across tracks including agriculture, non-agriculture, forestry, clerk / admin, and education to enhance knowledge and facilitate partnership discussions.
 - Gave reports during Annual Meeting
 - Soil and Water Conservation Committee’s March meeting
 - New York Association of Conservation District’s March meeting
- **Lake Monitoring Program**
 - Program review with AWI
 - Reviewed a draft manuscript for Dr. Paul Bukaveckas, Virginia Commonwealth University, describing changes in temperature and dissolved oxygen of Hamilton County lakes.
 - Finalized data to Raquette Lake Preservation Foundation, assisting with updating their monitoring program
 - Provided Lake Adirondack data to Adirondack Lake Advisory Weed Board
- **Water Quality Coordinating Committee** – assisted Katie with updating contact list and agenda
- **Events, Meetings, Trainings, and Partnerships**
 - Assisted Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program with their new Tier 1 species list
 - Updated guidance for ag practices and stormwater permit

**District Technician's report
Submitted by Lenny Croote**

General

Project Permits

Town of Wells USACE permit for FEMA

County Snowmobile Trails

Completed and submitted the Hamilton County DUAR

Meeting with AWI and Warren Co SWCD to discuss Water Monitoring

Stormcrete Research /Inlet Stormwater

WQS

Rhodes pit renewal

Tree and Shrub 2023

Office Cleaning

Updated mailing for Lake Eaton residents for Septic System Replacement Fund

Completed Q1 Annual Plan of Work

**District Technician's report
Submitted by Katie WhitKovits**

- Attended Water Quality Symposium
 - Assisted with anything I could, and attended several wonderful classes
- Lake Monitoring
 - Visited the AWI lab at Paul Smiths College with Lenny
 - Discussed sampling methods & key testing parameters
- Worked with Tim Ellifritz (IT), Caitlin, Lenny, Microsoft 365/Dell Technologies on computer/IT issues
- Envirothon – Wednesday May 3rd
 - 9 teams are signed up! Indian Lake, Long Lake & Wells are participating
 - Requested sponsorships, ordered shirts, & invited legislators
- Mobile Interactive Display for meetings and educational outreach– obtained 3 quotes for Clear Touch: 43” display, extended warranty (5 yrs total), convertible mobile stand, zoom calling camera/audio, wireless keyboard with trackpad, & 3 hr training class
- Agricultural Environmental Management
 - Attended Construction Stormwater & Ag statewide zoom with Caitlin
 - Continuing to organize and review files
 - Reviewing and reworking the Hamilton County Strategic Plan
- WQCC meeting is scheduled for Monday June 5th at the Lake Pleasant Library 9am-12pm

- Coordinated Maintain the Chain presentation with Herkimer SWCD Saturday August 5th with Herkimer's staff and Stream Table
- Visited Paul Smith's AWI lab with Lenny to review Lake Monitoring parameters
- Conducted a Hemlock Wolly Adelgid hunt with Caitlin on our Ecotrail
- Exchanged Ronny Raindrop costumes with the designer in Cortland
- Facebook posts about Tree & Shrub sale, Multiple Symposium posts, Paul Smith's AWI visit, Earth Hour, plus many more from Caitlin!
- Created a Hamilton SWCD Instagram Page – Posts about our district, Symposium, and invasive Hemlock Wolly Adelgid hunting
 - Hamiltoncountynyswcd – Follow if you're on Instagram!
- Completed Q1 Annual Plan of Work

**New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee
Region 4 Report – April 2023**

Submitted by: Ryan Cunningham – Region 4 Associate Environmental Analyst

NYS SWCC News

New Executive Director to the State Soil Water Conservation Committee: We are pleased to announce that Bethany Bzduch will serve as the new SWCC Executive Director! Bethany started her career with the SWCDs in 2008. In 2012, she joined the staff of the SWCC as a Regional Program Assistant and has excelled over the years to manage a number of our very important SWCD cost share programs. As the SWCC Executive Director, Bethany will be providing staff leadership to the SWCC, in addition to working with SWCDs across the state, and developing and implementing the SWCC's Strategic Plan, policies and programs, along with many other responsibilities. Please join us in congratulating Bethany on her new position and welcoming her as the new Executive Director!

Climate Resilient Farming Program Round 7: \$15 million is available to support agricultural projects and related equipment purchases that aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help agricultural producers prepare for and better manage impacts of climate change, including increased heavy storm events, overall rainfall, and periods of drought. The RFP and associated documents are now available on SharePoint, <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com>. All questions related to the RFP and the required attachments shall be addressed to Jennifer Clifford jennifer.clifford@agriculture.ny.gov by **June 5th, 2023**. Applications for funding must be submitted through the NYS SWCC SharePoint website by **4:30 PM August 7, 2023**.

Agricultural Non-Point Source Program Round 29: \$13.5 million is available to support agricultural water quality conservation projects across the State through Round 29 of the Agricultural Nonpoint Source Program. The RFP and associated documents are now available on SharePoint, <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com>. All questions related to the RFP and the required attachments shall be addressed to Bethany Bzduch bethany.bzduch@agriculture.ny.gov by **May 22nd, 2023**. Applications for funding must be submitted through the NYS SWCC SharePoint website by **4:30 PM June 26, 2023**. A webinar to discuss the RFP for Round 29 will be held on **Tuesday April 11, 2023 at 10:00 AM**.

April SWCC Meeting: The next SWCC meeting is scheduled to convene at **10:00 AM on April 26th**. Further details and an agenda for this meeting will be sent out shortly. Reminder – participation at a SWCC meeting is eligible toward PM1, Part C of State Aid to Districts.

Interim Reporting: Interim reports for AGNPS Contracts (Round 21-Round 23), CAFO WSTSP (Round 1 and Round 2), CRF (Round 1 – Round 4) **MUST** be submitted by **May 1st**. Please submit these reports to the appropriate Program Manager and cc your AEA and Maureen Irish (Maureen.Irish@agriculture.ny.gov).

AEM Leopold Conservation Award 2023: NYSAGM is partnering once again with the Sand County Foundation to present the AEM Leopold Conservation Award to recognize landowners who inspire others with their dedication to ethical land, water, and wildlife habitat management on agricultural land. The deadline for applications is **May 27th, 2023**. More information can be found at <https://www.sandcountyfoundation.org/uploads/NY-CFN-23.pdf>

Share Your SWCD Project Success Stories: The SWCC is always looking for opportunities to promote the diverse work of SWCDs. Do you have a completed project that your SWCD has found to be innovative, or a great example of partners working together, and/or had a beneficial impact to your local natural resources? Help us tell your story. If you would like to share the details about a recent project, please submit to the SWCC a short project description letter which includes a: Project Name; Grant Round/Funding Source; a short synopsis of the project which details goals and successes and; quality pictures of the project. Farmer/landowner testimonials would also be a great addition to your submission. Project description information, as well any questions, can be directed towards your Regional AEA.

Other Events

Webinar - On-Farm Biogas System Opportunities, Increase Farm Sustainability with Biogas Production: Anaerobic digesters are an opportunity to produce biogas on-farm to use for heat or power and are poised to become an increasingly important source of renewable energy. Join Penn State Extension as they explore an anaerobic digester system's role in enhancing a farm's

sustainability. The webinar will be held **Thursday, April 13th 12:00-1:00pm**. Registration is available at <https://web.event.com/event/3f580b30-e341-4b80-8435-ea5cabb0bdc3/summary>

Webinar - Using the Riparian Opportunity Assessment in Project and Resiliency Planning: Join staff from the Tug Hill Commission, NYS DEC and others, to learn how the Statewide Riparian Opportunity Assessment Tool can be used in local and regional project and resiliency planning. No experience with the tool is necessary to attend. The webinar will be held **Friday, April 21, 2023, 1PM – 2PM**. Registration is available at <https://tinyurl.com/3knk63d3>

2023 NYS Wetlands Forum Annual Conference: The 2023 NYS Wetlands Forum Annual Conference will take place in Niagara Falls on **April 25th and 26th**. To register, please visit: <http://www.wetlandsforum.org/registration.html>

2023 NACD Northeast Regional Conference: Save the Date. This year the conference will be held in Portland, ME at the Portland Sheraton at Sable Oaks on **September 17-20, 2023**. Further details will be available shortly.

Other Funding

Great Lakes Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Program: The Great Lakes Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Program (GLSNRP) Request for Proposals was recently announced, for projects that reduce nutrients and sediments entering the Great Lakes. Applicants are invited to submit proposals for sediment and nutrient reduction activities associated with one of two project types: 1) agricultural non-point; and 2) shoreline or streambanks. The due date for applications is **5:00 p.m. Eastern on April 21st, 2023**. <https://www.glc.org/work/sediment/apply-2023>

NRCS Funding Opportunity for Resource Conservation Partners in New York: The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is announcing the availability of funding for conservation work in New York. Awards will go to partners to provide direct technical services to address water quality, soil health, wildlife and plant health, as well as other key conservation objectives. All applications must be submitted through Grants.gov by **April 27th 2023**. Please read the full announcement at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=New+york&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery