



**Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District**  
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 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**

### **July 5, 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  
 Betsy Bain, Town Supervisor  
 Chris D. Rhodes, Town Supervisor  
 Shawn Hansen, Member-at-Large (via Zoom)

**District Staff**

Caitlin Stewart, District Manager  
 Marjorie Remias, Clerk and Secretary to the Board  
 Katie WhitKovits, District Technician  
 Leonard Croote, District Technician  
 Jacob Vander Pyl, Seasonal Intern

**Partners**

Tom Bielli, District Conservationist,  
 Natural Resources and Conservation  
 Service

**Absent**

Ryan Cunningham, Associate  
 Environmental Analyst, New York State  
 Soil and Water Conservation Committee

- I. Call to order with introductions** – Buyce called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance**
- III. Roll Call** conducted.
- IV. Reading and approval of the June 6, 2023, meeting minutes** – The minutes were provided in advance of the meeting.
  - **A motion was made by Bain, seconded by Stortecky to approve the June 6, 2023, meeting minutes. All voted in favor, motion carried.**

**V. Treasurer’s Report** – Remias reviewed the Treasurer’s Report.

<b>Balance</b>	<b>5/31/23</b>	<b>\$488,160.24</b>
<b>Receipts</b>		<b>7,639.19</b>
<b>Disbursements</b>		<b>47,575.13</b>
<b>Balance</b>	<b>6/30/23</b>	<b>\$448,224.30</b>

- **A motion was made by Stortecky, seconded by Buyce to accept the Treasurer’s report, and approve the bills to be paid. All voted in favor, motion carried.**

**VI. Executive Session to discuss lawsuits**

- **A motion made by Stortecky, seconded by Buyce to enter Executive Session, inviting Stewart, Remias and WhitKovits, to discuss lawsuits at 9:37 a.m. All in favor, motion carried.**
- **A motion made by Bain, seconded by Stortecky to exit Executive Session at 9:54 a.m. All in favor, motion carried.**

The Board of Directors agreed that they will consult with County Attorney Chuck Getty before replying to emails regarding the website.

**VII. Preliminary 2024 budget discussion** – Stewart reported that the District is normally asked to submit the request for our county allocation in August.

- **A motion was made by Buyce, seconded by Rhodes to permit Stewart to request a 2% increase for the 2024 Hamilton County budget allocation. All voted in favor, motion carried.**

**VIII. AutoCAD LT purchase** – Stewart reported that Croote uses this software to design projects and permits (ex. Higgins Bay Cemetery). He was using the free version, but the company discontinued it. He needs to access 20 years of files.

- **A motion was made by Stortecky, seconded by Buyce to approve the purchase of an Auto Cad 3-year subscription in the amount of \$1,455.00. All in favor, motion carried.**

**IX. Laptop purchase** – Stewart reported that Tim Ellifritz has been working on her desktop computer, and determined that it not capable of efficiently processing her workload. Programs are sluggish, documents take a long time to load and sometimes do not save, and the computer often freezes. She seeks support to purchase a laptop she can use at home, at the office, in the field, and at meetings.

- **A motion was made by Stortecky, seconded by Bain to approve the purchase of a Dell Technologies Latitude 5430 Rugged and docking station in the amount of \$3,884.52. All in favor, motion carried.**

**X. Hydroseeding supplies purchase** – Stewart reported that most of this expense will be reimbursed through our Upper Hudson Roadside Erosion Remediation Program grant.

- **A motion was made by Rhodes, seconded by Buyce to approve the purchase of hydroseeding supplies in the amount of approximately \$16,000. All in favor, motion carried.**
- XI. Caring Through Conservation Mini Grant application approval** - Stewart reported that 3 applications were received. She reviewed the applications per the ranking sheet. With the approval of these applications, \$4,642.67 will be expended of the \$10,000, with a balance of \$5,357.33.
- **A motion was made by Stortecky, seconded by Buyce to approve the following Caring Through Conservation Mini Grant applications: Indian Lake Theater’s Monarch Report, \$1,150.00; Town of India Lake’s Monarch and Milkweed Challenge, \$1,497.67, and the Town of Lake Pleasant’s Community Garden Fencing, \$1,995.00. Buyce, Stortecky, Rhodes, and Hansen in favor; Bain abstained; motion carried.**
- XII. District Activities**
- a. **Draft watershed health and farming justice legislation update** – Nothing new to report.
  - b. **Lake Monitoring Program** – Stewart reported that she, WhitKovits, Croote, and Vander Pyl completed the June rotation. The boat is working well. She completed the Chain of Custody and delivered samples to Adirondack Watershed Institute.
  - c. **Trail Stewardship Program** – Croote reported that there is one more day of work on Buck Mountain and the District’s portion of trail work will be complete. Lake Pleasant Highway Superintendent Randy Lavarney has been contacted to coordinate work on the Sacandaga Pathways and Croote also contacted Town of Indian Lake Supervisor Brian Wells to coordinate projects. No other Town Supervisors or Highway Superintendents have contacted the District with trail or other projects. Adirondack Ecotrail work is ongoing. Vander Pyl has been working on a spur trail to the old growth pine trees. Manager Stewart noted Vander Pyl’s strong work ethic and reiterated the positive asset he has been for the District.
  - d. **Sediment and Erosion Control Program** – Croote and Vander Pyl have completed several hydroseeding projects for the private sector.
  - e. **Agricultural Environmental Management** – WhitKovits reported that she has ArcGIS desktop and online so she can look up landowners on map and research farms. She is working with Warren and Oneida County SWCDs to go on site visits in early October.
  - f. **Arbor Day Poetry Contest** – Stewart reported that the CVW Long Lake Public Library hosted a celebration for the poetry contestants on June 28<sup>th</sup>. Poems were read and prizes were awarded.

- g. Water Testing Program** – Remias collected samples for the June 26<sup>th</sup> drop-off. We received 19 samples for delivery to the Mohawk Valley Water Authority for testing.
- h. Invasive Species Program** – Croote reported that the *Galerucella* beetles collected with Warren County SWCD for purple loosestrife biocontrol are healthy. He has picked a site on a large wetland in Long Lake to release the beetles. This site is close to the lake so the beetles, as a natural method of eradication, are best suited to this area. Vander Pyl has set the emerald ash borer trap and has been checking it. WhitKovits reported that she has ordered the injectors for the Japanese knotweed program for landowners. She has been working on the manual for the program and the county attorney is looking over the agreement between the landowners and the District.
- i. Conservation Education Program** – WhitKovits held a Pollinator event at the Long Lake Public Library on June 21<sup>st</sup>. She has Ecotrail tours scheduled with students from area schools and has begun work on Conservation Field Day which is scheduled for September 21<sup>st</sup> this year. Stewart presented Adirondack Waterfest at the Black River Watershed Conference on June 14<sup>th</sup> and the Warner Brook Streambank Stabilization project to NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee on June 20<sup>th</sup>.
- j. Watershed partnership update**
1. **FLLOWPA** – Stewart attended the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding meeting and submitted a stormwater related project for the Town of Inlet.
  2. **Upper Hudson River Watershed Coalition** – Stewart hosted the May 22<sup>nd</sup> picnic and meeting. Croote also attended.
  3. **St. Lawrence River Watershed Project** – Nothing new to report.
  4. **Mohawk River Watershed Coalition** – Stewart hosted June 26<sup>th</sup> meeting and attended the Mohawk River Basin Steering Committee meeting on June 30<sup>th</sup>.
  5. **Black River Watershed** – Stewart attended and presented at June 14<sup>th</sup> conference.
- k. Other**
1. Website purchase - \$2,500.
- **A motion was made by Stortecky, seconded by Hanson to approve website purchase of \$2,500. All in favor, motion carried.**

- IX. Staff reports** – Stewart disseminated and emailed copies of the staff reports. They are also appended to the minutes.
- X. District Conservationist’s report** – Bielli reported that the Inflation Reduction Act has added increasing amounts of funding through the next four years. These funds enhance the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program. These funds are for agricultural, climate smart, energy consumption, and forest operations (management, planting etc.) projects. There will be a local working group meeting at the Ballston Spa 4H building on Wednesday, July 12th from 1-3pm for any interested parties.
- 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 August 1, 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 Stortecky, seconded by Buyce to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 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
  - Assisted Tim Ellifritz with computer maintenance and updates
  - Attend Environmental Bond Act Listening Session on June 26
  - Class C Stream Bill letter of opposition sent from the BOD to the Governor
- **Technical Assistance**
  - Lake monitoring coordination with Fulton Chain of Lakes Association and Raquette Lake Preservation Foundation
  - Snails inquiry from Hamilton County Cornell Cooperative Extension

- Invasive species invasion locations – Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program
- Aquatic invasive plants – Blue Mountain Lake Water Watchers and Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program
- **Watershed Coalitions**
  - FLOWPA – attended a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding meeting and submitted projects for review, submitted resolution for FLOWPA program payment
  - Upper Hudson River Watershed Coalition - hosted the May 22 meeting and picnic
  - St. Lawrence River Watershed Project – Nothing new to report
  - Mohawk River Watershed Coalition – hosted June 26 meeting, attended Mohawk River Basin Steering Committee meeting on June 30
  - Black River Watershed – attended and presented at the Black River Watershed Conference, working on press release
- **Invasive Species**
  - Attended APIPP’s photography of invasive species online workshop – June 9
  - Coordinates deployment of emerald ash borer trap with Jacob and Katie
- **Conservation Education**
  - Adirondack Waterfest presentation at the Black River Watershed Conference – June 14, 97 attendees
  - Warner Brook Streambank Stabilization Project – New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee – June 20, 30 attendees
  - Arbor Day Poetry Contest – Gala held June 28 at Long Lake Public Library, sent invitations, made certificates
  - Worked with Katie on Conservation Field Day
- **Lake Monitoring Program**
  - Monitored lakes with Katie
  - Dropped off samples at Adirondack Watershed Institute and coordinated bottle labeling with their staff
- **Press Releases**
  - Seniors Gather for Poetry Contest Gala
- **Water Testing Program**
  - Marj ran the drop-off on June 26
  - Sample drop off at Mohawk Valley Water Authority
- **Septic System Replacement Fund**
  - Submitted disbursement information to County for 2 grant close out
  - Responded to 2 inquiries
- **Caring Through Conservation Mini-Grant Program**
  - Launched program
  - 3 applications received totaling \$4,942.67
  - Responded to 3 inquiries
- **Trainings**
  - Emerging Contaminants Panel – Black River Watershed Conference – June 14

- eDNA – background, invasive species applications, challenges and successes - presented by SLELO at Black River Watershed Conference – June 14
- Road Salt from a Highway Department perspective - Black River Watershed Conference – June 14
- Black River Adaptive Management – program review and resource needs, our lake monitoring data was one of the few that received an A for overall quality and details! - Black River Watershed Conference – June 14
- **Hamilton County Trail Stewardship Program**
  - Ordered PPE
  - Trail work completed on Buck Mountain
  - Adirondack Ecotrail trailwork ongoing
  - Contacted Lake Pleasant Highway Superintendent Randy Lavarney to coordinate work on the Sacandaga Pathways
  - Lenny contacted Town of Indian Lake Supervisor Brian Wells to coordinate projects
  - No other Town Supervisors or Highway Superintendents have contacted the District with trail or other projects
- **New York State Conservation District Employees Association**
  - Coordinating July meeting
  - Responded to inquiries about the Watershed Health Coalition
  - Completed and disseminated June CDEA News
  - Conservation Skills Workshop planning
  - New York Association of Conservation Districts meeting – June 28
  - Soil and Water Conservation Committee Meeting - June 20
  - Technical Advisory Committee meeting – June 8
  - Managers’ Meeting – June 21
  - Updated 4-Way Partnership MOA and incorporated suggestions from partners

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

Project permits  
 County snowmobile trails  
 Submitted the Hamilton County DUAR  
 NAACC assessment for joint rant with Fulton County  
 Roadside assessment for hydroseeding grant  
 Buck Mountain  
 Water monitoring  
 Dry hydrant design for Town of Morehouse  
 Hydroseeding  
 Began Cold Stream Streambank Stabilization Project  
 Office cleaning

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

- Lake Monitoring
  - Enjoyed my 1<sup>st</sup> week of lake monitoring – I used all of the monitoring equipment & calibrated the YSI probe prior
  - Took my boater safety course on June 17<sup>th</sup>
  - Input field data and ProDSS data into spreadsheets
- Conservation Field Day
  - Sent save the dates to teachers & invitations for special guests
  - Contacted potential presenters
- Mobile Interactive Display – ClearTouch
  - Delivered & set-up!
- Agricultural Environmental Management
  - Not much new – but I have ArcGIS desktop and online now so I can do mapping work & research farms
  - Working with Warren and Oneida SWCDs to do some farm visits in early October
- Japanese Knotweed
  - Ordered injectors for rental program, working on agreement/liability form and landowner manual
  - Sent agreement to county attorney for review
- Held a Pollinator event and the Long Lake Public Library
- Educated a landowner on different types of water testing depending on their specific needs and water source
- Cold Stream survey with Lenny & Jacob
- Took on the CDEA Fish On Challenge
  - This is a statewide competition for District employees, I promote and organize this competition
- NAACC stream and RRAMP assessment visits with Lenny & Jacob
- Buck Mountain trail work with Lenny & Jacob
- Assisted Jacob in installation of the Emerald Ash Borer trap
- Attended Hamilton County Highway Safety Training on 6/22 with Jacob
- Facebook posts about Emerald Ash Borer, Purple Loosestrife control, Veggie garden, Harmful Algal Blooms, Lake Monitoring, Invasive Species Awareness Week, Mosaic Contest, Long Lake Library presentation, and Pollinator Week



**New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee  
Region 4 Report – April 2023  
Submitted by: Ryan Cunningham – Region 4 Associate Environmental Analyst**

**NYS SWCC News**

**Listening Sessions to Advance Bond Act:** Governor Hochul has announced a statewide educational listening tour to advance the \$4.2 billion Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act. The tour provides an opportunity for the public and potential funding applicants to learn more about the Bond Act and the draft eligibility guidelines being developed to identify potential projects. To register for any of these sessions, visit <https://www.ny.gov/programs/clean-water-clean-air-and-green-jobs-environmental-bond-act>

- **North Country: July 14, 1 to 3PM**, North Country Community College, Sparks Athletic Complex Alumni Gymnasium
- **Capital District: July 20, 1 to 3PM**, University at Albany: Campus Center Auditorium
- **Virtual Meeting #2: July 26, 6 p.m. to 8PM.** <https://www.nysebatour.com/virtual-2>

**Climate Resilient Farming Program Round 7:** \$15 million is available to support projects. The RFP and associated documents are now available on SharePoint, <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/Agriculture/SWCC>. Applications for funding must be submitted through the NYS SWCC SharePoint website by **4:30 PM August 7, 2023**.

**July SWCC Meeting:** The next SWCC meeting is scheduled to convene at **10:00 AM on July 18<sup>th</sup>**. 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.**

**Other Events**

**2023 NY Soil Health and Climate Resiliency Field Days:** The NY Soil Health Alliance Group will convene a series of Soil Health & Climate Resiliency Field Day's throughout the State during 2023. Registration is now live for the **July 13<sup>th</sup> orchard event at the Rodman Lott and Son Farms in Seneca Falls**. Visit, <https://www.newyorksoilhealth.org/fielddays/> for more information and to register.

**Save the Date:**

The Adirondack Lakes Alliance is very excited to announce a return to our summer Educational Symposium. This year the Symposium will be held on **Friday, August 11, 2023, at Paul Smith's College, in Paul Smiths, New York**. We hope to see you there and look forward to meeting and sharing your experiences. More importantly, going forward the Symposium will be known as the **Ed Griesmer Annual Adirondack Lakes Alliance Symposium**, to honor our late founder.

**Grasstravaganza 2023 PLANET GRAZE:** The Grasstravaganza 2023 conference is **July 20-21 at SUNY Morrisville**. This event features lectures from many great speakers, panel discussions, and a variety of workshops on different aspects of grazing for different species of livestock. the full agenda and conference registration can be found at: <https://grasstravaganza.morrisville.edu/> **Please notice the registration deadline! July 13th!**

**2023 Empire Farm Days: August 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023** (<https://empirefarmdays.leetradeshows.com>).

**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.

**2023 Conservation Skills Workshop – Save the Date: September 18-21, 2023**, at the Auburn Holiday Inn. Registration materials will be available soon.

### **Other Funding**

**Grants Available for Communities in the Finger Lakes Watershed:** DEC has announced \$350,000 in competitive funding is available to help communities in the Finger Lakes watershed restore and protect water quality. Submit applications online through the State's Grants Gateway by **3 p.m. on July 21, 2023**. Contact the Finger Lakes Watershed Hub at [FLWP@dec.ny.gov](mailto:FLWP@dec.ny.gov) with questions. [https://grantsgateway.ny.gov/IntelliGrants\\_NYSGG/module/nysgg/goportal.aspx](https://grantsgateway.ny.gov/IntelliGrants_NYSGG/module/nysgg/goportal.aspx)

**Consolidated Funding Application Requesting Proposals:** [Round XIII of the Consolidated Funding Application \(CFA\) is open](#) and applications are requested by **4:00 p.m. on Friday, July 28, 2023**. More than \$750,000,000 in funding will be made available under this year's CFA. Grant programs of interest to SWCDs offered via the CFA include:

- Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) Program - <https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/4774.html>
- Non-Agricultural Nonpoint Source Planning and MS4 Mapping Grant - <https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/116725.html>