



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

June 6, 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

District Staff

Caitlin Stewart, District Manager
Marjorie Remias, Clerk and Secretary to
the Board

Absent

Chris D. Rhodes, Town Supervisor
Shawn Hansen, Member-at-Large
Leonard Croote, District Technician
Katie WhitKovits, District Technician
Jacob Vander Pyl, Seasonal Technician
Ryan Cunningham, Associate Environmental Analyst,
New York State Soil and Water Conservation
Committee
Tom Bielli, District Conservationist,
Natural Resources and Conservation
Service

- I. Call to order with introductions** – Buyce called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance** conducted.
- III. Roll Call** conducted.
- IV. Reading and approval of the April 4 and May 2, 2023, meeting minutes** – The minutes were provided in advance of the meeting.
 - **A motion was made by Bain, seconded by Stortecky to approve the April 4 and May 2, 2023, meeting minutes. All voted in favor, motion carried.**
- V. Treasurer's Report** – Remias reviewed the Treasurer's Report.

Balance	4/30/23	509,927.57
Receipts		34,351.54
Disbursements		56,118.87
Balance	5/31/23	488,160.24

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

VI. Japanese Knotweed Landowner Management Program – Stewart reviewed WhitKovits’ proposal to pilot the Japanese Knotweed Land Management Program.

- **A motion was made by Stortecky, seconded by Bain to pilot the Japanese Knotweed Land Management Program, and purchase 3 injector tools in the amount of \$671.98, with approximately \$30-\$40 shipping. All voted in favor, motion carried.**

VII. Caring Through Conservation Mini-Grant Program – Stewart reviewed her proposal to pilot the Caring Through Conservation Mini-Grant Program.

- **A motion made by Stortecky, seconded by Bain to pilot the Caring Through Conservation Mini-Grant Program in the amount of \$10,000 to fund a maximum of \$2,000 per project (5 projects total), with the Board of Directors approving applications. All voted in favor, motion carried.**

VIII. Adirondack Watershed Institute contract for laboratory services – Stewart reviewed the contract. She mentioned that this is approximately a \$4,000 increase from last year’s amount because we would like to include bottom water sampling of lakes with documented harmful algal blooms to augment our data analyses.

- **A motion made by Stortecky, seconded by Bain to permit District Manager Caitlin Stewart to sign the Adirondack Watershed Institute contract for laboratory services in the amount of \$21,800 for the 2023 lake monitoring season. All voted in favor, motion carried.**

IX. District apparel – Stewart mentioned that she would like to purchase shirts and hats for District staff and board members. Branded apparel will ensure our staff are recognized as professional, unified, and trustworthy while in the field and giving presentations. Safety green shirts are highly visible and enhance safety.

- **A motion made by Stortecky, seconded by Buyce to approve the purchase of up to \$3,000 of apparel with Hamilton County SWCD branding for staff and board members from Clear Image. All voted in favor, motion carried.**

X. District Activities

- a. Welcome Seasonal Technician Jacob Vander Pyl!** – Stewart reported that the District hired Vander Pyl to fill the County’s Seasonal Technician vacancy for trail work and District projects. Vander Pyl began May 22, and has assisted with the Buck Mountain and Adirondack Eco Trails, the Hydroseeding Program, and rearing *Galerucella* beetles. Stewart encouraged town supervisors to send her projects for Vander Pyl to ensure the District fulfills the expectations and needs of the County’s trail program. Vander Pyl is motivated and eager to assist and has been a wonderful addition to the team.
- b. Draft watershed health and farming justice legislation update** – Stewart reported that she contacted Megan Brosterman twice to inquire if any movement occurred, if the WHC is seeking sponsors for the proposed draft New York State Watershed Health Bill, and who the sponsors are, and has not received a reply.
- c. Adirondack Tree and Shrub Sale** – Stewart reported that this year’s sale was a great success with excellent feedback from customers. Net income was \$2,231.63 and we sold 1,304 non-invasive trees and shrubs.
- d. Lake Monitoring Program** – Stewart reported that Croote has prepared the boat for the monitoring season. Croote, WhitKovits, and Vander Pyl met with Adirondack Watershed Institute staff to review calibration for the YSI Pro DSS meter. We are ready for our June rotation!
- e. Trail Stewardship Program** – Stewart reported work has been done on the Adirondack EcoTrail and Buck Mountain. The County DPW is working to complete the Buck Mountain parking lot, and Croote, WhitKovits, and Vander Pyl are implementing trail maintenance. Stewart encouraged supervisors and highway superintendents to contact Croote with projects for the seasonal technician to complete.
- f. Sediment and Erosion Control Program** – Croote and Vanderpyl have hydroseeded several private landowners and the hydroseeder is running well.
- g. Agricultural Environmental Management** – WhitKovits met with Cunningham to discuss our program and ideas.

- h. Hamilton County Envirothon** – Stewart reported that WitKovits did a beautiful job running this year’s event. Record numbers attended. WhitKovits volunteered as Oral Presentation Judge at the NYS Envirothon and saw our Long Lake Team at the event.
- i. Invasive Species Awareness Week** – for New York state is June 5th – 11th. The goal is to promote knowledge and understanding of invasive species and the harm they can cause. Whitkovits held a mosaic poster contest for invasive species and has done a Facebook campaign to spread awareness of invasive species. Additionally, our intern, Vander Pyl will be deploying our emerald ash borer within the next few days.
- j. Water Quality Coordinating Committee meeting** – Whitkovits organized this first meeting of the year and Board members Bain and Buyce attended and said they found it very informative. Bain thought the speakers were very good. Stewart stated that the Water Quality Coordinating Committee is linking experts with our lake associations and municipalities to provide them information about funding and resources and how to address water quality concerns. Whitkovits will compile attendees’ concerns and revamp our strategy to prioritize and help find funding to assist with their projects.
- k. Arbor Day Poetry Contest** – Stewart reported that the gala will be held later in June at the Long Lake Public Library. There were 22 entries this year and there will be certificates, prizes and potluck for the senior citizens that participated.
- l. Water Testing Program** – Landowners dropped off 6 samples in May. The next drop off is June 26.
- m. Invasive species program** – We are once again rearing Galerucella beetles, that when mature feed off the invasive species, purple loosestrife. At maturity, they will be released to populate and feed on purple loosestrife in the area as a natural form of invasive species eradication.
- n. Conservation Education Program** – We have had numerous requests for presentations this summer. The Friends of Lake Algonquin, Maintain the Chain in Inlet and two summer youth programs have been scheduled for presentations.
- o. Watershed partnership update** – Stewart reported that all Watershed Coalitions are productive and seeking or implementing grants. The Black River Watershed Conference will be held June 14th from 9am to 4pm in Carthage. There will be presentations on various relevant topics. Stewart will be talking about our Adirondack Waterfest and other Districts will provide updates.

- XI. **Staff reports** – Stewart disseminated and emailed copies of the staff reports. They are also appended to the minutes.
- XII. **District Conservationist’s report** – Bielli submitted the following: I have received applications/interest from three Hamilton County residents for high tunnels. I will be attending the water quality meeting on 6/5.
- XIII. **New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee report** – appended to minutes.
- XIV. **Correspondence** – Katie received correspondence from Indian Lake Envirothon advisor Christine Kobo thanking us for an inspiring and meaningful experience for her students. We also received complimentary correspondence from Erik Reardon and Michelle Curry regarding the recent Water Quality Committee meeting.
- XV. **Next meeting date** – Wednesday July 6, 2023, 9:30 AM, Hamilton County SWCD office, 103 County View Drive, Lake Pleasant NY 12108 and virtually on Zoom.
- XVI. **Adjournment** – A motion was made by Bain, seconded by Stortecky to adjourn the meeting at 10:24 a.m. All in favor, motion 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
- **Technical Assistance**
 - Septic system replacement fund inquiries – Long Lake residents
 - Cattail removal recommendations and permitting - Morehouse Rod and Gun Club
 - Invasive species characters for symposium in September
 - Erosion and sediment control/ stormwater management service
 - Shared Watershed Health bill opposition resolution with other SWCDs
 - Shared hydroseeding program information with other SWCDs
 - EAB trap information inquiry
- **Watershed Coalitions**
 - FLOWPA – attended the full board meeting on April 12.
 - Upper Hudson River Watershed Coalition - hosted the May 11 meeting
 - St. Lawrence River Watershed Project – Katie attended meeting on my behalf.
 - Mohawk River Watershed Coalition – DEC is nearing signage of the Action Agenda proposal for 1.5 million dollars.
 - Black River Watershed – Preparing for Black River Watershed Conference and provided information to Black River Adaptive Modeling group.
- **Adirondack Tree and Shrub Sale**
 - Marj and I ran the Lake Pleasant sale.
- **Hamilton County Envirothon** – Purchased supplies. Assisted Katie with the event.
- **Invasive Species**
 - Assisted Katie with ISAW Facebook campaign
 - Assisted Katie with Japanese knotweed stem injector program
- **Conservation Education**
 - Warner Brook Streambank Stabilization presentation and field trip – Katie and I presented to Lake Pleasant Central School's third, fourth, and fifth graders, highlighting erosion, trout habitat, and stabilization using step-pool systems. Students traveled to the project site and learned how to properly plants. Lenny assisted with field planting. 33 attendees.
 - Co-presented Benthic Macroinvertebrates with Katie for Wells 6th grade. Classroom presentation and field collection! 8 attendees.
- **Lake Monitoring Program**
 - Program review with AWI

- Developed cost comparison for analytes
- Finalized Quality Assurance Project Plan that was approved by DEC
- **Press Releases**
 - Hamilton County Envirothon
 - Hemlock Woolly Adelgid
 - Water Testing Program
 - Warmer Brook
- **Water Testing Program**
 - Updated poster, ad for newspaper
- **Septic System Replacement Fund**
 - Mailed materials for Round 3, responded to inquiries
- **Caring Through Conservation Mini-Grant Program**
 - Program idea discussion with *Jake* Dunkley, Warren County SWCD
 - Prepared application and ranking sheet for board review
- **Hamilton County Trail Stewardship Program**
 - Team meeting to discuss Jacob's priorities
 - Paperwork for Jacob's internship
- **New York State Conservation District Employees Association**
 - Prepared for and hosted the May meeting
 - Conservation Skills Workshop planning
 - New York Association of Conservation Districts meeting
 - Organized 4-Way Partnership Meeting to update MOA

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

Project Permits
Town of Wells USACE permit for FEMA
County Snowmobile Trails
Water Monitoring preparation
Stormwater Management for Inlet
Dry Hydrant Survey for town of Hope
Dry Hydrant design for town of Morehouse
Hydroseeding
Purple Loosetrife Beetle collection.
Tree and Shrub 2023

Office Cleaning
Trail Maintenance
Envirothon
Sediment basin inquiry

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

- Lake Monitoring
 - Next week with Caitlin!
- Envirothon – Wednesday May 3rd
 - 8 teams participated from Indian Lake, Long Lake & Wells
 - Long Lake team Bryon and the Baddies took First Place and went to the NYS Competition
 - I volunteered as an Oral Presentation Judge at the State Competition
- Mobile Interactive Display – ClearTouch
 - Placed the order on 4/4/23
 - Shipped! Expected to arrive any time!
- Agricultural Environmental Management
 - Not much new – hope to start making site visits soon!
- WQCC meeting Monday June 5th at the Lake Pleasant Library 9am-12pm
 - 22 people attended in-person and on zoom!
 - Well Water Program presentation, AIS presentation, reviewed the Water Quality Strategy
- NYSISAW – New York State Invasive Species Awareness Week June 5th – 10th
 - Mosaic Contest- Open to all ages throughout Hamilton County
 - We had 4 entries – all in the same age group
 - Vicki – would you please judge them and choose a winner?
- Japanese Knotweed
 - Working on a “rental” program, where landowners can rent/borrow injector guns to treat their own knotweed

- It's no longer a priority species with APIPP, so we'd like to put the responsibility in the landowners' hands with our guidance
- Visited AWI Lab with Lenny & Jacob, learned a ton about calibrating the YSI probe for Lake Monitoring
- Presented on and collected Bentic Macroinvertebrates with Caitlin and the Wells 6th grade science class!
- Collected Galerucella beetles and purple loosestrife for beetle rearing with Lenny, Jacob, and Maren from Warren Co SWCD
- Planted willows and dogwoods with Lenny at 2 stream buffer sites
- Put up posters for ISAW Contest and Water Testing program with Caitlin
- Attended virtual planning meeting for Black River Watershed Conference – June 14th
- Trucked straw with Lenny
- Tree & Shrub handout in Blue Mountain with Lenny
- Stream culvert visit and preliminary survey with Lenny & Jacob in T/O Salisbury (Herkimer Co)
- Pond site investigation in Blue Mountain with Lenny
- Facebook posts about the Envirothon, Tree & Shrub Sale, ISAW Mosaic Contest, Riparian Buffer plantings, putting up posters, Black River Watershed Conference, WQCC, Water Testing Program, NYS Envirothon, Invasive Species Mosaic entries, purple loosestrife and Galerucella beetles, the Round Goby & LOTS more from Caitlin!
 - Created the first ever facebook reel on the macroinvertebrate sampling with Wells students

**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 the details for the next couple locations in the 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. Details are being finalized for additional locations, as

well as two virtual meetings. To register for any of these sessions, visit

<https://www.ny.gov/programs/clean-water-clean-air-and-green-jobs-environmental-bond-act>

- **Central New York: June 8, from 1 to 3 p.m.**, State University of New York Cortland, Corey Union Function Room
- **North Country: July 14, 1 to 3 p.m.**, North Country Community College, Sparks Athletic Complex Alumni Gymnasium

Agricultural Non-Point Source Program Round 29: \$13.5 million is available to support agricultural water quality conservation projects across the State. 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 June 26, 2023**.

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**.

June SWCC Meeting: The next SWCC meeting is scheduled to convene at **10:00 AM on June 20th**. 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.**

Director Training: A reminder that your Regional AEA is available to present training modules to your Board of Directors. Most notably the District Law training module which is training required every 3 years under the Performance Measure 1. Please reach out to your Regional AEA if you have any training needs. Additionally, the District Law training module is available to complete virtually via VIMEO: <https://vimeo.com/446525792>

Other Events

Training Opportunity - Seeking Competition in Procurement: The Office of the State Comptroller's Legal Division will discuss legal requirements for competitive bidding, including statutory amendments to the General Municipal Law § 103 and various exceptions to the bidding requirements. **Thursday, Jun 22nd, 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM**. Register here, <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/2233481280518001238>

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 **June 22nd-23rd event at the Ontario County Fair Grounds** and the **July**

13th orchard event at the Rodman Lott and Son Farms in Seneca Falls. Visit, <https://www.newyorksoilhealth.org/fielddays/> for more information and to register.

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

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>

Regenerate New York Forestry Cost Share Grant Program: Funding for private landowners with five acres of land or more is available to support the regeneration of forests so they may continue to deliver vital services such as mitigating climate change, protecting air and water quality, and supporting the economy. A minimum of \$10,000 and a maximum of \$100,000 with a 25% match requirement is available. Applications for Round 3 will close **Friday, October 6th, 2023 at 5:00pm**, or when funds are exhausted, whichever comes first. For more information and to apply, visit: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/119950.html>. **Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) are able to apply for funds on behalf of private landowners.**

NYS Farmland Protection Implementation Grants Round 18 - Conservation Easement Projects – A reminder that these applications are taken on a rolling basis. The intent of the grant program is to fund the implementation of certain farmland protection activities intended to maintain the economic viability of the State's agricultural industry and its supporting land base and to protect the environmental and landscape preservation values associated with agriculture. For more information about applying, please visit, <https://agriculture.ny.gov/land-and-water/rfa-0238-farmland-protection-implementation-grants-round-18-conservation-easement>