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## Otsego County Soil & Water Conservation District

967 CO HWY 33 – RIVER ROAD – COOPERSTOWN, NEW YORK 13326-9222 – PHONE (607) 547-8337 ext. 4

### OTSEGO COUNTY SWCD BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, May 21, 2020

Held remotely on GoToMeeting.com

1 (866) 899-4679

AC 818-226-949

#### **Members Present:**

Les Rathbun, Chair, Grange Rep.  
Meg Kennedy, Vice Chair, Cty. Rep.  
Ed Lentz, Member at Large  
Michelle Farwell, County Legislator  
Larry Roseboom, Sr., Farm Bureau  
Doris Moennich, Treasurer/Landowner

#### **Staff Present:**

Jordan Clements, District Manger  
Jessica Miller, Admin. Assistant/  
Secretary/Assistant Treasurer

#### **Absent:**

Helene Kraham, Ag Landowner

#### **Guest:**

Tony Capraro, District Conservationist, NRCS  
Scott Fickbohm, Regional Associate Environmental Analyst

- I. **Call to order:** Board Chairman, **Les Rathbun** called the online meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
  
- II. **Approval of minutes:**
  - Motion was made by **Kennedy**, seconded by **Lentz** to approve April's minutes with corrections made. All in favor. Motion carried.
  
- III. **Approval of Treasurer's Report & Bills to be paid**

A list of April Bills to be Paid were provided to the Board in advance of the meeting.

  - Motion was made by **Kennedy**, seconded by **Lentz** to approve April's Treasurer's report and bills to be paid. All in favor. Motion carried. **Lentz** stated that he is used



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to seeing profit and loss, actual vs budget, and a balance sheet prepared for every meeting.

### **District Secretary/Assistant Treasurer Report**

- Administrative Assistant, **Jessica Miller**, reported that the Intuit payroll center has been setup and each employee has a login to view pay stubs, and tax documentation. Invoicing and paying bills have continued to run smoothly remotely.

### **IV. District Reports**

District Manager, **Jordan Clements**, reported he has continued to have remote staff meetings on Monday and Thursday mornings while the staff has been working from home. Tuesdays and Thursdays Jordan continues to work from home.

#### **A. Buffer Planting**

Stream Technician, **Mark Kugler**, has successfully planted/facilitated 11 buffer plantings. Dan, Karl, and Jess have also come in to assist Mark with planting.

#### **B. Tree Program**

The 2020 Tree and Shrub program ran different this year due to the pandemic, there were no sales of extras this year. The sale ran smooth, staff was spread out, pickup was timed, and for the most part people were on time. Many commented they enjoyed the drive thru system. We lost out on profits from the extra sales, but we also didn't carry any extras. Delivery fees certainly upped the cost of the tree sale, but staff did not have to go to Pennsylvania to pick the seedlings up. Nurseries already packed our orders and planned on sending us the orders regardless of the pandemic.

#### **C. Updates**

County cut of 15% of our allocation. **Kennedy** stated that % is not yet finalized. Jordan proposed that the money lost is what would have paid for former secretary's pay, and that the District has taken over the lawn maintenance. Jordan stated that he wants to keep the staff he has and will attend SWEC meeting to present report to show how the District brings in money for projects. Upper Susquehanna Coalition has a 20-acre riparian forest



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buffer planting in Morris. The District can be contracted for planting at \$3,500 an acre. Once Chris Andreassen becomes a certified CNMP planner AEM funding will increase.

### **D. 5 Month Pandemic Policy**

Board was sent copy of 5 month pandemic policy to review. There was discussion on how to improve policy. Stage 1 was outlined with hypothetical dates, with the intention to slowly integrate into Stage 2-3 of the 5 month pandemic policy. Sanitizing equipment, and masks are at the office. Jordan needs the staff back into the office to do more work, landowners do not need to be present to do the work. Jordan is taking steps to ensure safety and security of staff. The front door remains locked. Jordan asked the board for guidance on the next step to reopen. **Farwell** believes the District should reopen in Phase 2. Agriculture reopened in Phase 1 which allowed plantings. Once the governor announces Phase 2 staff will return to office to do field work, and only interact with the public with masks on. Board suggests pandemic policy be updated with NY forward phases and dates, and review NY Forward website for details. **Lentz** requested daily temperature checks along with a sign in log. Jordan asked for approval for Chris Andreassen to work remotely 2 days, and spend 2 days in the office due to his child's Daycare being closed. Board Approved. Phase 3 will resume normal operations. **Scott Fickbolm** reported that Ag and Markets will be emailing about NY forward, and reminded that Part C funds can be used for staffing. Brief discussion on SWCC May's monthly report. See Attached.

### **E. Grants**

Jordan reported that the District will be submitting three Agricultural Non-Point Source Grants. Ag and Markets has been very accommodating with deadlines. Along with one High Frequency Irrigation Grants. Two Climate Resiliency Farming grants are on the approved list, both new styles of projects.

### **F. Forestry**

Jordan reported Forest Technician, **Dan Zimmerman**, has been working on the 7<sup>th</sup> County Forest Management Plan. Going forward we will need to ensure we will have a County contract for forestry. Can't project funds with the timber market the way it currently is. Timber sales could be lined up when the market improves. Jordan will propose to extend the forestry contract for 3 years at 45k a year with no additions just to secure the position. **Lentz** feels that adding into the contract that 10%-15% of all timber



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sales will go back to the District's forestry program will add incentive for more timber sale. **Kennedy** agrees that it is a good idea to incentivize the District. **Rathbun** feels strongly that it will hurt the acceptance of the contract. Dan's FMP's need to be uploaded to the District website.

### **G. Further Staff Updates**

Jordan reports that staff has increased Facebook activity with weekly Moo-Mondays, Watershed Wednesdays, and Forestry Friday updates. Chris is working on his 3<sup>rd</sup> CNMP plan, and his 2<sup>nd</sup> plan is being reviewed. Jordan is hoping for a quicker turnaround to get all of the plans reviewed this year so Chris can become certified. Scott made mention that AEM contract could be amended if Chris gets his CNMP certification sooner. Karl took the soil samples for 3<sup>rd</sup> CNMP plan. Mark is continuing to work on buffer planting, and we are hoping to contract USC soon. Mark will attend Rosgen stream training in the Fall if it is still held.

### **V. Partner Reports**

#### **NRCS**

District Conservationist, **Tony Capraro**, reported that the USDA reopening won't be all at once. USDA NRCS is still operating with one person per office per day. They have 14 applications in for EQIP, 4-5 CSP applications currently. Jeanine is still doing site visits while practicing social distancing. There is a new engineer starting in the Walton Office which will greatly help projects out. Kate Mertus a SUNY Oneonta student was hired as a Pathways Intern and will be starting on Tuesday. Kate will be starting out with online trainings and can help with tree plantings. Tony leaves the call with the message that "We are still here."

**FSA**- Did not submit a report.

### **VI. Other Business:**

Approval to spend Part C money as discussed in prior meetings.

- Send Mark to Rosgen Stream Training in the Fall. Board Supports.
- Jordan reports that he would only like to request \$3,000 of Part C monies instead of \$12,000 for his continuing education masters degree at Paul Smith's College due to pandemic. Decision was deferred on the remaining monies. **Lentz** stated that he



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would not object to reimbursing the other \$9,000 if finances improve. Board approves \$3,000.

- USC Buffer Steward Intern that will follow safety precautions and start work in the middle of June. Board Supports.
- **Les Rathbun** would like to start having face to face meetings in phase 2. July's meeting will be held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July instead of the 16<sup>th</sup> of July due to Jordan taking vacation time July 5<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> for grad school responsibilities.

**Resolutions to Pass:** That the Board supports applications for the Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program Grant.

**Resolution #1:** A motion was made to pass a resolution in support of 3-5 applications for the Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program Grant. Motion to pass resolution was moved by **Kennedy** and seconded by **Moennich**. All in favor. Motion carried.

**VII. Next Meeting:** Next meeting to be held on **Thursday, July 23, 2020 at 10:00 am.**

**VIII. Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at **11:45 a.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Jessica Miller*

Jessica L. Miller,  
Administrative Assistant/Secretary/Assistant Treasurer  
May 22, 2020



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Staff Reports attached

### **Conservation Technician Board Report**

May-June 2020

Karl Giroux

#### **AEM:**

- Assisted CNMP employee with farm planning
- Tier 1 & 2 form and summary completion

#### **Buffer Plantings:**

- Site prepped buffer site with tractor and brush cutter
- Assisted Stream Technician with planting 3 buffer sites

#### **Mechanic Services:**

- Fixed hydraulic hose on Challenger tractor
- Changed oil on district vehicle
- Rebuilt carburetor on lawn mower to facilitate yard work being done “in house”
- Fixed several parts on old post pounder

#### **Miscellaneous:**

- Weekly interactive Moo Monday postings and comments
- Weekly yard work (mowing and weed eating)
- Delivered and picked up ag plastic bailer
- Garage and assigned vehicle cleaning



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### **Mark Kugler Stream Technician May-June Monthly Report**

#### **Week of 5/25**

- Finished planting Cherry Valley Creek T4T buffer
- Planted Campbell Brook T4T buffer
- Developed cost estimates for proposed Butternut Creek and Calhoun Creek projects
- Reviewed partner grant applications for NFWF Expanding Partnerships grant

#### **Week of 6/1**

- Finished planting Campbell Brook T4T buffer
- Organized surplus buffer supplies in preparation for 2021 projects
- Ordered Stihl commercial-grade weed trimmer and accessories through USC Buffer Steward grant
- Straightened tree tubes on Cherry Valley Creek T4T buffer
- Interviewed USC Buffer Steward candidates with Jordan

#### **Week of 6/8**

- Monitoring and maintenance on Cherry Valley Creek buffer with USC Buffer Steward
- Site visit on Butternut Creek for prospective 2021 project
- Cleaned pole barn for FSA meeting space, and organized buffer supplies collected from dead trees
- Meeting with USC, BVA, and OLT regarding prospective 2021 projects and NFWF grant approval



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Chris Andreassen  
06/18/2020  
June Board Report

### AEM # 507 Comprehensive Nutrient Management Planning

Plan revised and submitted to Ag. & Markets. Plan status: Accepted

### AEM # 266 Comprehensive Nutrient Management Planning

Plan submitted to Ag. & Markets for review. Plan status: Awaiting results

### AEM # 526 Comprehensive Nutrient Management Planning

- Resource Concern Checklists for pasture, cropland, and farmsteads for farmstead and heifer facility
- Pasture Condition Scoresheets for farmstead and heifer facility
- Manure spreader calibration
- Cons Plan being evaluated and fine-tuned based on discussions with producer
- Nutrient Management Plan being developed
- RUSLE2 Soil loss analysis of all crop fields completed
- Awaiting manure analysis for NMP completion
- Emergency Action Plan
- Emergency spreading/stockpiling locations identified based on environmental factors
- Utilities mapped
- Heifer facility flowpaths identified
- Conservation Plan/ Implementation Schedule expected to be completed within a few weeks and initial CNMP expected to tentatively be completed within 4-6 weeks or so. Timing is subject to change based on a host of factors but that is my expectation based on the information I have obtained on site visits to both the farmstead and the heifer facility. This plan will be thoroughly reviewed and site-checked by Ag. & Markets so I will be spending some additional time reviewing and double checking my work. Upon acceptance, I will officially be NYS AEM Certified.





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### May 2020 Forestry Report

May 2020 saw four Forestry Friday posts on: Phragmites, Dead trees in wet environments, Forest succession, and Red Twig Dogwood with six to eight conference calls while working from home. Considerable field time was invested in obtaining forestry Friday photo's and subjects.

The month of May also saw investment of time and considerable energy in assisting stream technician Mark Kugler with planting stream buffers. I participated in planting over 300 trees in two sites, with one in the town of Worcester and the other location in the town of Milford.

Forest management plan was completed for Otsego parcel #12 Forestry headquarters. The plan was the result of considerable time invested in field inventory, statistical compilation, and write up, and ArcGis applications. This plan was unusual in that two distinct courses of action were proposed: 1) continuation of timber application that has historically been employed upon parcel #12, and 2) an interpretative nature and or Forestry conservation center for the enjoyment of the people of Otsego County. It is with regret that the proposal of a nature center was being suggested in hard economic times for the county but is something to consider for the future.

Parcel #12 also has some property line issues. I marked out identifiable property lines that were difficult to ascertain due to the amount of time that has elapsed since the lines were originally put in with tree blazes. These old blazes were hard to find and intermittent in nature. Some lines were not able to be found. A report dealing with this subject was written and submitted to the manager. A resurvey by a licensed land surveyor was recommended.

Daniel Zimmerman, Forester, MBA

Otsego Soil and Water Conservation District. June 12, 2020.



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### New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee Report May 2020

**Coronavirus Updates General:** There is no question that we are facing a difficult and unprecedented situation with the COVID-19 pandemic. SWCDs and the sectors that you all serve have been affected in many ways, and the SWCC remains committed to assisting you all during this time. Please feel free to reach out to your Regional AEA with any questions, concerns or issues that may arise. As a reminder, the SWCC SharePoint (<https://nysemail.sharepoint.com>) site has a link, “**Announcements**” that anyone can access and post their county’s emergency/Continuity of Government plans and other steps the District is taking during this emergency, including “reopening” plans to safely resume program, project and operations. Please use this site to post plans and information for others to access to help in developing plans or implementing emergency plans. Do not hesitate to contact your Regional AEA if you have any questions or concerns. The CDEA has also opened a Slack channel online as a discussion forum to communicate with one another during this unprecedented time.

The Department of Agriculture and Markets has helpful guidance for NY farms and agribusinesses and is updated frequently. We know that this is one of the most unique and trying times that we have ever faced as a community and the resources provided at [www.agriculture.ny.gov/coronavirus](http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/coronavirus) will be helpful as we work to get through this together. Please feel free to share as appropriate.

I hope that all of you, your staff, Board members, and your families are feeling well and staying healthy. The health and safety of us all should come first.

**NYS SWCC News SWCC Meeting:** The SWCC will meeting again in June 2020. A specific date and more details regarding meeting specifics will be provided in the June SWCC report.

**AEM Leopold Conservation Award 2020:** The deadline for the AEM Leopold Award has been extended to **May 15th**. This will allow additional time, with all other approaching deadlines having been pushed back. Once again, the cover letter and application can be found on Sharepoint. As per the cover letter that was distributed with the application, completed applications should be sent to the Commissioner’s office to Stephanie Baird at [Stephanie.Baird@agriculture.ny.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Baird@agriculture.ny.gov)

**Community Resiliency Training Program Funding:** The SWCC, together with NYSDEC are pleased to announce the availability of funding for Community Resiliency Training. The purpose of this funding is to provide Community and Municipality-based Training Events to increase resiliency to future flooding and outbreaks of harmful algal blooms in high- risk waterbodies. This opportunity is now available through the NYS Grants Gateway <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov>. The application (**AGM01-CRTP-2019**) and required uploads found on the NYS Grants Gateway must be used to apply for these funds. **All applicable materials must be submitted through the NYS Grants Gateway. This opportunity has an open enrollment until February 2022.** Questions about the funding opportunity can be directed to Lauren Prezorski, [lauren.prezorski@agriculture.ny.gov](mailto:lauren.prezorski@agriculture.ny.gov)



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**USC wins Arbor Day Foundation Award:** The Arbor Day Foundation has announced the recipients of the 2020 Arbor Day Awards and have chosen to bestow The Headwaters Award to the Upper Susquehanna Coalition! The Headwaters Award celebrates innovative programs — in rural or urban areas — that support the improvement of water quality and quantity through forestry activities. Congratulations to the USC for this National recognition! <https://www.arborday.org/programs/awards/2020/>

**Grant Funding Opportunities** Multiple funding opportunities are currently available. In response to the Coronavirus pandemic, the SWCC has extended the RFP deadlines for all currently available programs. Please see the information below for new deadline information. Please note that all other submission/application requirements indicated in each respective RFP remains the same.

**AGNPS Round 26:** \$15 million is available this year to support projects across the State this year. The RFP and associated documents are now available on SharePoint, <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com>. At this time, SWCDs will **NOT** be required to obtain landowner commitment signatures (last page of the application form). If an application is received without these signatures no penalty will be assessed. If the project is awarded funding, the Soil and Water Conservation District will be required to obtain the signatures as part of the plan of work.

- Deadline for submittal of questions: May 11, 2020
- Final Question and Answers posted: May 18, 2020
- The New Deadline for Proposal Submission: **June 15, 2020 by 4:30 PM local time**

**Implementation of High-Efficiency Agricultural Irrigation Water Management Systems:** Approximately \$700,000 is available for the Implementation of High-Efficiency Agricultural Irrigation Water Management Systems. Proposals must be submitted in the Grants Gateway <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/>. All answers to submitted questions have been posted on the Department website <https://agriculture.ny.gov/funding-opportunities>.

- The New Deadline for Proposal Submission: **June 1, 2020 at 4:00 PM local time**

**Implementation of AEM Plans on New York State Grown and Certified Farms (NYS G&C):** Approximately \$700,000 is available for the implementation of AEM Plans on farms enrolled in the NYS G&C program or farms that provide commodities to NYS G&C processors. Proposals must be submitted in the Grants Gateway <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/>. All answers to submitted questions have been posted on the Department website <https://agriculture.ny.gov/funding-opportunities>.

- The New Deadline for Proposal Submission: **June 1, 2020 at 4:00 PM local time**



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**Source Water Buffer Program:** \$5 million is available to support the purchase of development rights on agricultural land to support the protection of active public drinking water sources. The RFA and associated documents are now available on SharePoint, <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com>. Questions regarding the RFA must be submitted in writing to [bethany.bzduch@agriculture.ny.gov](mailto:bethany.bzduch@agriculture.ny.gov).

**Other Funding Opportunities US Forest Service GLRI Funding:** The U.S. Forest Service anticipates that up to \$4.2 million in new funds will be available for tree planting and forest health improvement in the Great Lakes Basin through the GLRI. This funding will be awarded to the highest ranked proposals received through the **June 26, 2020** deadline at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). Prospective applicants are advised to contact DEC's Lands & Forests and/or Great Lakes staff ([glakes@dec.ny.gov](mailto:glakes@dec.ny.gov)) early on to discuss their projects. An informational webinar will be held May 12, 10:00 am Eastern/9:00 am Central. Click the link to register and for more information! [https://events-na11.adobeconnect.com/content/connect/c1/1103645199/en/events/event/shared/default\\_template/event\\_registration.html?connect-session=na11breezmpbbzttx5z87awvc&sco-id=2668992956&\\_charset=utf-8](https://events-na11.adobeconnect.com/content/connect/c1/1103645199/en/events/event/shared/default_template/event_registration.html?connect-session=na11breezmpbbzttx5z87awvc&sco-id=2668992956&_charset=utf-8)