

**STATE SOIL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
MINUTES
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY
NOVEMBER 14, 2011**

The November meeting of the State Soil Conservation Committee was called to order by Chairman Douglas Fisher at 9:41 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

Douglas Fisher
Joe Lomax
Louise Davis
Larry Katz
Dr. Stephanie Murphy (rep. R Goodman)
Don Pettit
Don Knezick
Priscilla E. Hayes
Brian McLendon (rep. B. Martin)
Sean Moriarty, Deputy Attorney General
Frank Minch, Administrative Analyst

Associate Members and Others

Dr. F. Ali, SSCC
Tim Fekete, SSCC
Rich Belcher, SSCC
John Showler, SSCC
Robert Reitmeyer, Burlington SCD
Dennis Dougherty, Camden SCD
Cliff Lundin, Sussex SCD
Mario Tridente, HEP SCD
Bill Brash, Mercer SCD
Ines Grimm, Freehold SCD
Charlie Buscaglia, Freehold SCD
Nancy Coles, FSA
Jaclyn Rhoads, PPA

Minutes of September Meeting

On motion by Ms. Davis, second by Mr. Lomax, the Minutes of September 11, 2011 were approved.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Secretary Fisher welcomed new counsel, Sean Moriarty, Deputy Attorney General. Mr. Moriarty provided a brief history and background. In addition, Secretary Fisher welcomed Larry Katz, Director, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, Cook College.

Secretary Fisher indicated that this would be the last meeting as committee members for Ms. Davis and Mr. Knezick, who will be stepping down from the SSCC Board. Secretary Fisher wished both of them well and extended his thanks and appreciation for their dedication and hard work in their efforts to assist in conserving New Jersey's natural resources. It was mentioned that later in the meeting a discussion will be held regarding erosion control produce endorsement and a streamlined process will be instituted.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT

Mr. Minch reported on the following:

- 1 **Ag Water Certifications** – the Ag Water Certifications processed within the timeframe September 1, 2011 to October 31, 2011. Seventeen (17) registrations and certifications were processed and approved from the following counties, Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cumberland, Gloucester, Monmouth, Salem and Warren.
- 2 **Animal Waste Plans** – 392 animal waste plans have been received (several are high density plans). The majority of plans are from Hunterdon, Salem and Warren counties accounting for 56% of all plans received. All plans must be implemented by March 2012.
- 3 **SSCC/SCD Directory-** The updated directory was mailed to all SCDs.
- 4 **2012 Meeting Schedule-** the 2012 SSCC meeting schedule is as follows: 1/10/12, 3/12/12, 5/14/12, 7/9/12, 9/10/12 and 11/13/12. These meetings will take place in the Board room of the Health and Agriculture building. The January and November meetings will be held on a Tuesday since the Board room was already booked for a Monday date. There was a suggestion that the July 2012 meeting be held at Rutgers. Mr. Minch will work with Dr. Murphy to coordinate this meeting.
- 5 **Standards Update-** The existing document had to be merged with the proposed additions and deletions. The old version was in "Word Perfect" and had to be transferred to a "Word" document. It is anticipated that the updated version will be completed by the end of December and sent for legal review. Dr. Murphy indicated there is a strict timeline regarding the fertilizer training/certification and the updated standards should be incorporated into this training and certification.

10:08 AM-Ken Marsh arrives

SOIL EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL ACT

1. **Helmetta Dam (Freehold) and Gloucester County Engineer-** Mr. Showler reviewed these two (2) items together. There have been two (2) recent projects (Freehold and Gloucester SCDs) where county government projects exceeded original limits of disturbance. When required by the districts to revise plans to reflect the additional disturbed areas, both counties indicated that the disturbance was performed by their contractors and they had no responsibility for updating plans. The districts position is that the areas were disturbed in order to construct the county projects, and as such, the counties, as applicants, have ultimate responsibility for compliance with the certified erosion control plan. Ultimately, Gloucester County acquiesced. The districts are requesting policy or interpretative guidance on this issue from the SSCC.

2. **Engineering Assistance-** Mr. Showler reviewed the engineering report overview submitted to the SSCC regarding projects he has worked on and assisted the districts during the last two (2) months including Panther Valley, Warren County detention basin failure, Russo property solid waste disposal situation in Plumbstead Township, Ocean County, Old Forge drainage plan, Monroe Township, Middlesex County and erosion control product testing.

3. **Chapter 251 Quarterly Report-** July to September 2011- During this timeframe 1,036 applications were processed by the districts on 3,149 acres of land disturbance activities. Nearly 16,306 inspections and 1,602 Reports of Compliance were issued during the period to assure compliance. (Report attached).

4. **Erosion Control Product Evaluation-** A lengthy discussion was held regarding modifying present procedures in place to evaluate new erosion control products. There is a call to streamline the process and evaluate the product with respect to the standards and the findings of other independent entities. Upon completion of this review, staff would issue a technical bulletin for guidance.

5. **Sussex SCD Fee Schedule-**The Sussex SCD is proposing a slight modification of the fee schedule. There is no increase in fees proposed, just a clarification which addressed slight gaps between acreage in the present fee schedule. It is proposed that all categories be rounded to the nearest acre.
On motion by Ms. Davis, second by Mr. Lomax, the proposed modification to the Sussex SCD fee schedule was approved.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND COST SHARE PROGRAM (FPCSP)

Mr. Fekete reported on the following:

- 1 **New Applications** - On motion by Mr. Lomax, second by Ms. Davis, the following Priority I applications were approved, pending the funding approval of State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC)*.

PRIORITY I- PERMANENTLY DEED RESTRICTED

<u>County</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Requested</u>
Camden	A. Mortellite	Irrigation	\$5,000.00
Salem	Allen Williams	H2O Imp Res	\$5,000.00
Salem	D&L Garrison	Irrigation	\$5,300.00

*All applications will be forwarded to the SADC with a recommendation for funding approval once funds become available. Copies of all applications will be maintained as part of the minutes of this meeting and kept on file at the Office of the Executive Secretary.

Cost Share Payments Processed – Since September five (5) payment requests were processed to the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) totaling \$81,080.18 representing the State share for completed and functioning practices. These practices include 4 irrigation projects and 1 water impoundment reservoir project. The value of these projects exceeds \$175,999.87.

CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CREP) *

Mr. Minch reported the following regarding the CREP program.

Conservation Practices	Contracts Approved		Payments Processed	
	This Period	Cumulative	This Period	Cumulative
Filter Strips (acres)	3.5	313.8	1.6	279.26
Grassed Waterway (acres)	3.1	120.4	.8	93.92
Lined Waterway (feet)	2,580	64,057	0	3,528
Riparian Forest Buffer (acres)	0	221.9	0	191.1
Number of Contracts	3	157	2	138
Funds Obligated/Expended	\$12,795.48	\$356,389.35	\$1,652.50	\$262,188.56

*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 **2011 Poster Contest-** Statewide judging took place Nov. 8th and SCDs were notified of winning entries. A discussion will be held at the NJACD meeting this afternoon regarding scheduling of an awards ceremony.
- 2 **2012 NJ Envirothon-** Is scheduled for May 4th and 5th in Farmingdale, NJ. The Freehold SCD will host the event in 2012. Planning is ongoing.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) REPORT

Mr. Pettit reported on the following:

- 1 **High Tunnel Pilot project-** In 2012 USDA/NRCS will introduce a national initiative regarding high tunnel houses. Specifics will be unveiled shortly and pilot projects will be solicited and awarded. Presently, Rutgers has a Conservation Innovation Grant which endeavors to detail the benefits of high tunnel houses.
- 2 **Expanded Energy Initiative-** Payments will be made for energy audits. Practices will be unveiled in the near future that will be financed by this nationwide initiative.
- 3 **Organic Initiative (EQIP) -** There will be separate categories for Certified Organic and Transitional Organic so as to avoid competition for funding.
- 4 **NJ Conservation Foundation-** This organization was awarded the 2011 Governors' Environmental Excellence Award in the healthy Eco-systems Category. Much of what was recognized is enrolled in the Wetlands Reserve Program located on the Franklin Parker Reserve.

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

Ms. Coles reported on the following:

- 1 **CRP-** An update was provided regarding the acreage enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program. CREP is a component of CRP and encompasses 180 contracts totaling 691.71 acres.
- 2 **Secretarial Disaster Declaration-** A proposed rule has been published for comment today. The new proposal will simplify and streamline disaster declaration process from six (6) to two (2) steps. The comment period is for sixty (60) days.
- 3 **Lawsuits and claims of Hispanic and Woman Farmers-** \$50,000 will be awarded individuals that can prove their claim.
- 4 **County Committee Elections-** Local FSA county Committee elections are being held until December 5, 2011.

NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Ms. Davis reported on the following:

- 1 **2012 NJACD Slate of Officers-** C. Buscaglia- President, P. Hayes- 1st VP, R. Cywinski- 2nd VP, D. Dougherty- Secretary, M. Tridente- Treasurer, L. Davis- Past President.
- 2 **SSCC Representation-** North- R. Cywinski replaces Ms. Davis.
South- A. DiLodovico replaces Mr. Knezick
- 3 **Planning-** NJACD Long range planning will be discussed at this afternoons meeting.

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr. McLendon reported on the following:

1. DEP is doing more with less personnel
2. There may be an opportunity for SCDs to assist DEP in Stormwater Management reviews. Presently, this is in the discussion stage at DEP.
3. CSO (Combined Sewer Overflow) in urbanized areas of the state. The goal is to reduce stormwater flow going into the storm system. There may be a role for the more urbanized districts, HEP and Bergen, to assist DEP in this endeavor.

SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Dr. Murphy reported on the following:

- 1 There are twenty two (22) agricultural majors at Rutgers, up from eight (8) in 2008.
- 2 Approximately twenty five (25) students participated in a day of gleaning, the practice of harvesting crops left over after the usual harvest for the benefit of poor or disadvantaged people. Over 200 pounds of food was donated to local food banks.
- 3 A lecture, given by Debashish Bhattacharya on “The Power of Genomics” was held November 10, 2011.
- 4 The documentary “Corn King” will be screened at Rutgers, 5:30 PM, November 14th. This feature follows two (2) college friends who move to Iowa and grow America’s most productive and subsidized grain, corn. When they try to follow it into the food system, troubling questions are raised about how we eat and farm.
- 5 Dr. Thomas Molnar will give a lecture entitled “Let’s Go Nuts!” on November 16th. This lecture focuses on tree nuts.
- 6 Congressman Rush Holt will share his experiences as a “Scientist in Congress” on November 21st at the Cook Campus Center.
- 7 Dr. Mark Robson will give a lecture entitled “Global Pesticide Use: Human and Ecological Effects” on December 1st.
- 8 The NJ Green Expo Turf and Landscape Conference will be held 12/6/11 – 12/8/11 in Atlantic City, NJ
- 9 Rutgers fall semester final exams will be held 12/16/11 – 12/23/11.
- 10 2012 Atlantic Coast Ag Convention and Trade Show will be held 1/17/12 – 1/19/12 at the Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City, NJ

RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Dr. Katz reported on the following:

1. A short course will be held tomorrow regarding the DEP Flood Hazard Area Control Act.
2. Another short course will be held in December regarding Water Management Drainage.
3. The training program for the fertilizer law is almost complete. The organization of the training is broken up into modules that follow the requirements of the act.
4. The university has instituted the Raritan River initiative, a concerted effort to improve water quality all along the Raritan River.
5. Almost 50% of Ag. Agents are eligible for retirement. A strategic planning initiative has been launched to assess the statewide needs.

PUBLIC AND AGENCY COMMENTS

Mr. Knezick expressed his thanks for the opportunity to serve on the SSCC.

On motion by Mr. Lomax, second by Ms. Davis, the meeting was adjourned at 11:55 AM. All actions were by unanimous vote unless otherwise noted.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Minch, Administrative Analyst