

**New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee**  
10B Airline Drive, Albany, NY 12235 -- Telephone (518) 457-3738  
**State Committee Meeting**  
**NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets**  
10B Airline Drive  
Albany, NY 12235  
March 18, 2014

**Present:**

G. Proios, Chair; D. Stein, C. Colby, D. Brass, J. Dickinson, Voting Members; M. Latham, Director; B. Steinmuller, Assistant Director; K. Roberts, DEC; N. Billhardt, CDEA; D. Pettit, T. Willis, NRCS; P. Kaczmarczyk, DOH; T. Sweeney, DAM.

**Call to Order**

G. Proios called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**Review/Approval of Minutes**

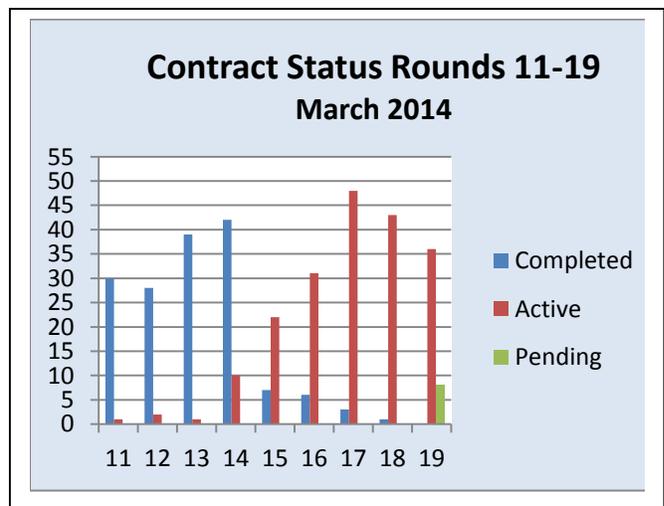
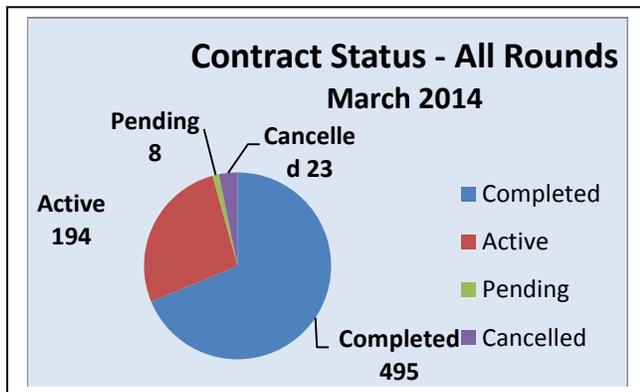
**D. Stein moved to approve the February 2014 minutes; seconded by J. Dickinson. Motion passed; carried.**

**Correspondence**

B. Steinmuller made the correspondence available. Correspondence included a variety of Soil and Water Conservation periodicals, reports, Newsletters and Reports.

**Agricultural NPS Abatement & Control Grant Program – B. Steinmuller**

**STATUS OF ROUNDS 1-19**



**Amendments for State Committee Consideration**

Albany SWCD – La Grange Brothers Dairy CAFO CNMP Tier IV – Round 15 – T700933

Request: time extension from 3/15/2014 to 3/15/2015

Reason: Farm has dropped below CAFO size and had to reevaluate the business plan and environmental footprint. WQIP funds were obtained to address a section of the farmstead and delayed the implementation.

*Note: Cliff Frasier, Region 3 AEA, supports the time extension.*

*Previous amendments: none*

**J. Dickinson moved to approve the time extension; seconded by D. Brass. Motion passed; carried.**

Delaware SWCD –Controlled/Ltd Livestock Acc. Using Riparian Forest Buffers 2010 –Round 16 – C700970

Request: time extension from 5/15/14 to 7/14/15

Reason: One Landowner has passed away. His son is operating the farm now and has committed to completing the project. Severe storms in 2012 and 2013 held up construction on another farm. Unstable streams resulted in modifications to planned buffer areas. Implementation now scheduled for spring 2014.

*Note: Cliff Frasier, Region 3 AEA, supports the time extension*

*Previous amendments: none*

**J. Dickinson moved to approve the time extension; seconded by D. Brass. Motion passed; carried.**

Madison SWCD – Upper Chenango River Ag NPS Reduction Project – Round 15 – C700941

Request: time extension from 12/31/2013 to 12/31/2014

Reason: One farm (CAFO) experienced some economic hardships over the past few years resulting in the delay of implementing this project. Farm is committed to completing the project in 2014.

*Note: Cliff Frasier, Region 3 AEA, support the time extension*

*Previous amendments: none*

**J. Dickinson moved to approve the time extension; seconded by D. Brass. Motion passed; carried.**

Montgomery SWCD –Canajoharie Creek – Round 16 – C700978

Request: time extension from 5/15/2014 to 12/31/2015

Reason: Implementation has begun on one farm. District has reviewed implementation schedule on the other farm. Farmer would like to complete implementation early next year. With a time extension, District will not have any trouble completing all facets of the grant.

*Note: Cliff Frasier, Region 3 AEA, supports the time extension*

*Previous amendments: none*

**J. Dickinson moved to approve the time extension; seconded by D. Brass. Motion passed; carried.**

Montgomery SWCD – Fonda Reservoir – Round 15 – C700944

Request: time extension from 3/15/2014 to 12/31/2014

Reason: All BMPs completed except for laneways. Contractor delays and extremely cold weather has pushed completion of this BMP to spring 2014.

*Note: Cliff Frasier, Region 3 AEA, supports this time extension*

*Previous amendments: none*

**J. Dickinson moved to approve the time extension; seconded by D. Brass. Motion passed; carried.**

**Staff Approved Amendment**

Ontario SWCD – Canandaigua Lake Watershed Ag Program – Round 15 – C700946

Request: change in budget

Reason: OCSWCD had a personnel change during the contract period (new technician hired). As a result, the District exceeded the available engineering and personnel hours. The request is to move \$986 from the NWNV contractual state requested funds into the personal services state requested-funds to offset additional hours worked by the OCSWD to complete the deliverables of the contract.

*Note: Jeff Ten Eyck, Region 2 AEA, approved the change in budget*

*Previous amendments: none*

**Advisory Members / Partnership Reports** – All

**DOH** – P. Kaczmarczyk spoke about the Filtration Avoidance Determination (FAD) that is being finalized in the New York City Watershed.

**NRCS** – D. Pettit spoke about the federal budget. Pettit advised the Committee that the three-way Cooperative Working Agreement between the SWCC/NRCS/SWCDs is complete. Pettit provided an overview of the agreement and a background on the cooperation between the 4-way Conservation Partnership in its development. Pettit advised the Committee that a letter has been drafted to be signed by the 4-Way Partnership to be sent to each Conservation District Chair. Pettit has copies of the letter and asked for signature from the CDEA President, and the Chair of the SWCC. It is D. Pettit’s hope that the cover letter and CWAs will start to go out to Districts in the next few weeks. Pettit advised the Committee that the rental agreements and leased space has come up again and currently is a central issue at USDA headquarters in Washington D.C. Pettit encouraged all co-located SWCDs to work on becoming self-sufficient as the authority for rental agreements is becoming a more central function.

Pettit also spoke about the Soil Health Campaign. Pettit is pleased that the topic of Soil Health is a big interest nationwide and here in NYS.

D. Pettit introduced Tammy Willis, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, who advised the Committee on the Conservation Title of the recently passed Federal Farm Bill. Willis distributed two fact sheets that were made available from Washington D.C. that summarizes the consolidation of programs and new initiatives present in the Farm Bill. For more information, please see the attached fact sheets.

D. Pettit and T. Willis gave the Committee a brief on the National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) that was recently approved for specific sub-watersheds of the Genesee River Basin. The NWQI is a partnership between NRCS and the state water quality agency, DEC. The intent is to target EQIP funds in these watersheds coupling these efforts with DEC water quality information and edge of field monitoring in an attempt to demonstrate improvement in the watershed. Discussion ensued regarding the SUNY Brockport study led by Professor Joseph C. Makarewicz. This study proved to be helpful in modeling water quality improvements associated with agricultural BMPs within the Great Lakes and subwatersheds.

**DEC** – K. Roberts advised the SWCC that the Nonpoint Source Coordinating Committee (NPSCC) plans to meet in April 2014.

**Voting Member Report** – G. Proios provided an update on the water quality legislation making its way through the State Legislature that would reduce the tolerable nitrogen levels in drinking water supplies.

D. Stein reported on manure and nutrient management issues related to the weather conditions. Stein reported that with a long and frozen winter coupled with recent local high intensity rain events, reports of manure contamination have started to surface. Discussion ensued.

**SFY 2014-2015 Priorities** – G. Proios

G. Proios facilitated a discussion on priorities to address in the upcoming State Fiscal Year and potential meeting topics, agenda items, and special meeting events.

Discussion ensued. A number of potential priorities based on the Strategic Plan were discussed. The Committee agreed that a meeting at Cornell University should be set in July. B. Steinmuller will reach out to D. Grantham to start developing an agenda and program. Other items were discussed including prioritizing the revisions of the Conservation District Administrative Manual. This would be a cooperative effort with the CDEA.

**2014 Water Quality Symposium Report** – N. Billhardt

N. Billhardt, re-elected President of the NYS Conservation District Employees’ Association reported on the recently held 2014 Water Quality Symposium. Although numbers of participants continue to decrease, Billhardt reported on a very successful Water Quality Symposium. Initial assessment of the course evaluations indicate that the sessions were very well received. Billhardt talked about the challenges posed with a mid-week storm that led to a few courses being cancelled. Billhardt reported that Kevin Lewis, Oneida County Conservation District Executive Director, was the recipient of the Willard F. Crony Award. The Committee extends a big congratulations to Mr. Lewis.

Billhardt reported on the new CDEA Division Reps. Finally, Billhardt spoke about the budget challenges with the NYS Envirothon and made a plea for assistance to all partners for support.

**Conservation District Annual Plan of Work Approval**

The following Conservation District Annual Plans of Work have been reviewed and recommended for approval by SWCC Field Staff:

Allegany	Chautauqua	Erie	Livingston	Orleans
Broome	Chemung	Essex	Monroe	Oswego
Cattaraugus	Chenango	Jefferson	Niagara	St. Lawrence
Cayuga	Cortland	Lewis	Ontario	Schuyler
Steuben	Warren	Wayne	Yates	
Tioga	Washington	Wyoming		

**C. Colby moved to approve the above referenced Annual Plans of Work; seconded by D. Stein. Motion approved; carried.**

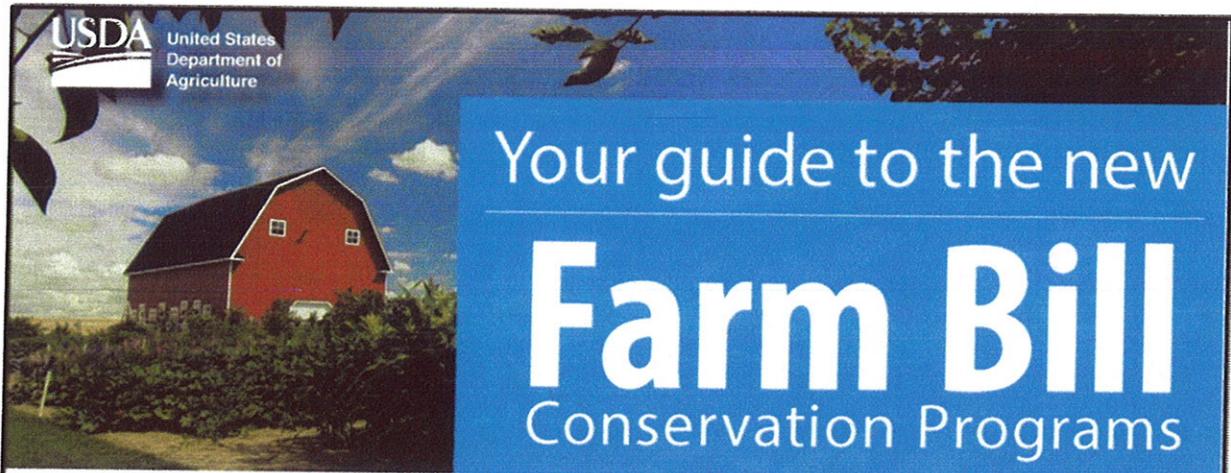
**Next Meeting – May, TBD, 2014. NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, 10B Airline Drive, Albany.**

**The Meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.**

**Audiocast available at:** <http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/webcasting.html>



# GRAPHIC COMPARING '08 and '14 BILLS



Below is a quick summary of changes made to conservation programs in the new Farm Bill, enacted on February 7, 2014. These programs are administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. The new Farm Bill streamlines conservation programs that enable farmers, ranchers and forest landowners to get assistance.

To get started with NRCS, visit [www.nrcs.usda.gov/GetStarted](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/GetStarted) or visit your local USDA service center.

	Previous Farm Bill	vs.	New and Streamlined Farm Bill
Financial Assistance	Environmental Quality Incentives Program	}	Environmental Quality Incentives Program
	Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program		Conservation Stewardship Program
	Conservation Stewardship Program		Agricultural Management Assistance
	Agricultural Management Assistance		
Easements	Wetlands Reserve Program	}	Agricultural Conservation Easement Program
	Grassland Reserve Program		
	Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program		
Partnerships	Healthy Forests Reserve Program	}	Healthy Forests Reserve Program
	Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative		Regional Conservation Partnership Program
	Agricultural Water Enhancement Program		
	Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative		
Other	Great Lakes Basin Program	}	
	Technical Service Providers		Technical Service Providers
	Conservation Innovation Grants		Conservation Innovation Grants
	Agriculture Conservation Experienced Services Program		Agriculture Conservation Experienced Services Program
	Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program – administered by Farm Service Agency		Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program
	<i>Emergency Watershed Protection Program*</i>		<i>Emergency Watershed Protection Program*</i>
	<i>Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program*</i>		<i>Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program*</i>

\*EWP and Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program are not Farm Bill programs but are offered by NRCS; Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program was funded through the 2014 Farm Bill.



## Overview

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners. NRCS provides assistance to producers through partnership agreements and through program contracts or easement agreements.

RCPP combines the authorities of four former conservation programs – the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program, the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative and the Great Lakes Basin Program. Assistance is delivered in accordance with the rules of EQIP, CSP, ACEP and HFRP; and in certain areas the Watershed Operations and Flood Prevention Program.

# RCPP



Regional Conservation Partnership Program



USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service offers voluntary Farm Bill conservation programs that benefit agricultural producers and the environment.

## Benefits

RCPP encourages partners to join in efforts with producers to increase the restoration and sustainable use of soil, water, wildlife and related natural resources on regional or watershed scales.

Through RCPP, NRCS and its partners help producers install and maintain conservation activities in selected project areas. Partners leverage RCPP funding in project areas and report on the benefits achieved. The Secretary of Agriculture may also designate up to eight critical conservation areas to focus RCPP assistance.

## Eligibility

*Eligible Partners* - Agricultural or silvicultural producer associations, farmer cooperatives or other groups of producers, state or local governments, American Indian

tribes, municipal water treatment entities, water and irrigation districts, conservation-driven nongovernmental organizations and institutions of higher education.

**Eligible Participants** - Under RCPP, eligible producers and landowners of agricultural land and non-industrial private forestland may enter into conservation program contracts or easement agreements under the framework of a partnership agreement. RCPP assistance is also available independent of a partner if the land is located either in a partner project area or in a critical conservation area designated by the Secretary. Conservation program contracts and easement agreements are implemented through the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) or the Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP). NRCS may also utilize the authorities under the Watershed and Flood Prevention Program, other than the Watershed Rehabilitation Program, in the designated critical conservation areas.

### **How to apply**

NRCS will announce a request for proposals that will outline requirements for proposal submissions for funding. NRCS will review partnership proposals according to the priorities identified in the announcement and make project selections. Upon selection of a partnership proposal, NRCS and the partner will enter into a partnership agreement through which they will coordinate to provide producers in the project area assistance. Partnership agreements may be for a period of up to five years. NRCS may extend an agreement one time for an

additional 12 months if needed to meet the objectives of the program.

Producers may apply for RCPP assistance in several ways:

1. At the producer's request, a partner may submit the application for participation in a selected project area
2. Directly at their local USDA Service Center in a selected project area
3. Directly at their local USDA Service center in a critical conservation area designated by the Secretary of Agriculture

### **Partnership Agreement**

The partnership agreement defines the scope of the project, including:

1. Eligible activities to be implemented
2. Potential agricultural or nonindustrial private forest operation affected
3. Local, state, multi-state or other geographic area covered
4. Planning, outreach, implementation, and assessment to be conducted

Partners are responsible for contributing to the cost of the project, conducting outreach and education to eligible producers for potential participation in the project and for conducting an assessment of the project's effects. In addition, partners may act on behalf of the eligible landowner or producer in applying for assistance and for leveraging financial or technical assistance provided by NRCS with additional funds to help achieve the project objectives.

Before closing the agreement the partner must provide an assessment of the project costs and conservation effects.

### **More Information**

For more information visit your local USDA Service Center or [www.nrcs.usda.gov/farbill](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/farbill).

### **Find Your Local USDA Service Center**

<http://offices.usda.gov>

### **What's new?**

RCPP is a new partnership program that combines the authorities of four former programs - Agricultural Water Enhancement Program, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program, the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative and the Great Lakes Basin Program, and delivers assistance through covered programs, including EQIP, CSP, ACEP and HFRP, and Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations in Critical Conservation Areas.

[www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov)

**Natural Resources Conservation Service**

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.