



Local Working Group Meeting Minutes of Central Aroostook SWCD. December 7, 2022

The annual meeting of the CASWCD Local Working Group was held at the USDA Service Center Conference room November 22nd, 2022 from 8:00am to 10:15 am.

In attendance for this meeting were: Dotty Dudley, CASWCD Financial Officer, Rosie Otalora, CASWCD Associate Supervisor, John Hoffses, CASWCD Supervisor, Ian Bubar, District Technician, Randy Martin, CASWCD Manager, Helena Swiatek, NRCS District Conservationist, Brittnie Hodson, NRCS Soil Conservationist, Pamela Snow-Sweetser, Landowner, George McLaughlin, Maine Potato Board Water Engineer, Kathy Hoppe, Maine DEP, Kirsten Thompson, Maine DEP.

Randy Martin Called the meeting to order and thanked the attendees for their participation. He went on the say how much NRCS relied on the input generated from the LWG meetings to plan their work. Introductions were made.

Randy Martin outlined the District's signature project for 2022, the Environmental Health Field Day that was held in July. The wildlife habitat, pollinator habitat and cover crop demonstration was covered. CASWCD was able to donate 16.5 tons of fresh produce to Catholic Charities Maine as a result of incorporating vegetables in the cover crop/crop rotation demonstration.

Helena Swiatek, DC, handed out last year's local priorities and introduced the new categories that NRCS would be funding in 2024; Soil Health Management Plans, Soil and Water Testing to include Pfas, Raised bed production, Beaver Deceivers, Tree Marking, Tree pruning, and Tile drainage as a spot treatment for lands that are in production now, they cannot be wetland properties.

For the 2024 fiscal year the following EQIP funding pool categories would be up for consideration:

Cropland, includes hay; Ag Waste; Forestry; Wildlife; Other. This group added Pasture.

After much discussion the following ranking was determined to be acceptable;

EQIP Funding Pool Category

2024 EQIP Funding Pool Category	Percent of FO Allocation
Cropland (includes hay)	60
Pasture	15
Animal Waste	15
Forestry	5
High Tunnels**	0
Wildlife	5

*Funding available through the EQIP-Irrigation Special Initiative. ** High tunnels will be funded through the AMA pool

Local issues were discussed to determine the point value. The group decided to add two ranking elements to accommodate for the Water Shed Based Plan that is being developed by the District.

Local Issues – Cropland

Local Issue Ranking Elements	Point Value Added
Will the planned practice(s) result in soil having cover (residue or living) of 80% or more from Sept 30 th to May 1 st ?	35
Application will address erosion on C/D sloped fields	35
Application addresses point source pollution(sedimentation) as a visible discharge to a perennial waterbody.	60
Application will address improving soil organic matter.	30
Application has been ranked twice previously and has not be selected for funding	25
Project is located in the Amsden, Grey, McHugh and Hacker watersheds.	15

It was decided to add a third ranking element to Ag waste to address the affect on Public health and drinking water.

Local Issues – Ag Waste

Local Issue Ranking Elements	Point Value Added
Does the planned project protect sensitive areas such as areas with hydric soils, or other water bodies.	75

Application addresses point source pollution which is defined as a visible discharge to a perennial waterbody.	75
point source pollution impacts a water source for drinking water.	50

Local Issues – Pasture

Local Issue Ranking Elements	Point Value Added
Application fences livestock out of a perennial stream or waterbody or otherwise address a point source of sedimentation to a stream	100
Application includes the implementation of rotational grazing.	50
Application addresses an invasive species in pasture.	50

The group wanted to add a ranking element to include pre-commercial thinning.

Local Issues – Forestry

Local Issue Ranking Elements	Point Value Added
Is the forested property or the participant enrolled in any tree farm organization such as SWOAM or American Tree Farm Association?	30
Application will address the repair or stabilization of soil on forest trails and/landings?	50
Application addresses erosion on stream crossings.	100
Application includes pre-commercial thinning	20

Local Issues – Wildlife

Local Issue Ranking Elements	Point Value Added
Application contains a stream crossing (as defined by the State of Maine NRPA rules) or riparian buffer	75
Application address invasive plants	40
Application addresses a habitat of state wide importance such as deer wintering habitat, grassland birds or pollinators	45
Application will include planting of hard mast	40

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 am.

Respectfully submitted by

Randy Martin

**Randy Martin
CASWCD Manager**

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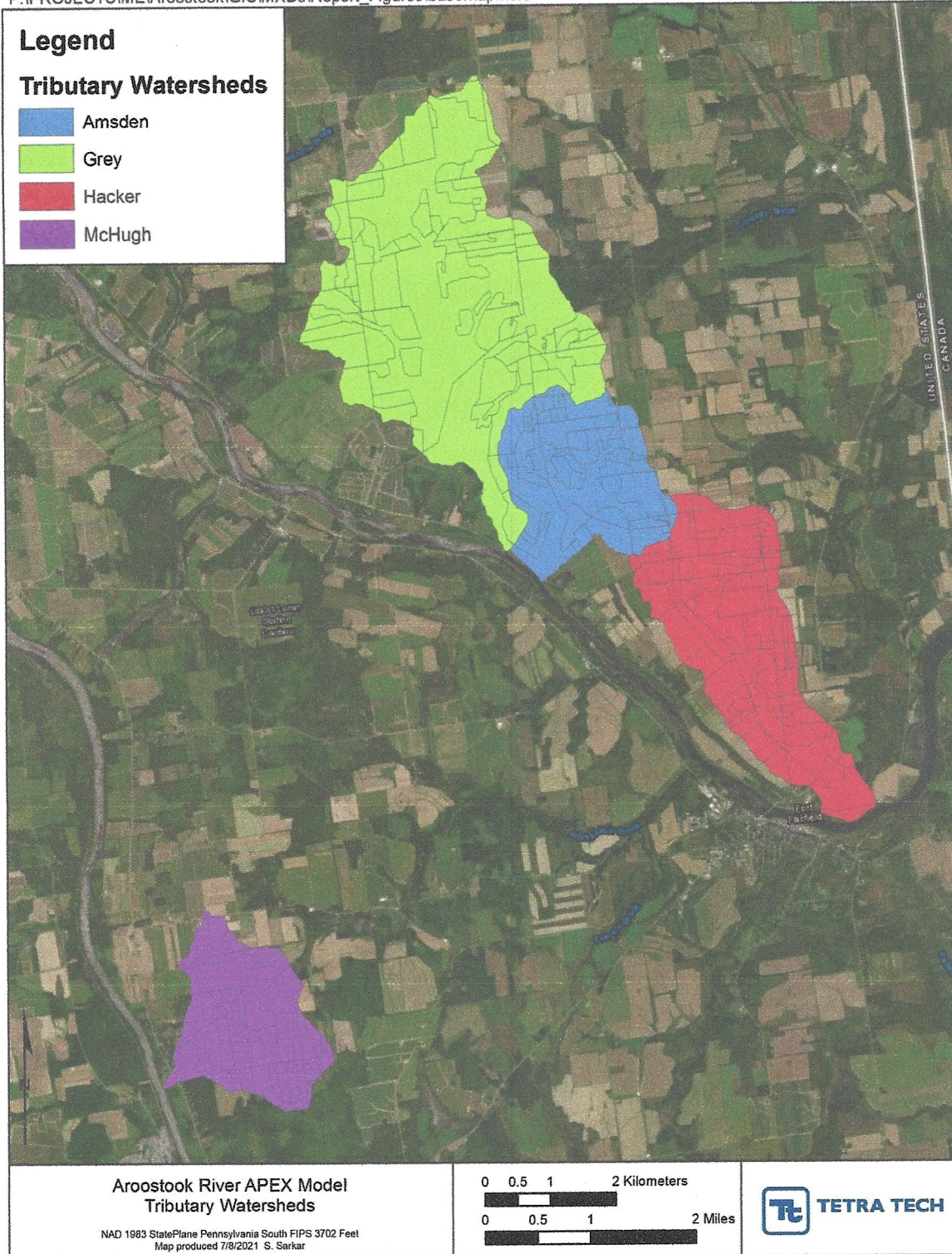


Figure 1-1. Aroostook River APEX model study area