



**Local Working Group Meeting Minutes of Central Aroostook SWCD.  
November 14, 2023**

The annual meeting of the CASWCD Local Working Group was held at the USDA Service Center Conference room November 14<sup>th</sup> from 8:03 am to 9:36 am.

In attendance for this meeting were: Kirsten Thompson, Maine DEP, Bill Sheehan, Maine DEP, Bruce Wilkins, Private Forest Consultant, Judith Roe, Professor at U Maine Presque Isle, Tony Graziano, Research Assistant at CASWCD, Galen Weibley, City of Presque Isle, Randy Martin, Executive Director CASWCD and Helena Swiatek, District Conservationist.

Randy Martin called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for taking time to let their voices be heard. He explained how NRCS uses the information from these meetings to decide funding allocations.

Helena Swiatek handed out the Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry Mitigation Activities List for FY2023 as well as a breakdown of the general statewide and local field office subaccounts. She went on to explain how each application received is ranked and applied to the most relevant funding pool.

For the 2025 fiscal year the following EQIP funding pool categories will be up for consideration:

Ag Waste, Cropland, Pasture, Forestry, and wildlife. There was one category, Unique Local Opportunity as well.

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

EQIP Funding Pool Category	
2025 EQIP Funding Pool Category	Percent of FO Allocation
Ag Waste	20%
Cropland	55%
Pasture	15%
Forestry	5%
Wildlife	5%
Unique Local Opportunity	0%

Local issues were discussed to determine the point value. After discussing with Helena, it was decided not to change the point values from the previous year since she had no problems working with the values set in 2022. Since the Water Shed Based Plan that the District is developing will be finalized in December of 2024, it was decided to leave in the element that gives priority to projects that are located in the Amsden, Gray, McHugh and

**Hacker watersheds since there will be a 10-year time period for 319 funds to assist in the implementation of prescribed BMPs.**

**Local Issues – Cropland**

<b>Local Issue Ranking Elements</b>	<b>Point Value Added</b>
Will the planned practice(s) result in soil Having cover (residue or living) 80% or more From Sept. 30 <sup>th</sup> to May 1 <sup>st</sup> ?	35
Application will address erosion on C/D Very steep and farmed 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 been selected for funding	25
Project is located in the Amsden, Gray, McHugh and Hacker watersheds.	15

**Local issues – Ag Waste**

<b>Local Issue Ranking Elements</b>	<b>Point Value Added</b>
Does the planned project protect sensitive Areas such as 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 – Forestry**

Is the forested property of the participant Enrolled in any tree farm organization such as SWOAM or American Tree Farm Association?	10
Application will address the repair or Stabilization of soil on forest trails and Landings.	50
Application addresses erosion on stream Crossings.	80
Application includes Pre-commercial thinning	60

Local Issues – Wildlife

Local Issue Ranking Elements	Point Value Added
Application involves a stream crossing (as Defined by The State of Maine NRPA rules) or riparian buffer	75
Application addresses invasive plants.	40
Application addresses a habitat of statewide Importance such as deer wintering habitat, grassland birds, shrubland birds, aerial insectivores (swallows) or pollinators.	45
Application will include planting of hard mast	40

The Meeting was adjourned at 9:36 am.

Respectfully submitted by



Randy Martin  
CASWCD Executive Director