



Local Working Group Meeting Minutes Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District

Date: December 2, 2017

Call to Order Time: 11:10am

Location: Topsham Public Library 25 Foreside Rd. Topsham, ME 04086

In attendance for this meeting were:

Jim Johnson- NRCS Lewiston Field Office District Conservationist

Terri Teller- NRCS Lewiston Field Office Soil Conservationist

Rebecca Long- NRCS Lewiston Field Office Soil Conservationist

Jocelyn Lahey- Androscoggin Valley SWCD District Manager

Steve Sinisi- Androscoggin Valley SWCD Associate Supervisor and Farmer

Lynne Holland- UMaine Cooperative Extension Androscoggin Sagadahoc Counties Office Community Education Assistant

Kathy Shaw- Androscoggin Valley SWCD Supervisor and Farmer

Jocelyn Lahey called the meeting to order and thanked attendees for their participation. Introductions followed. Jocelyn discussed AVSWCD history, current District programs, and described the Local Working Group and identified goals for the meeting.

Jim Johnson started his presentation by introducing himself, Terri Teller, and Rebecca Long. Jim discussed the history of NRCS starting with the SCS and working up to current day practices including financial assistance, technical assistance, the EQIP program, and the interaction between NRCS and the SWCD.

At this point, guests were asked, "What are the most pressing natural resource concerns related to agriculture/forestry in Androscoggin/Sagadahoc Counties?"

Results of that question:

Forestry. Access roads and erosion. Wildlife displacement. Insect pressure on forestry. Winter moth and browntail moth. Forest health.

Condo associations and homeowners need to be part of outreach for invasive forest pests and other issues. Community outreach needs to be improved, generally.

Drought- pressure on homeowners, farmers, and woodlots.

Development pressure on space and woods. Better economy on open land.

Terri Teller presented a "case study" of a local project that was cost-shared through the EQIP program.

Terri went over the following topics and processes:

- The Problem
 - Identifying the problem- The problem was presented by the client
 - Identifying the resource concerns- Compost pile contains nutrients, in a drainageway to Cathance River, offensive odors.
 - Site visit to location of problem – NRCS field office staff and soil scientist

- Application Process
 - EQIP program application was submitted- Submitted in May but usually due the middle of August for the following fiscal year.
 - NRCS technical specialist were consulted and a conservation plan was developed
 - Discussed alternatives
 - Cost estimate and design
- Application was determined eligible in 3 fund pools.
 - Discussed fund pools.
- Applications were ranked.
 - Discussed ranking process and questions.
 - Explained that ranking values and fund pool allocations were with the help of the Local Working Group.
- Application was approved and funds were obligated.
- Contract implementation.
- Contract completed and certified for payment.

Lynne Holland asked a question about whether NRCS would provide technical assistance for a community garden with nutrient problems in a flood plain. Answer was yes.

Lynne asked a follow up question about municipalities receiving cost share funding. Answer was no.

Rebecca Long walked the group through the three main goals for the meeting.

Prioritizing resources concerns.

How to distribute funding between local pools.

Input on ranking questions.

Steve Sinisi, Lynne Holland, and Kathy Shaw decided to keep the resource concerns the same as last year.

That is:

High:

- *Water Quality: nutrients, sediment, pathogens for groundwater and surface water. Sources: manure/compost, soil erosion*
- *Water Quantity: too little (drought), too much (flooding)*
- *Soil Erosion: farmland and streambank*
- *Soil Health: organic matter, compaction*

Medium:

- *Livestock: water, shelter, feed and forage*
- *Wildlife Habitat: food, water, space, cover for aquatic and terrestrial*
- *Plant Health and Productivity: pasture, cropland or forest, including woody invasives management*

Low:

- *Air Quality: particulates, greenhouse gas emission, odors*

Steve Sinisi, Lynne Holland, and Kathy Shaw decided to move 1% of animal waste local pool funding to wildlife.

That is:

Animal Waste: 74%

Cropland: 8%

Pasture: 5%

Small Farms: 8%

Forestry: 2%

Wildlife: 3%

There was a brief overview of the ranking questions, which were given as a packet to take home. Guest were instructed that recommendations should be made within the next two weeks.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30pm.

Submitted by Jocelyn Lahey. December 11, 2017.