

December 19, 2017

CUMBERLAND AND YORK COUNTY LOCAL WORK GROUP

The meeting of the Local Work Group was called to order at 9:15 A.M., December 19, 2017 by the LWG Chair Howard Dupee, YCSWCD. All in attendance introduced themselves, were welcomed by Wayne P. Munroe, D.C. of the NRCS Scarborough Field Office.

A power point presentation by David Chiappetta, NRCS Soil Conservationist, highlighted projects and practices in York and Cumberland Counties through EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program).

Program Results, Updates and trends by Wayne Munroe, D.C. showed 72 new 2017 contracts for EQIP, RCPP-EQIP Young Forest and NE Cottontail WLFW with an obligation amount of \$1,094,358.00. A total of 2,233 acres were treated.

Wayne Munroe presented the 2018 Program Delivery Schedule, Statewide Funding Pools, Initiatives and CAPS snapshot. The proposed statewide EQIP set aside categories for FY2018 were discussed regarding EQIP, WLFW-NEW (New England Cottontail) and RCPP Young Forest. There are State allocations for On Farm Energy and Organic. The state initiatives and set asides include; Animal Waste-CAFO, High Tunnel Initiative, Beginning Farmer, CAPS (Conservation Activity Plans), CIG (Conservation Innovation Grants), Edge of Field Monitoring-Aroostook County focus area, Pollinator Initiative, Irrigation, Reserve, Tribal and Socially Disadvantaged. The Field Office Local Pools will receive 42.5 % of the State Allocation which is about 2.5% higher than 2017.

The Resource Assessment Final Reports from the Cumberland and York SWCD's were presented.

Future Initiatives: WLFW, RCPP and the Saco River Watershed Collaborative were discussed. The Annual Conference for Saco Watershed Collaborative will be held at University of New England Wednesday, January 24, 2018, 8:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.. Registration is free and the Eventbrite link is provided here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/annual-conference-for-the-saco-watershed-collaborative-tickets.38511358510>

Be on the lookout for future Partner and NRCS Working Lands for Wildlife "WLFW" Turtle species (Blanding, Spotted and Wood) ACEP wetland easements and EQIP conservation opportunities.

Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) are EQIP competitive grants that stimulate the development and adoption of innovative approaches and technologies for conservation on agricultural land. Statewide competition emphasizes projects that benefit a limited geographical area. DC Wayne Munroe made note of the various reports from past active Conservation Innovation Grants as documented in the March 1, 2017 State Technical Committee Meeting Minutes (copy in the LWG information packet).

Andrew Johnson, contract wildlife biologist to the Wildlife Management Institute, presented background and a FY2017 summary regarding the Working Lands for Wildlife – New England Cottontail initiative (WLFW) and Young Forest - Regional Conservation Partnership Program (YF-RCPP). New England cottontail habitat management projects can be funded by WLFW for management located in the cottontail focus areas (approximately the coastal half of York and Cumberland Counties). Young forest habitat projects can be funded by YF-RCPP anywhere in York and Cumberland Counties with priority given to habitat management in the cottontail and American woodcock focus areas, which cover most of the district. In FY2017 four CAPs and seven implementation contracts were funded between these two

programs, which will lead to over 150 acres of habitat creation or enhancement. We hope to keep this momentum going to help recover the state endangered New England cottontail and the dozens of other Species of Greatest Conservation Need that depend on young forest habitat in southern Maine.

Various attendees noted that early successional/young forest habitat is also beneficial for pollinators and can improve forest health by diversifying our forests. However, this habitat type can also be conducive to the growth of invasive plants, so invasive-exotic species control is often a component of young forest projects in southern Maine. Performing follow-up treatments is often necessary. The NRCS was encouraged to put additional support into invasive species follow-up treatments. The DC reviewed typical examples of EQIP Practice guidance documents and payment scenarios that sometimes limit the number of treatment years for reoccurring practices.

The Resource Concerns Decisions and Delivery Narrative for FY2019 was presented by Wayne Munroe, D.C. with recommendation to include Pollinator Habitat as a High Priority Resource concern for 2019 and beyond. Scott Reynolds, Cumberland SWCD, made reference to the support of Pollinator Habitat as a High Priority Resource concern documented in the recent Cumberland County Resource Assessment.

The 2019 LWG Funding Pools and Allocation percentages for Cumberland/York were discussed and 2019 set aside appear in graph form herewith. It was approved by the majority.

Fund Pools: The Cumberland & York County Local Work Group has decided to allocate the available local funding pool EQIP funds as follows for the 2019 Application Evaluation and Ranking Periods.

Resource Fund Pool	% of Local Allocated Funding
Animal Waste	50
Cropland	2
Forestry	46
High Tunnel	0
Pasture / Grazing	2

After discussion the 2019 Ranking Guidance and Local Ranking Questions and Points were approved by the majority with no changes:

2019 EQIP Scarborough Pasture

Local Issues Addressed

1. Soil Condition: Contaminants from animal waste and other organics (nitrogen) is not at the Planning Criteria (PC) at the benchmark condition, but will be with proposed action? 50 points
2. Water Quality: Excessive nutrients and organics in surface water (not forestry) not at the PC at the benchmark condition, but will be with the proposed action? 40 points

3. Water Quality: Excessive suspended sediment and turbidity in surface water - not at the PC at the benchmark condition, but will be with the proposed action? 50 points
4. Water Quality: Harmful levels of pathogens in surface water (not forestry) - not at the PC at the benchmark condition, but will be with the proposed action? 20 points
5. Plant Condition: Productivity, health, and vigor - not at the PC at the benchmark condition, but will be with the proposed action? 50 points
6. Soil Condition: Soil organic matter depletion is not at the PC at the benchmark condition, but will be with the proposed action? 20 points
7. Water Quality: Is the proposed action on land within a Maine Drinking Water Program Wellhead Buffer, Direct Watershed, or Source Water Protection Area (as portrayed in NRCS ARCGIS layers)? 20 points

2019 EQIP Scarborough Cropland

Local Issues Addressed

1. Soil Condition: Contaminants from animal waste and other organics (nitrogen) is not at the Planning Criteria (PC) at the benchmark condition, but will be with proposed action? 20 points
2. Water Quality: Excessive nutrients and organics in surface water (not forestry) not at the PC at the benchmark condition, but will be with the proposed action? 40 points
3. Water Quality: Excessive suspended sediment and turbidity in surface water - not at the PC at the benchmark condition, but will be with the proposed action? 50 points
4. Water Quality: Harmful levels of pathogens in surface water (not forestry) - not at the PC at the benchmark condition, but will be with the proposed action? 20 points
5. Plant Condition: Productivity, health, and vigor - not at the PC at the benchmark condition, but will be with the proposed action? 50 points
6. Soil Condition: Soil organic matter depletion is not at the PC at the benchmark condition, but will be with the proposed action? 50 points
7. Water Quality: Is the proposed action on land within a Maine Drinking Water Program Wellhead Buffer, Direct Watershed, or Source Water Protection Area (as portrayed in NRCS ARCGIS layers)? 20 points

2017 EQIP Scarborough High Tunnel

Local Issues Addressed

1. Will the produce grown in the High Tunnel be shipped or made available to a Wholesale Food Distributor? If yes Award 50 points

2. Will the produce grown in the High Tunnel be made available to a Local Community Supported Agricultural (CSA) Program? If yes Award 50 points
3. Will the produce grown in the High Tunnel be made available to a Local Farmers Market ? If yes Award 50 points
4. Will the produce grown in the High Tunnel be made available to a traditional on the Farm Stand or on the Farm Store? If yes Award 50 points
5. Will the produce grown in the High Tunnel be made available to a charitable organization? If yes Award 50 points

^HT are 0% for FY2019^

2019 EQIP Scarborough Animal Waste

Local Issues Addressed

1. Soil Condition: Contaminants from animal waste and other organics (nitrogen) is not at the Planning Criteria (PC) at the benchmark condition, but will be with proposed action? 50 points
2. Water Quality: Excessive nutrients and organics in surface water (not forestry) not at the PC at the benchmark condition, but will be with the proposed action? 40 points
3. Water Quality: Excessive suspended sediment and turbidity in surface water - not at the PC at the benchmark condition, but will be with the proposed action? 50 points
4. Water Quality: Harmful levels of pathogens in surface water (not forestry) - not at the PC at the benchmark condition, but will be with the proposed action? 20 points
5. Soil Condition: Soil organic matter depletion is not at the PC at the benchmark condition, but will be with the proposed action? 20 points
6. Water Quality: Is the proposed action on land within a Maine Drinking Water Program Wellhead Buffer, Direct Watershed, or Source Water Protection Area (as portrayed in NRCS ARCGIS layers)? 70 points

2019 EQIP Scarborough Forestry

Local Issues Addressed

1. Does the planned treatment of invasive species make up 30% or more of the contract acres? 50 points
2. Water Quality: Excessive suspended sediment and turbidity in surface water-not at the Planning Criteria (PC) at the benchmark condition, but will be with the proposed action? 75 points
3. Plant Condition: Productivity, health and vigor-not at the PC at the benchmark condition, but will be with the proposed action? 50 points
4. Does this application include the forest stand improvement practice (666)? 25 points

5. Does this application benefit a Maine Drinking Water Program source water protection area as delineated in the ARCGIS database or benefit an impaired stream watershed? 25 points

6. Does this application include a practice designed to benefit wildlife habitat? 25 points

Wayne Munroe led the discussion on the payment schedule and practice list and guidance document scenarios.

William Spiller initiated discussion of food safety issues which need to be elevated.

Kira Jacobs, EPA, Maine State Tec Committee/Forestry sub- committee is always glad to hear from all EQIP partners in York and Cumberland County area. She encouraged input regarding RCPP and Healthy Forest Reserve Program.

Missy Brandt and Howard Dupee YCSWCD, announced that they are celebrating their 75th Anniversary in 2018. Look for special programs, speakers and events!

Meeting adjourned 12:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Hazel Richard