

THE INSIDE SCOOP



Edition #3/October 2003

State Conservationist's Corner

Happy New Year!

As we transition into another new year filled with opportunities and new experiences, I hope you will all take a few moments to reflect back on the challenging and highly productive year we have had in New Hampshire. It is a year of which you should take great pride in your efforts and the results of those efforts. Because of your work New Hampshire's light has shown brightly within the agency and more importantly many more producers in our state have been assisted.

As an example, in the EQIP program we produced 44 contracts for \$1,042,559 in FY 2002. Last year we signed 115 contracts for \$2,554,285. This is a tremendous increase in aid to the producers of New Hampshire. And, this is only one program. Through your efforts we had increases in **ALL** the programs.

I believe the work you have accomplished this past year has put us in good stead for more funding to help more people in the coming year. I realize the challenges of implementing these contracts, but I believe with your ability to develop innovative ways to get the job done and with the streamlining efforts that the agency is undertaking we will have another superb year.

Let me say a very sincere thank you for your work in aiding the landowners of New Hampshire. I am very proud of your accomplishments.

On another note, I have had questions regarding outsourcing. The outsourcing effort continues throughout government as well as our agency. During the last year NRCS was very successful in winning the bids for jobs that were studied. We won our bid in New Hampshire easily. Chief Knight has expressed his opinion and I fully agree that we will continue winning these bids because the employees of our agency are skilled, efficient and dedicated. NRCS through its employees is the best deal for the producers and all the taxpayers of this country.

RICHARD D. BABCOCK

News from the Field

Heavy Rains Cause Havoc for the Cheshire County

This summer after torrential rains hit the southwestern part of the state, flooding and washouts on major roads occurred. Heidi Smith, Soil Conservationist, briefed town officials on the Emergency Watershed Program (EWP) and answered many questions from concerned individuals.



NH Statewide Numerical Legend Published

With the able and enthusiastic help of Kim Saufley and Earth Team Volunteer Solange Knowles, issue #6 of the NH statewide Numerical Soils Legend was published in August. This publication is widely used and referenced by private sector scientists and anyone using soil survey information in NH. All soil survey activities conducted in NH either as part of the National Cooperative Soil Survey Program or identified by the private sector as conforming to the standards of the National Cooperative Soil Survey (Order 1 Soil Mapping), adhere to the use of the NH Numerical Legend. This includes field mapping, soil correlation and soil map digitizing. For your copy, please contact Steve Hundley or Kathy Swain.

Chief Addresses NRCS ET Volunteer Coordinators and PAS' in New Orleans

Pricilla Johnston and Lynn Howell attended the National Earth Team Coordinators and Public Affairs Specialists conference in New Orleans for training and networking. Sessions included topics on recruiting minorities, media

training, team building, how to measure accomplishments and successes, communication plans and how to give effective presentations.

Chief Knight emphasized the success and importance of our volunteer program. He talked about the more than one-million hours of volunteer service the Earth Team contributed in 2002, and how that helps accomplish tasks related to the Farm Bill. He issued three challenges to the Earth Team leaders:

- Be visible
- Be diverse
- Be accountable

To the Public Affairs Specialists his challenges included:

- Be credible
- Be accurate
- Be persuasive

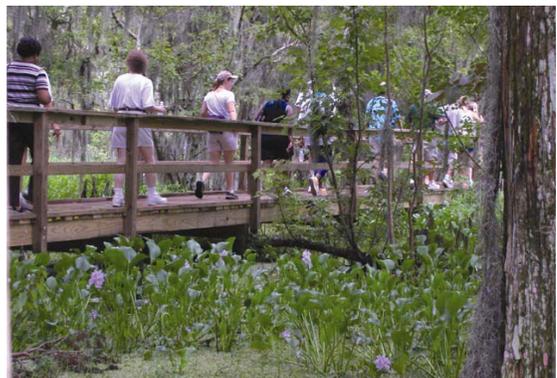
“Who are our customers?” asked Chief Knight. He stated that they are the 11,500 employees of NRCS, a score or more of affiliated organizations, Congress, local, state, and tribal governments, a couple million farmers, ranchers, and rural landowners, the population in general. “If we make the conservation message clear enough, every group will understand the importance of our mission,” said Knight.

Communication efforts from NRCS will cover the following:

- Marketing a vision of NRCS as an enabler of conservation
- Communicating to our own employees
- Ensuring every farmer and rancher is aware of the opportunities presented by our programs
- Being transparent and consistent (example is the NRCS website and every state having a uniform image)

Special Trip

Earth Team Coordinators were treated to a special trip that demonstrated the power of volunteers. The group visited a pristine 41-acre swamp which has been preserved and is enjoyed by the public, in a large part due to a volunteer project. A wooden walkway almost a mile in length and various decks were built so the public can enjoy this beautiful area.



Priscilla Johnston on the wooden walkway

NH Represented at the National Asian Pacific Islander Organization Conference

Lynn Howell, as NH's NRCS Special Emphasis Program Manager for the Asian Pacific Islander Organization (APIO), recently attended the 5th annual APIO conference held in Woodland Hills, California. The conference included one day of training for the managers which included sessions on the roles and responsibilities of the special emphasis managers, recruitment and retention issues for NRCS, reasonable accommodations, discussions regarding civil rights compliance reviews and sharing of state reports.

The remainder of the conference included discussions on the vision and direction of the APIO in NRCS, updates on the Farm Bill, Civil Rights, NRCS reorganization above the state offices and concurrent technical workshops.

Coos County Soil Survey Data Available on CD

An interim Soil Survey Report of the Coos County Area, New Hampshire, Version I, is now available. The report represents the completion of over 25 years of work by more than a dozen soil scientists. Included on the CD are the soil maps, map unit and taxonomic unit descriptions, all narrative information, tables, interpretations, and the general soil map. Soil Survey Atlas Sheets and selected files are displayed in Adobe Acrobat PDF. The general soil map was produced by applying generalization algorithms to the SSURGO data in Arc Info GIS. Hyper linking in HTML makes navigating the different areas of interest easy. The information is best viewed using Internet Explorer. Future plans include making this information available interactively over the internet.

For copies of the CD, please contact Joe Homer, Soil Survey Party Leader at joseph.homer@nh.usda.gov or Don Richard, GIS Specialist at don.richard@nh.usda.gov

Day of Caring

On September 11, the United Way of the Greater Seacoast joined other United Way's throughout New Hampshire and the nation by holding the annual *Day of Caring*. Volunteers from the US Forest Service, Fleet Bank and NRCS employees; Kim McCracken, Roy Thompson, Kim Saufley and Dawn Genes helped the Seacoast Land Trust with sign posting, clearing trails, and trash pickup at the Great Bog in Greenland.



Roy Thompson clearing a trail

Souhegan High School Places 2nd at the International Envirothon – 1st place in the Soils/Land Use Category

Souhegan High School students represented New Hampshire at the 16th annual Envirothon competition at Mount St. Mary's College in Maryland. Fifty teams, 44 from the U.S. and 6 from Canada competed for a share of the \$30,000 in college scholarships.

After a New Hampshire statewide competition in the spring, Souhegan High School, won the right to advance to the national competition. The Envirothon tests the team's knowledge of soils/land use, forestry, aquatics ecology, wildlife and this year's current issue on agricultural land conservation and preservation. At the national competition, our New Hampshire students were awarded 2nd place overall and 1st place in the soils/land use category.

Each team's knowledge was tested under the supervision of foresters, soil scientists and wildlife specialists. Teamwork, problem solving and oral presentation skills were evaluated as each team presented a recommendation for solving an environmental concern to the group of judges.

Soon the 2004 New Hampshire Envirothon Steering Committee will be meeting to discuss next year's event. If anyone is interested in serving on the committee please contact Herb Vadney at vadney@metrocast.net

UNH Career Fair for Engineers

On Thursday, October 2, the new Holloway Commons on the University of New Hampshire's campus was the site of a career fair sponsored by the Whittemore School of Business, the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences and the University Advising and Career Center. NRCS' Sandy Sears and Brian Linvill, along with nearly 50 other organizations, spent the day talking to UNH students about possible careers. They provided information and pertinent website addresses for those seeking Federal employment.

New Appointments

Welcome to Nels Liljedahl, District Conservationist, to our Conway Field Office. Nels comes to us from Oxford County, Maine where he served as a soil conservationist in the Career Internship Program with NRCS. He has a business background in landscaping and has operated a family business for 13 years.

We also welcome Scott Heckman, District Conservationist, to the Walpole Field Service Center. Scott previously served as a Resource Conservationist for NRCS, in Mill Hall, Pennsylvania.

Stacy Luke, Conservation Educator and former Americorps Volunteer with Belknap County Conservation District, has contracted with NRCS in Concord to enter soil pedon descriptions into the Windows Pedon Database. Stacy will be entering 250 pedon descriptions from the Merrimack-Belknap Soil Survey Update to enhance the retrieval and dissemination of soil data electronically, aid in the statistical analysis of soil data, and speed the process of producing the soil survey manuscript for the Merrimack-Belknap Soil Survey. Welcome Stacy!

Jessica Bailey, former Student Trainee in the Concord Field Office, recently moved north to become a Soil Conservationist in the Woodsville Field Service Center.

Events

On September 12, many NRCS friends and retirees enjoyed an evening with Miranda Grynkevicz, in celebration of 34+ years of Federal service. Delicious food, great “roasts,” and lots of laughs were enjoyed by all. Not only will we miss Miranda’s computer assistance, but we will miss her political views, her sense of humor, her mentoring, her beautiful flowers, her filled candy dish, her savory baked goods and her wonderful friendship. Enjoy retirement, Miranda!



Miranda and USDA friends from Vermont

Happy Birthday

October 6	Roy Thompson
October 10	Sue Hoey
October 11	Dick Babcock
October 11	Tom Burke
October 15	Brian Linvill
October 20	Kim McCracken

Special Observances

September 15 – October 15

National Hispanic Heritage Month

October

National Disability Employment Awareness Month

November

Native American Heritage Month

We look forward to your input and suggestions regarding this newsletter. Please contact Lynn Howell @ lynn.howell@nh.usda.gov

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