



New Hampshire

February 2004

The Inside Scoop



Conservation Security Program (CSP) Regional Listening Session Held in Maine

Throughout the country NRCS has been providing a venue for interested farmers and landowners to voice their opinions on the proposed rule of the Conservation Security



Program (CSP). Forty citizens met at the Civic Center in Augusta, Maine for the north-east session. Pictured above is State Conservationist *Richard Babcock* discussing CSP with a Maine landowner.

Public comments were limited to 5 minutes per speaker during the 3-hour session. The listening panel consisted of Joyce Swartzendruber, Maine



NRCS State Conservationist; Merlin Bartz, USDA Special Assistant to the Undersecretary for Natural Resources and the Environment, Washington, DC; Carole Jett, NRCS Associate Deputy Chief for Programs, Washington, DC; Richard Swenson, East Region Conservationist, NRCS, Beltsville, Maryland; and David Lavway, USDA, Farm Service Agency, State Executive Director, Bangor, Maine.



John Hodsdon from Belknap County provided comments to the panel.

The proposed rule was published in the Federal Register on January 2, 2004. Public written comments are due by March 2, 2004 to David McKay, NRCS Conservation Operations Division, P.O. Box 2890, Washington, DC 20013 or email david.mckay@usda.gov.

State Conservationist's Corner

Believe it or not, spring is just around the corner and with it another field season. We have our program allocations and we are right in the middle of applications and ranking to provide contracts to our clients.

Once again it will be hectic since we need to have our financial assistance dollars obligated by the beginning of May. I have no doubt that will be accomplished. Like last year, because of your efforts, it is possible that we will be able to secure more funding in various programs.

I appreciate all of your efforts. You are making a positive impact on the well being of the land in New Hampshire.

RICHARD D. BABCOCK

News from the Field

Dedication of the Restored Riverbank at Fort #4 Charlestown, NH

On November 14, a group assembled along the Connecticut River at Fort #4 in Charlestown, NH to celebrate the project completion at one of twenty-seven priority sites selected for restoration by county conservation districts. *Wendy Ward*, soil conservation technician, guided the group on a tour along the streambank viewing the newly installed riparian buffer that included more than 600 native shrubs and trees anchoring the soils above the riverbank. NRCS' Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) provided funding for 465 shrubs which included winterberry, holly, arrowwood viburnum, speckled alder, bayberry, summer-sweet, grey stem dogwood, blackhaw viburnum and silky dogwood for bank stabilization. Further stabilization included 20 pounds of wildlife seed mix, a combination of grasses, sedges and wildflowers and 260 live stakes of Streamco willow and silky dogwood at the waters edge.

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NHMA Showcases Safety

The New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) conducted a daylong safety-training program for public works officials this past fall at a reclaimed gravel pit in Bow. In addition to sessions conducted by equipment dealers, a number of associations and other groups conducted lectures and demonstrations. *Mike Lynch*, District Conservationist for Merrimack and Hillsborough Counties and Merrimack County Conservation District Manager *Lisa Morin* provided information on gravel pit restoration.

News from the RC&Ds

Southern NH RC&D Annual Meeting

The annual meeting took place at Checkers Restaurant at the Alvirne High School in Hudson. This restaurant is one of several facilities at the school, with others being a bank and gift shop that are run by the students and supervised by the teaching staff. Alvirne High School also has an operating farm, which was supervised by the Southern NH RC&D Chairman, Webb Palmer, until his retirement from teaching two years ago. Special guests of the evening included NRCS State Conservationist *Richard Babcock* and his wife, Bette, Matt Leahy, project director for Senator Judd Gregg, and Chairman Emeritus Don Ferren.



*Southern NH RC&D Coordinator
Lindsay Carter and Don Ferren*

North Country RC&D Update

The following individuals are the newly elected officers for the North Country RC&D: Joan Turley of Rumney, Chair; Freda Swan of Lyme, Vice-Chair and Adam Tatem of Holderness, Secretary/Treasurer. NCRC&D is looking to fill some board vacancies in Belknap, Carroll, Coos and Grafton counties. If you know of someone that you think may be interested in the mission of NCRC&D, please pass their name on to *Rick DeMark*.

Upcoming Events

March 9, 2004

NCRC&D Board Meeting

March 13, 2004

Spring Meeting of the New England Association of RC&D Councils
Portland, Maine

March 26-27, 2004

1st Annual Northern New England Small and Beginner Farmer Conference. Go to www.beginnerfarmers.org for details.

April 12 -13, 2004

FastTrac Business Planning Seminar
Contact NCRC&D for details

October 28 - 30, 2004

New England Association of RC&Ds Fall Conference
Portsmouth, NH

More News from the RC&Ds

Funds Awarded to Towns in Southern NH for Dry Hydrants

The New Hampshire Rural Fire Protection Initiative (NH RFPI), a project directed by the Southern NH Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council, has awarded the towns of Newport, Durham and Washington, a total of \$5,300 for the installation of a dry hydrant. Funding for the projects has come from the US Forest Service through the NH State Forester's Office.

This initiative is designed to provide rural communities with technical and financial assistance to improve their water supply capability for firefighting. Technical assistance is provided with water supply planning, GPS mapping of water supply sites, water supply site evaluation, dry hydrant and fire pond design and assistance with state wetlands permit processing.



Town of Newport Presentation



Town of Durham Presentation



District Conservationist Scott Heckman and landowner Audrey Rhodes pose next to the dry hydrant in the town of Washington.

New Hampshire NRCS Soil Conservationists Brave -50 Degree Windchill Factor to Learn about Nutrient Management Planning

By Heidi Smith

It was -28 degrees when I left my house very early Wednesday morning 1/14/04 to drive to Burlington, VT for the Nutrient Management Planning Training. Heading north and passing a teenager waiting for her bus in the dark and without a hat (!) I thought about all of the people who have to work outside in this cold. Everything just takes longer to do when it is cold like this. On Tuesday, a farmer had called to cancel an appointment to meet about a nutrient management plan due to the cold and its after-effects making his morning chores stretch into evening chores. "No problem," I said, speaking from inside my heated office. "We'll set it up for sometime next week."

Back to the training. This well organized two-day training was hosted by VT NRCS and the University of Vermont Extension. It touched on the basics of soil fertility, the nitrogen and phosphorous cycle, the 590 Nutrient Management Practice Standard, the specifics of soil and manure sampling, manure spreading equipment calibration, and use of Arcview to create resource maps. An informative session on buffers and setbacks was given by Kip Potter, VT NRCS and an interesting new computer program (AFO-Pro) designed to write nutrient management plans was unveiled. It was designed by NRCS in South Carolina. Vermont NRCS is going to use it, but most other states are not.

It was interesting to hear about Vermont's nutrient management law, called Accepted Agricultural Practices. This law incorporates a winter spreading ban and Large Farm Operation permitting, similar to AFO-CAFO. Vermont also uses a different Phosphorous Index than New Hampshire does, because the soil testing done at the UVM lab uses a different test than the UNH lab does. This creates some extra work for us in NH, as a P Index had to be developed just for us. This work has been done, although Tom Buob, UNH Extension, mentioned that it needs revising, and the revision is being held up by the problems we are experiencing with RUSLE II.

Out of the 60 attendees, most were VT NRCS and about a dozen were Vermont Technical Service Providers (TSPs).

Special Observances Coming Up

March -- Women's History Month
April 18 -24 National Volunteer Week
May -- Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month

Cultural Awareness Day

Every year on the day following Martin Luther King's Birthday, New Hampshire NRCS celebrates "Cultural Awareness Day." This year marked the twelfth consecutive year that the NH NRCS employees recognized the diversity of their cultures through speakers and food.

The program this year included two guest speakers. The first, Kathleen Bates, is an active member and chair of the NH Develop-



Roy Thompson with Kathy Bates

mental Disabilities Council and a mentor with the "Take Charge Program." Through this program she provides support to teenagers with cerebral palsy.

Our second speaker, Lwo Hsieh was born in China. At the age of 2, he moved with his family to Taiwan and at 24 he entered the University of New Hampshire to study computer science. Lwo is now a US citizen and is currently employed by the Farm Service Agency at the USDA Service Center in Epping, as a program assistant.



Lwo with Brooke Stubbs

For our famous pot-luck luncheon, all employees are encouraged to bring an ethnic appetizer, soup, bread, entree or dessert to share with others. Prior to lunch judges are selected to award certificates in many categories. This year's culinary extravaganza winners were: spiciest, Steve Hundley; most original, Mike Harrington; most colorful, Roy Thompson; most decadent, Janet Boduch; most unusual, Heidi Smith; most creative, Bill Hoey; most savory, Sandy Sears and the prestigious, "Chef's Hat Award," went to Kim McCracken. This feast is incredible and gets better each year.



Sandy Sears (L) presenting Kim McCracken the Chef's Hat Award.

Kudos to the New Hampshire NRCS Civil Rights Committee for sponsoring this popular event.

NH Farm and Forest Expo “New Hampshire’s Greatest Winter Fair” February 6-7, 2004

As is the tradition, the weather for the Farm and Forest Expo was predictable. It was a snowy weekend. But that didn't keep everyone away, many came to see what this year's theme “NH Farms and Forests: Our Heritage, Our Future” was all about. The following pictures were taken at the NHACD, RC&D and NRCS booths:



*Michele Tremblay at the
NHACD booth.*



*Bob Scheirer playing “RC&D
Jeopardy” with contestant.*

Black History Month Celebrated in February

NRCS Chief Bruce Knight has asked all NRCS employees to reflect on the accomplishments and contributions that African-Americans have made to our Nation, our workforce in the United States, and throughout the world. Black History Month is more than just a celebration honoring the achievements of African-Americans. It is the understanding of African-American culture, customs, heritage, and how we use those traits to enhance the conservation of natural resources.

The theme for 2004 is “Brown vs. Board of Education” 50th Anniversary (May 17, 1954). During the month of February there will be many Black History celebrations. You are encouraged to participate in as many events as possible.

Our Black Special Emphasis Program Manager is Roy Thompson. If you have any questions please contact Roy at 868-7581 ext. 118.



*Jess Bailey providing
information to an
interested customer.*

Congratulations!

- ...To Alan Ammann for his recent retirement from NRCS after 25+ years of federal service
- ...To Kim Saufley who has been converted to permanent full-time status
- ...To Brooke Stubbs who has been converted from student trainee status to permanent full-time
- ... To Roy Thompson promoted to GS-12
- ...To Kim Saufley a time-off award for her extra efforts in putting together exhibits and materials for the NH Farm and Forest Expo

Boy Scout Troop 154, in Durham, recently presented Gerald Lang the Damon L. Spencer award. Gerry received the award in recognition of more than 15 years of service to the Troop as Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, Troop Committee Chair and Troop Committee member.

This award was created in honor of Damon, a young scout in the Troop, who was killed by an intoxicated driver in the 1970's. His parents became very active in state politics and local issues to help organize both MADD and SADD and were also instrumental in getting the drunken driving laws changed to what we have today. The award recognizes adults in the troop who have given their time and skills to help the youth of the community become better citizens of the community. Gerald is the latest of six adults who have been given this award since it was created in the late '70s.



Patti Komeski recipient of the 2003 NRCS Extra Mile Award for multifaceted abilities, expeditious assistance, and kindness.

The National Conservation District Employee Association presented Mary Currier, Executive Director, Rockingham County Conservation District (RCCD), with the Conservation District Professional Recognition Award at the 58th Annual Meeting of the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) in Waikoloa, on the Big Island of Hawai'i.



Mary has been employed by the RCCD for 26 years. She exhibits a true dedication to natural resources conservation and district development, and has always demonstrated great initiative and resourcefulness in developing district capacity with innovative programs and in finding or raising funds necessary to carry them out.

Mary has held the office of President for three terms in the state district employee association. She has helped to write and adopt bylaws, adopt a code of ethics, complete a strategic plan, and write an annual plan of work. Mary has been a representative from NH to the Northeast regional employee association as well as holding each office within the regional association.

Important Dates to Remember:

March 2	State Technical Committee Meeting, Concord
March 3	New England Mentoring Committee, Durham
March 4-5	NACD NE Leadership Meeting, Portsmouth
March 15-17	NACD Legislative Conference, Washington, DC
March 17-18	National Leadership Team Meeting, DC
March 26-27	Northern New England Small & Beginning Farmers Conference, Waterville Valley
April 14	Grafton County Conservation District Annual Meeting
April 21	Hillsborough County Conservation District Annual Meeting
May 11-12	East Region State Conservationists Meeting, Beltsville
May 12	Civil Rights Committee Meeting
May 19	QSAT Meeting, Concord

National Volunteer Week
April 18-24, 2004
Earth Team Volunteers -- Planting the Seeds of Tomorrow

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