

Washington County Soil & Water Conservation District

Minutes of Regular Meeting - January 12, 2026

Attending:

Board Members

John Dickinson, Chairman

Jay Skellie, Director

Sherri Slater, Director

Kate Ziehm, Director

Cassie Fedler, Director

Others:

Tina Williams, Farm Service Agency (FSA)

Ben Luskin, NYS-SWCC

Staff Members

Corrina Aldrich, District Manager

Lori Sheehan, Office Manager

Bob Kalbfliesh, District Technician

Amber Stark, District Technician

Ashley Leemans, District Technician

Call to order at 11:01 a.m. by Chairman Dickinson.

Chairman Dickinson turned the meeting over to Aldrich for election of Board Chairman.

Organizational Business:

Aldrich called for a nomination for Board Chairman.

Motion by Skellie/Slater to elect John Dickinson as Board Chairman. **Unanimously carried.**

Aldrich turned the meeting over to John Dickinson to chair the remainder of the meeting.

Motion by Fedler/Slater to elect Jay Skellie as Vice Chairman.

Motion by Slater/Fedler to rescind previous motion and to make a new Motion to keep election of officers the same as 2025:

- Jay Skellie, Vice Chairman
- Catherine (Kate) Ziehm, Treasurer

Unanimously carried.

Motion by Fedler/Slater to appoint Lori Sheehan as Secretary/Assistant Treasurer of the SWCD Board of Directors. **Unanimously carried.**

Motion by Slater/Fedler to appoint the following representatives:

- Water Quality Coordinating Committee (WQCC): Ashley Leemans / Sherri Slater (alternate)
- Farmland Protection Board: Corrina Aldrich / Sherri Slater (alternate)
- Upper Hudson River Coalition: Amber Stark / Corrina Aldrich (alternate)
- Champlain Watershed Improvement Coalition of New York: Corrina Aldrich – SWCD; Ashley Leemans – WQCC; Amber Stark – SWCD alternate; Sherri Slater – WQCC alternate

Unanimously carried.

Motion by Skellie/Slater authorizing payment of certain bills prior to Board approval, including payroll & payroll liabilities, health/dental insurance, office/field supplies, program supplies (tree & fish programs), utility bills, employee travel, credit card, county pool car (fuel), and reimbursement of petty cash. **Unanimously carried.**

Motion by Slater/Fedler to designate Arrow Bank and Trustco Bank as the district's official banking institutions and appointment the following authorized signers:

- Arrow Bank Authorized Signers: Catherine Ziehm, Treasurer; Lori Sheehan, Assistant Treasurer; Catherine Fedler, Designated Board Member
- Trustco Bank Authorized Signers: Catherine Ziehm, Treasurer; Lori Sheehan, Assistant Treasurer

Unanimously carried.

Minutes: **Motion** by Skellie/Fedler to approve the minutes of the last meeting. **Unanimously carried.**

Treasurer's Report: Upon review and approval of the finances, **Motion** by Slater/Fedler to approve the Treasurer's Report (as a whole) for December 2025 and to pay bills as presented. **Unanimously carried.** (Attachment)

Agency & Staff Reports:

- A. Farm Service Agency: Verbal Report by Williams
- B. NRCS: No Report
- C. District Manager: Verbal Report by Aldrich
- D. District Technician: Attachment, reviewed by Kalbfliesh
- E. District Technician: Attachment, reviewed by Stark
- F. District Technician: Attachment, reviewed by Leemans
- G. NYS-SWCC Report: Attachment, reviewed by Luskin

New Business:

Motion by Fedler/Ziehm to approve disposal of certain 2018 financial records according to Schedule LGS-1. **Unanimously carried.**

Motion by Slater/Fedler to open Certificate of Deposits at Trustco Bank (Money Market Funds \$250,000) and Arrow Bank (Part C Funds \$200,000). **Unanimously carried.**

Motion by Slater/Ziehm to approve participation in the Regional Envirothon (including cost of event expenses, est. \$1,000). **Unanimously carried.**

Motion by Ziehm/Slater to approve NYS Urban Forestry Council Membership (\$140), Upper Hudson River Coalition Dues (\$500). **Unanimously carried.**

Motion by Slater/Ziehm to approve the following employee trainings: Leemans – ArcGIS Pro Training Class (\$250), Kalbfliesh & Stark - CaroVail Annual Winter Meeting (\$35/pp), Kalbfliesh & Stark - No-till & Cover Crop Conference (\$75/pp). **Unanimously carried.**

Motion by Ziehm/Slater to set the Equipment Reserve Fund Amount to \$28,000. **Unanimously carried.**

Motion by Slater/Fedler to approve accepting donations from newsletter sponsors for our February & August newsletters. **Unanimously carried.**

Motion by Slater/Ziehm to approve opening interest-bearing checking account for AEM Round 19. **Unanimously carried.**

Motion by Ziehm/Fedler to approve submitting a Time Extension Amendment Request for CRF Round 6 Contract #C012424 – Permaculture & Soil Health to SWCC. **Unanimously carried.**

Motion by Ziehm/Skellie to approve CropwareNet Software Yearly Subscription (est. \$1,100 Part C Funds). **Unanimously carried.**

Motion by Slater/Ziehm to allocate Part C Funds (\$5,962) to match CWICNY Lake Champlain Basin Cover Crop Funds (\$29,038) to total \$35,000 to reimburse the farmers who participated in the Lake Champlain Basin Cover Crop Program for 2025. **Unanimously carried.**

Motion by Skellie/Ziehm to approve CWICNY Pass-thru grant funds (\$20,000) for Lake Champlain Basin Cover Crop Program for 2025 to make the following partial payments to the 10 participating farms: **Unanimously carried.**

Albert Marns (\$2,000), Wayne Foote (\$2,000), Foothill Farm (\$2,000), Yorkmont Farm (\$2,000), Toolite Farm (\$2,000), Twin Brooks Farm (\$2,000), Fred Burch (\$2,000), Manor View Farm (\$2,000), Walker Farms (\$2,000), Jeffrey Bush (\$2,000)

RESOLUTION
of the Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District
Motion by Ziehm/Fedler. Unanimously Carried.

Authorizing participation by the Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District in the Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program created pursuant to section 11-b of the New York State Soil and Water Conservation Districts Law.

WHEREAS, the New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee has issued a Request for Proposals inviting Soil and Water Conservation Districts or groups of Districts acting jointly to submit proposals for funding under Round 31 of the Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program; and

WHEREAS, funds are available for projects that consist of activities that will reduce, abate, control, or prevent nonpoint source pollution originating from agricultural sources; and

WHEREAS, the **Washington** County Soil and Water Conservation District has determined that certain work, as described in its application and attachments, (the “Project”) is in the public interest and consists of activities that will reduce and/or prevent nonpoint source pollution from agricultural sources;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the **Washington** County Soil and Water Conservation District Board

- 1) That **Corrina Aldrich, District Manager**, or such person’s successor in office, is the representative to act on behalf of the District’s governing body in all matters related to State Assistance under Round 31 of the Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program. The representative is authorized to make application, execute the contract for State Assistance, submit project documentation, and otherwise act for the District governing body in all matters related to the Project;
- 2) That the District agrees to fund its portion of the cost of the Project as provided in the application;
- 3) That one (1) certified copy of this Resolution be prepared and attached to the application for funding under Round 31 of the Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program;
- 4) That this resolution take effect immediately.

Motion by Ziehm/Fedler to approve submitting RFP applications for Kings Ransom and Walker Farms for AgNPS Round 31 grant funding. **Unanimously carried.**

Motion by Ziehm/Fedler to approve Agreement between Washington County SWCD and Warren County SWCD for AEM Round 19 Technical Services, January 2026. **Unanimously carried.**

Motion by Slater/Ziehm to approve the sale of the Fennig 6-Row Interseeder Model RM730 on Auctions International, with the right to reject any or all bids. **Unanimously carried.**

The next Board meeting will be held on February 17, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.

Motion by Fedler/Ziehm to enter Executive Session at 11:57 a.m. to discuss performance review of District Manager. **Unanimously carried.**

Motion by Slater/Ziehm to leave Executive Session at 12:55 p.m. and adjourn the meeting. . **Unanimously carried.**

Lori Sheehan, Secretary

Director

Reports Attached: *Treasurer Report, District Reports, NYS-SWCC Report*

District Technician Report – Bob Kalbfliesh – January 2026

AEM

- I have completed all AEM time sheets for Round 18.

CWICNY – Lake Champlain Basin Cover Crop Program

- I have completed all the necessary paperwork for this grant.

Ag Assessments

- I have completed 41 soil group worksheets to date. Last year I completed 176, so I expect January and February to be very busy.

Meetings / Events

- CaroVail Annual Winter Meeting, Greenwich – 2/6
- UVM No-till & Cover Crop Conference, South Burlington, VT – 2/19

Technician's Report-Amber Stark- January 12, 2026

Ag Non-Point Source-

- Round 28-
 - Kenyon Hill- Reception pit one is completed. We have received invoices from the farm and the engineer signed off on the practice. The project is 75% complete with a small portion left to be finished on reception pit number 2. We have submitted a request for a 1-year extension with consideration of what work is left to be done and taking into consideration the engineers' timeline to certify the final practices, along with our timeline for close-out paperwork.
- Round 31- Released January 5, 2026.
 - I have reached out to both farms (and CNMP planners) interested in applying and made them aware of our timelines. Kings have indicated that they would like us to try one more time for their satellite manure storage.
 - As of right now we have Walkers Farm and Kings interested in applying.

Climate Resilient Farming (CRF)-

- Round 6-
 - Maple Grove Farm- Had a phone call from the farm. They are working on getting bids for the project now that they have a final engineered design for the Access Road and Pond. I reminded the farm to make sure all bids had dates, business name, and contact information etc.
 - Ghost Light Farm- Talked with the contractor. The snow has slowed things down a bit, but he still plans on finishing the last part of the project this winter. The one access road is the only part left for this project. I told him the contract end date is April 2026, so as of right now we are on schedule to complete this project without the need for an extension as long as the weather allows for construction.
- Round 7-
 - Southerland- No new updates. The contractor is monitoring the stream during the winter. The plan is to start construction in the Spring of 2026.

CAFO Waste Storage and Transfer System Program-

- Round 3
 - Woody Hill Farm- Provided the program manager with some clarification on bids that were chosen. Have not heard anything back. I let the farm know the status.

AEM-

- AEM Reporting: Working on getting all the time logs completed & updated, so that I can start working on the closeout. Round 18 has officially ended.
- AEM round 19 timesheets have been added to the shared drive to allow staff to keep them up to date as work is completed.
- Tier 4 Cost Share-Contracts Round 19
 - ROUND 19 T4 CS-I have received 4 applications. We applied for \$300,000 in state cost share funding for projects. Nate Mattison, du Trieux Farm, Hick's and Hepatica Farm.
 - I have started to work on the budgets for these 4 projects. I will finalize them in the next coming weeks and work on setting up appointments to get them signed by landowners.

- AEM 3A Planning:
 - Hepatica Farm-Completed the Grazing plan for the farm. Staying in contact with the farm and waiting for budget form to come out so we can finalize things.
 - Du Trieux Farm- Grazing plan completed. Staying in contact with farm and waiting for budget form to come out so we can finalize things.
 - Partnering with Warren County SWCD to provide technical assistance with a Nutrient Management Plan. Warren County is working on a contract for us to review.

Ag Assessment-

- Assisted with taking multiple Ag Assessment requests from landowners.

Upper Hudson River Watershed Coalition- (President)

- Meeting was held on 1/8/26. This was our annual organizational meeting. We went over the bylaws, organizational items and elected officers.
- Only change to the bylaws was the inclusion of paying dues in the amount of \$500.00 annually to support current outreach and project activities going forward until we can establish a fund balance that is self-sustaining. This will help with yearly fees, as well as be a pot of funds that we can access to help with administrative and outreach efforts.
- Doug Reed attended and provided information to the group on the Day in the Life of the Hudson River event.
- Caitlin Stewart is working on finalizing our 2025 Newsletter. I will share with the board once it is finished.
- The next regular meeting will be held on February 12, 2026, at 10 AM. Located at the Warren County SWCD.

Trainings/Meetings Attending or Attended-

- Attended the Warren County SWCD Board meeting on behalf of the UHRWC on 12/15/25.
- CCA Virtual Training attending on 12/16/25 & 12/17/25.

Miscellaneous:

- Sent Olivia Fuller a reminder about filling out the application to CWICNY engineering funds.
- Wrote a newsletter article highlighting what we achieved during AEM round 18.
- Went to Syracuse to get my new Linc Pass (10 years with SWCD). Will need to go back out to get another new card once my name gets changed in the USDA system.

Technician's Report – Ashley Leemans – January 12th, 2026

Meetings and Trainings Attended

- 12/16 – Tuned into the SWCC meeting via Zoom.
- 12/17 – Attended a Stream Smart Workshop in Plattsburgh with Corrina.
- 01/07 – Corrina and I met with Ari from APIPP – he is going to help us prioritize our invasive species management efforts.
 - I have a follow-up meeting with the Hadlock Pond Association on 01/16.
- 01/08 – I attended the Upper Hudson Watershed Coalition Organizational meeting with Corrina and Amber.
- 01/12 – Today I will be attending an in-person LG HWA Coalition meeting at the Lake George Park Commission Office.
- I started a series of free webinar series given every other Friday on green infrastructure through Rutgers.

Part B

- I have completed a draft job description for the invasive species intern and have sent it to everyone else for review.

WQCC

- Our next meeting will be on February 11, 2026.
- I have completed the water quality report for 2025 water testing. It will be available and discussed at the meeting.

Education and Outreach

- I attended the Battenkill Conservancy's annual meeting on January 11th and presented on our experience of doing the Day in the Life of the Hudson River Program.
 - I worked closely with Doug Reed and Mike Levy to put together a brief presentation.
- Corrina, Amber, and I will be attending Winterfest at Lauderdale Park in February!

CWICNY

- Education and Outreach Grant through the Lake Champlain Basin Program.
 - The grant will fund World Water Day event, a watershed wide public fishing event, and a Champlain Watershed focused DITL event.
 - I worked with Sue Hagar to finish writing the grant and took over the responsibility of submitting the grant and became the point of contact as Sue has resigned from her position as CWICNY Coordinator.
- Our next meeting is on 01/15.

Misc.

- I have submitted the Organizational Support Grant application through the Lake Champlain Basin Program.
 - The goal is to hire a technology consultant to help us create a strategic plan for technology acquisition and independence from NRCS.

NYS SWCC News

Round 31 Agricultural Non-Point Source Program: The SWCC has made a total of \$25 million available through the AgNPS Round 31 RFP for SWCD's to propose AEM Tier 3 Planning and Tier 4 Implementation projects. This matches the record level of funding from last Round. RFP materials and the Application Form are available now through the Program's SharePoint Site (AgNPS Round 31 SharePoint) and Department of Agriculture's Funding Opportunities Website (AGM Funding Opportunities). An informational RFP Webinar will be held (and recorded) over Webex on January 20, 2026 from 10-11:30 AM, questions on the RFP are due in writing to Jason Kokkinos (Jason.kokkinos@agriculture.ny.gov) by March 2, 2026, and proposal submission to SharePoint is due **Monday, April 20, 2026 by 4:30 PM.**

2025 State Aid to Districts – DUE 2/15: All 2025 annual reporting documents (State Aid, Treasurers Report, Annual Report, etc.) are now available on the SWCC SharePoint <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com>, under Resources for Districts – State Aid to Districts. All reports are due to the State Committee by February 15, 2026. Please contact Bethany.bzduch@agriculture.ny.gov or your Regional AEA with any questions. If you have questions on the Treasurer's Report, it is suggested to contact OSC representative directly. This link (<http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/contact.htm>) will provide regional contact information.

AEM Base Program Round 18 - Options for AEM Base Round 18 Payments: A reminder that the Final Report/Close Out package for Round 18 of the AEM Base Program is due to the State Committee by **February 29th, 2026**, (please upload files to your District's AEM18 folder on SharePoint and email your Regional AEA and Chastity Miller once uploaded). AEM18 close out packages and their CFPs won't likely be paid until after the Blackout Period if sent after February 20th (depending on the number of Districts submitting and needs for report updates). While it varies, that could mean delays in payments until July 2026. Round 18 documents can be found on SharePoint: <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/Agriculture/SWCC/SitePages/AEM.aspx>

AEM Base Program Round 19 - If you have not submitted your Round 19 25% Technical Assistance Claim of Payments, please do so as soon as possible to beat that blackout period. Round 19 documents can be found on SharePoint: <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/Agriculture/SWCC/SitePages/AEM.aspx>. Questions, please feel free to contact your AEA or Chastity Miller chastity.miller@agriculture.ny.gov.

Claim for Payment Black Out Period Approaching: We are approaching the "Blackout Period" for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. The "Blackout Period" is the time of year (starting April 1st, 2026, lasting until June/July 2026) when payments for programs supported by the Environmental Protection Fund (AGNPS, CRF, EBM, AEM) cannot be processed due to end of the year reporting/accounting. We encourage Districts to consider what projects may be implemented in 2026 and what projects are eligible for advances or reimbursements. If you will need to request a 25% Advance, 65% BMP Implementation Payment, Subsequent/Interim Payment, or Final Payment prior to the start of the black out period, please email the CFP packet to the appropriate State Committee program manager, regional coordinator and Maureen Irish by **Friday, February 20th, 2026. Please remember to only submit claims for payment for contracts that have been fully executed.** Questions can be directed to your Regional Coordinator or appropriate Program Manager.

SWCC Meeting: The next meeting of the NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee will convene on **February 17th, 2026**. Further details and an agenda for this meeting will be sent out in advance of the meeting. All Districts are encouraged to attend and participate at SWCC meetings. Each meeting agenda provides an opportunity for Conservation Districts to provide reports, updates, or feedback to the SWCC. **Reminder – participation at a SWCC meeting is eligible toward PM1, Part C of State Aid to Districts.**

SWCD Operations Sub-Committee Recording: A recording of the November 2025, SWCD Operations Sub-Committee meeting has been uploaded to Sharepoint. The next sub-committee meeting will convene **January 29th, 2026, 1PM – 3PM**, via Webex. Details to follow.

[https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/Agriculture/SWCC/Mangers%20Meetings/SWCD%20Operation%20Sub-Committee%20\(2025\)/November%206,%202025%20Meeting?csf=1&web=1&e=0h9d04](https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/Agriculture/SWCC/Mangers%20Meetings/SWCD%20Operation%20Sub-Committee%20(2025)/November%206,%202025%20Meeting?csf=1&web=1&e=0h9d04)

Migrating to ArcGIS Pro - Online Class: The Society of American Foresters (SAF), and LandMark Spatial Solutions, LLC are offering a "Migrating to ArcGIS Pro for Foresters: Basic Short Course." You can start the course at **any time after January 6th, 2026**. The course is designed to be self-paced with an expected completion time of just over 7.5 hours, divided into four sections intended to be completed over four weeks. For more info and to register, visit: https://learn.eforester.org/p/lmss-janfeb-2026?utm_source=Society+of+American+Foresters&utm_campaign=eace66f419-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2024_02_23_01_16_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-74c5fc6bea-525959153&mc_cid=eace66f419&mc_eid=e9613e17fc#tab-product_tab_overview

Other Events

NACD 2026 Annual Meeting: The National Association of Conservation Districts' (NACD) 80th Annual will take place in San Antonio, TX from **February 14th- 19th, 2026**. Please save the date. To learn more and to register, please visit: <https://www.nacdnet.org/event/2026-nacd-annual-meeting/>

2026 Water Quality Symposium: The New York State Conservation District Employees' Association and Soil and Water Conservation Committee are thrilled to announce the 2026 Water Quality Symposium will convene in Rochester, NY. **March 10th – 13th, 2026**. Please save the dates. Registration information will be available from CDEA shortly.

Washington County Soil & Water Conservation District

Minutes of Regular Meeting – February 17, 2026

Attending:

Board Members

John Dickinson, Chairman (Via Telephone)

Jay Skellie, Director

Sherri Slater, Director

Kate Ziehm, Director

Staff Members

Corrina Aldrich, District Manager

Lori Sheehan, Office Manager

Bob Kalbfliesh, District Technician

Others:

Phelan Stover, Natural Resources Conservation (NRCS)

1. Call to order at 10:05 a.m. by Vice Chairman Skellie.
2. Minutes: **Motion** by Slater/Ziehm to approve the minutes of the last meeting. **Unanimously carried.**
3. Treasurer's Report: After review and approval of the finances, **Motion** by Ziehm/Slater to approve the Treasurer's Report (as a whole) for January and to pay bills as presented. **Unanimously carried.** (Attachment)
4. John Dickinson joined the meeting via telephone at 10:20 a.m.
5. Guest: Mike Levy, Battenkill Conservancy: Mr. Levy discussed with the Board the current grants the conservancy are applying for. He also discussed establishing an Alliance Agreement between the Battenkill Conservancy and Washington County SWCD for the purpose of working cooperatively within the Battenkill Watershed and Washington County.
6. Agency & Staff Reports:
 - A. Farm Service Agency: No report
 - B. NRCS: Verbal report by Stover
 - C. District Manager: Verbal report by Aldrich
 - D. District Technician: Attachment, reviewed by Kalbfliesh
 - E. District Technician: Attachment, submitted by Stark
 - F. District Technician: Attachment, submitted by Leemans
 - G. NYS-SWCC Report: Attachment, submitted by Luskin
7. New Business:
 - A. **Motion** by Slater/Ziehm to approve: Ag Stewardship Business Supporter Sponsorship (\$500); Grassland Bird Trust Raptor Fest Sponsorship (\$500); Washington County Association Street & Highway Membership & Advertisement (\$175). **Unanimously carried.**
 - B. **Motion** by Slater/Ziehm to approve: QuickBooks Annual Subscription (est. \$1,200); Zoom Annual Subscription (est. \$200). **Unanimously carried.**
 - C. **Motion** by Ziehm/Slater to approve Final Closeout of CAFO Round 3 Contract #C012096 Woody Hill Farm - Keys Farm and to make the following final payments:
 - Woody Hill Farm Final BMP Payment (\$65,500)
 - Woody Hill Farm Final Engineering Payment (\$6,000)
 - Washington County SWCD Personnel Services Payment (\$13,500)
 - Close dedicated grant checking account**Unanimously carried.**

D. **Motion** by Ziehm/Slater to approve “as is” the *Director Attendance & Replacement Policy*,” (no revisions). **Unanimously carried.**

8. The next Board meeting will be held on March 16, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.

9. **Motion** by Ziehm/Slater to adjourn the meeting at 11:45 a.m. **Unanimously carried.**

Lori Sheehan, Secretary

Director

Reports Attached: *Treasurer Report, District Reports, NYS-SWCC Report*

District Technician Report – Bob Kalbfliesh – February 2026

AEM

- I completed a Tier I with Maple Milk Farm (Glenn Hynick)

Ag Assessments

- I have completed 85 soil group worksheets to date.

Meetings / Events

- CaroVail Annual Winter Meeting, Greenwich – 2/6

Technician's Report-Amber Stark-February 17, 2026

Ag Non-Point Source-

- Round 28-
 - Kenyon Hill- Work is completed. Working with the farm and the engineer to get some little things tied up and certification on BMP's. We have submitted a request for a 1-year extension with consideration of what work is left to be done and taking into consideration the engineers' timeline to certify the final practices, along with our timeline for close-out paperwork. Site visit was conducted on 1/29/26 to get photos for the engineer.
- Round 31- Released January 5, 2026.
 - Working on grants. It has been slow due to working on the closeout paperwork. But one grant is complete and drafted up.
 - As of right now we have Walkers Farm and Kings interested in applying.
 - Attended a meeting with NRCS on 2/3/26 at Walkers just to stay in the loop about status of EQIP funding and timelines.

Climate Resilient Farming (CRF)-

- Round 6-
 - Maple Grove Farm- Landowner has started providing bids for construction. The farm is hoping to start construction in the Spring of 2026. We will be applying for an extension on the farm's behalf due to engineering delays.
 - Ghost Light Farm- I have kept in touch with the farm; the weather has delayed the last little bit of construction. I discussed the possibility of an extension, and they told me they did not want to do one if they didn't have to. They are hoping the contractor can get out as soon as the snow melts and work on the final access road. Both the landowner and contractor are aware of the ending contract date.
- Round 7-
 - Southerland- No new updates. The contractor is monitoring the stream during the winter. The plan is to start construction in the Spring of 2026.

CAFO Waste Storage and Transfer System Program-

- Round 3
 - Woody Hill Farm- Closeout has been approved by the state.

AEM-

- AEM Round 18 Closeout (DUE February 27,2026): All time sheets have been reviewed and totaled. Final Report is done and Checklist filled out. Working on T4 Closeout budgets. I am waiting for T3A checklist to be finished.
 - We worked with 73 farms through the AEM 2-year program in various capacity.
 - 12-T1 and 18-T2 completed over the 2 years.
 - 22-3A plans completed (cover crops, pasture, farmstead, etc.)
 - \$138,312.00 earned over the 2-year program. We applied for \$158,000.00. We applied for Option B which meant we were eligible for up to \$220,000.
- Tier 4 Cost Share-Contracts Round 19
 - ROUND 19 T4 CS-I have received 4 applications. We applied for \$300,000 in state cost share funding for projects. Nate Mattison, du Trieux Farm, Hick's and Hepatica Farm.
 - Budgets are all drafted up and I have started to meet with farms to go over plans and budgets, as well as obtain signatures.
 - Hepatica farm site visit on 2/4/26.

- AEM 3A Planning:
 - Partnering with Warren County SWCD to provide assistance with a Nutrient Management Plan. Warren County is working on a contract for us to review.
 - Held our first site visit to meet with the farm and answer some questions on their current Nutrient management practices 1/30/26.

Ag Assessment-

- Assisted with taking multiple Ag Assessment requests from landowners.

Upper Hudson River Watershed Coalition- (President)

- Next Meeting will be held on 2/12/26.
- Caitlin Stewart (Hamilton County) is working on finalizing our 2025 Newsletter. I will share with the board once it is finished.

Trainings/Meetings Attending or Attended-

- State Programs Advisory Committee Meeting attended 2/5/26
- AgNPS Round 31 webinar attended 1/20/26
- Central NY Corn and Soybean Day attend for CCA credits 1/21/25
- Met with Senator Jake Ashby and Assemblyman Scott Bendett at their mobile office hours at Burton Town Hall in Easton on 1/14/26.
- Attended CaroVail meeting for CCA credits on 2/6/26
- Attended Legislative Days in Albany on 2/10/26. Met with 7 various Senators and Assembly members to discuss the importance of State funding and to showcase the good things we are doing with State funding.

Miscellaneous:

- Bank Recs.
- Legislative Days Prep.

Technician's Report – Ashley Leemans – February 17th, 2026

Meetings and Trainings Attended

- 2/2 – Battenkill Conservancy (BkC) Steering Committee Meeting
- 2/5 – Highway Association Meeting
- 2/10 – Legislative Day
- 2/12 – Upper Hudson Meeting
- 2/13 – 4-Hour Sediment and Erosion Control Training

Part B

- Job has been posted for the intern position.

WQCC

- Our meeting was on February 11, 2026. We had 8 attendees and BkC did a short presentation.

Education and Outreach

- Winterfest was cancelled.
- Planning an education event with Camp Little Notch for the summer. Either stream activities or invasive species monitoring.
- I have been working on my MudU presentation on iMapInvasives. The presentation is on 3/3.

CWICNY

- We have our Call to Presenters out for SWTS.
- Corrina and I met with the County planning department about possible CWICNY funding from DEC.

Misc.

- Completed SAF ArcGIS Pro basic training
- Tree and shrub site is up and running
- Assisted with State Reports as needed

New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee
Region 5 Report – February 2026
Submitted by: Ben Luskin – Region 5 Associate Environmental Analyst

NYS SWCC News

2025 State Aid to Districts – DUE 2/15: All 2025 annual reporting documents (State Aid, Treasurers Report, Annual Report, etc.) are now available on the SWCC SharePoint <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com>, under Resources for Districts – State Aid to Districts. All reports are due to the State Committee by **February 15, 2026**. Please contact Bethany.bzduch@agriculture.ny.gov or your Regional AEA with any questions. If you have questions on the Treasurer’s Report, it is suggested to contact OSC representative directly. This link (<http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/contact.htm>) will provide regional contact information.

AEM Base Program Round 18 - A reminder that the Final Report/Close Out package for Round 18 of the AEM Base Program is due to the State Committee by **February 28th, 2026**, (please upload files to your District’s AEM18 folder on SharePoint and email your Regional AEA and Chastity Miller once uploaded). AEM18 close out packages and their CFPs won’t likely be paid until after the Blackout Period if sent after February 20th (depending on the number of Districts submitting and needs for report updates). While it varies, that could mean delays in payments until July 2026. Round 18 documents can be found on SharePoint:

<https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/Agriculture/SWCC/SitePages/AEM.aspx>

AEM Round 19 - Round 19 has kicked off! If you have not sent your 25% Technical Assistance CFP request, please do so before the blackout period! Tier 4 projects are due by **May 1st, 2026**, so please begin thinking about those projects!

Round 31 Agricultural Non-Point Source Program: The SWCC has made a total of \$25 million available through the AgNPS Round 31 RFP for SWCD’s to propose AEM Tier 3 Planning and Tier 4 Implementation projects. Questions on the RFP are due in writing to Jason Kokkinos (Jason.kokkinos@agriculture.ny.gov) by March 2nd, 2026, and proposal submission to SharePoint is due **Monday, April 20, 2026 by 4:30 PM**.

Claim for Payment Black Out Period Approaching: We are approaching the “Blackout Period” for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. The “Blackout Period” is the time of year (starting April 1st, 2026, lasting until June/July 2026) when payments for programs supported by the Environmental Protection Fund (AGNPS, CRF, EBM, AEM) cannot be processed due to end of the year reporting/accounting. If you will need to request a 25% Advance, 65% BMP Implementation Payment, Subsequent/Interim Payment, or Final Payment prior to the start of the black out period, please email the CFP packet to the appropriate State Committee program manager, regional coordinator and Maureen Irish by **Friday, February 20th, 2026**. **Please remember to only submit claims for payment for contracts that have been fully executed.** Questions can be directed to your Regional Coordinator or appropriate Program Manager.

SWCC Meeting: The next meeting of the NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee will convene on **February 17th, 2026**. Further details and an agenda for this meeting will be sent out in advance of the meeting. All Districts are encouraged to attend and participate at SWCC meetings. Each meeting agenda provides an opportunity for Conservation Districts to provide reports, updates, or feedback to the SWCC. **Reminder – participation at a SWCC meeting is eligible toward PM1, Part C of State Aid to Districts.**

ACH Electronic Checks: This day and age, paper check payments are at an all-time high risk of being stolen, forged, or improperly cashed. Based upon these findings, OSC is pushing back on payments that are not being remitted electronically. Agencies are being instructed that there is no guarantee that OSC will continue to remit payments via paper check in the future. If your District is not currently set up with ACH, it is advised that you do so ASAP to avoid any potential delay in payments. Questions can be directed to your Regional AEA.

Funding Finder: <https://environmentalbondact.ny.gov/pages/funding-opportunities> - This tool allows grant seekers to search for available grant opportunities. The tool can sort grant opportunities by eligible applicant, project type, project phase, etc. For example, Soil and Water Conservation Districts can search for available grant opportunities by selecting “Soil and Water Conservation Districts” in the Eligible Applicant filter option.

Tools and References Wiki Update: The Tools and References Wiki has just been updated for 2025. This is a useful resource for new employees to learn about resources used in New York State conservation planning and design and related fields. Check it out! https://apps.agriculture.ny.gov/SoilWater/tools_references.html

Other Events

Winter Webinar Series - Water Conservation for Small Farms: This series will examine how climate trends are impacting New York Farms, highlight agriculture's role in water quality and share practical strategies that farmers can implement to conserve water, increase resilience to extreme weather, and support improved water quality statewide.

1. **Feb 19th, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM: It Starts with the Soil: Soil Health Practices for Water Conservation,**
https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/ncFVqHh4SESGb-P7zoue_w#/registration
2. **March 19th, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM: Beyond Soil Health: Integrating Water Conservation Strategies,**
<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/MzqiiR0PSUSFS5pAa9huVg#/registration>

Other Grant Opportunities

NY Great Lakes Basin Small Grants Program: The New York Great Lakes Basin Small Grants Program supports stakeholder-driven efforts to restore and revitalize the State's Great Lakes region using ecosystem-based management and is funded through the EPF, and administer by NY Sea Grant. NYSG is soliciting proposals up to \$40,000 in total costs for projects that advance the goals of the GLAA and implement actions identified in locally supported community plans. Applications are due by **March 27, 2026, at 4:30 p.m** <https://small-grants-program-ccegeomaps.hub.arcgis.com/pages/apply-for-funding>

Washington County Soil & Water Conservation District

Minutes of Regular Meeting – March 16, 2026

Attending:

Board Members

John Dickinson, Chairman
Jay Skellie, Director
Sherri Slater, Director
Kate Ziehm, Director

Staff Members

Corrina Aldrich, District Manager
Lori Sheehan, Office Manager
Bob Kalbfliesh, District Technician
Amber Stark, District Technician
Ashley Leemans, District Technician

Others:

Tina Williams, Farm Service Agency (FSA)

1. Call to order at 10:02 a.m. by Chairman Dickinson.
2. Minutes: **Motion** by Slater/Skellie to approve the minutes of the last meeting. **Unanimously carried.**
3. Treasurer's Report: After review and approval of the finances, **Motion** by Ziehm/Slater to approve the Treasurer's Report (as a whole) for February and to pay bills as presented. **Unanimously carried.** (Attachment)
4. Agency & Staff Reports:
 - A. Farm Service Agency: Verbal Report by Williams
 - B. NRCS: No Report
 - C. District Manager: Verbal Report by Aldrich
 - D. District Technician: Attachment, reviewed by Kalbfliesh
 - E. District Technician: Attachment, reviewed by Stark
 - F. District Technician: Attachment, reviewed by Leemans
 - G. NYS-SWCC Report: Attachment, submitted by Luskin
5. New Business:
 - A. **Motion** by Skellie/Slater to approve donating leftover tree stock from Tree Program to conservation projects and refund customers as necessary. **Unanimously carried.**
 - B. **Motion** by Slater/Ziehm to approve opening a Certificate of Deposit with Part C funds (\$50,000). **Unanimously carried.**
 - C. **Motion** by Skellie/Slater to approve membership dues for New York Farm Bureau (\$110) and Soil & Water Conservation Society (\$275). **Unanimously carried.**
 - D. **Motion** by Slater/Ziehm to approve Leemans volunteer at the State Envirothon in May at SUNY Cortland (including cost of overnight room fee est. \$100). **Unanimously carried.**
 - E. **Motion** by Slater/Ziehm to approve AEM Round 18 BMP Forestry System BMP Payment to Grazin Acres Farm/Nathan Mattison (\$4,520). **Unanimously carried.**
 - F. **Motion** by Slater/Ziehm to approve Round 25 BMP Payment to Luncrest Farm, LLC (\$585,000 pending Engineer Certification and available grant funds). **Unanimously carried.**

- G. **Motion** by Slater/Ziehm to approve planning a presentation with Heather Cosgrove, Ph.D. on communication in the workplace and generational differences (est. \$1,000). **Unanimously carried.**
- H. **Motion** by Slater/Skellie to approve the district apply for NYS AEM Aldo Leopold Conservation Award for Tiashoke Farm. **Ziehm abstained, motion carried.**
- I. **Motion** by Skellie/Slater to award Tiashoke Farm, the District’s AEM Conservation Award based on recommendations of the district staff. **Ziehm abstained, motion carried.**
- J. **Motion** by Slater/Ziehm to approve the *Drainage Assistance Policy* “as is,” (no revision). **Unanimously carried.**
- K. **Motion** by Ziehm/Slater to approve the *Pond Site Evaluations & Related Requests Policy* with the following revisions:
- Move Item #2 of the ranking criteria to be Item #5, and re-number.
 - Delete Item #2 under the “Desired Assistance” section of the policy.
- Unanimously carried.**

**RESOLUTION of the Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District
Motion by Slater, Seconded by Ziehm. Motion unanimously carried.**

Authorizing participation by the Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District in the AEM Base Program.

WHEREAS, the New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee has issued an application inviting Soil and Water Conservation Districts or groups of Districts acting jointly to submit Tier 4 Cost Share Projects for funding under Round 19 of the AEM Base Program; and

WHEREAS, funds are available for projects that consist of activities that will reduce, abate, control, or prevent nonpoint source pollution originating from agricultural sources; and

WHEREAS, the **Washington** County Soil and Water Conservation District has determined that certain work, is in the public interest and consists of activities that will reduce and/or prevent nonpoint source pollution from agricultural sources;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the **Washington** County Soil and Water Conservation District Board

1) That **Corrina Aldrich, District Manager**, or such person’s successor in office, is the representative to act on behalf of the District’s governing body in all matters related to State Assistance under the AEM Base Program. The representative is authorized to make application, execute the contract for State Assistance, submit project documentation, and otherwise act for the District governing body in all matters related to the Project;

2) That the District agrees to support the following farm(s) participating in the AEM Tier 4 Cost Share Track:

- du Trieux Farm: BMP – Prescribed Rotational Grazing System
- Hepatica Farm, LLC: BMP – Prescribed Rotational Grazing System
- Hick’s Orchard: BMP – Process Wash Water Management System
- Grazin Acres Farm: BMP – Forestry/Agroforestry System

6. The next Board meeting will be held on April 20, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.

7. **Motion** by Skellie/Slater to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 a.m. **Unanimously carried.**

Lori Sheehan, Secretary

Director

Reports Attached: *Treasurer Report, District Reports, NYS-SWCC Report*

District Technician Report – Bob Kalbfliesh – March 2026

AEM

- I completed Tier I and Tier II with Wild Hogs at Maple Milk Farm. I also completed Grown & Certified Verification with them.
- I received a Tier I from Holly & Vine Farm (Mitchell & Rebecca Breese). I am scheduling a Tier II with them.
- Scheduling Tier II with Sean McGinley, he is interested in Grown & Certified.

Ag Assessments

- I have completed 149 soil group worksheets to date. I am still getting some requests.

Meetings / Events

- Because of the heavy volume of ag assessments in February, I did not attend the No-till Conference in South Burlington, VT.

Technician's Report-Amber Stark- March 16, 2026

Ag Non-Point Source-

- Round 28-
 - Kenyon Hill- Met with Mike Nolan to go over what invoices the farm has for work completed on the second reception pit. I totaled up all invoices and broke down what cleared checks we had and what paperwork is still needed. This was emailed to the farm. Still working to get BMP certification from the engineer. 1 year extension was approved at the 2/17/26 SWCC meeting.
- Round 31- Released January 5, 2026.
 - Working on submitting 2 grants for Round 31.
 - Due April 20, 2026. We have set an internal deadline for April 13th, due to how busy that week gets with Tree Sale.

Climate Resilient Farming (CRF)-

- Round 6-
 - Maple Grove Farm- I received bids from the farm. The farm is planning to start work this Spring, hopefully in April and is excited to get the project moving in the right direction. We are applying for a 2-year extension to carry out the grant deliverables.
 - Ghost Light Farm- I haven't heard too much from the farm. I will reach out this month and see where they are at with construction of the final roadway. Contract expires at the end of April.
 - Southerland- No new updates. The contractor is monitoring the stream during the winter. The plan is to start construction in the Spring of 2026.

CAFO Waste Storage and Transfer System Program-

- Round 3
 - Woody Hill Farm- Closeout has been approved by the state and final payment has been made to the farm.

AEM-

- AEM Round 18 Closeout completed and submitted on time.
 - We worked with 73 farms through the AEM 2-year program in various capacity.
 - 12-T1 and 18-T2 completed over the 2 years.
 - 22-3A plans completed (cover crops, pasture, farmstead, etc.)
 - \$138,312.00 earned in TA over the 2-year program. We applied for \$158,000.00.
 - I prepared all Staff round 19 time logs with individual rates and they are saved in the shared drive.
- Tier 4 Cost Share-Contracts Round 19
 - ROUND 19 T4 CS-We have 4 projects planned for the 3-year contract term.
 - I have got 3 budgets signed and are all ready for submission to the state.
 - Planning a few site visits for the Spring to go over more of the planning and timeline of construction.
- AEM 3A Planning:
 - Partnering with Warren County SWCD to provide assistance with a Nutrient Management Plan.
 - I will be tasked with Running CropWare on fields, assisting with soil testing and interpreting and planning Best Management Practices.

Ag Assessment-

- Assisted with taking multiple Ag Assessment requests from landowners.

Upper Hudson River Watershed Coalition- (President)

- Next Meeting will be held on 4/9/26
- Caitlin Stewart (Hamilton County) Completed the 2025 newsletter.

Trainings/Meetings Attending or Attended-

- SWCC meeting attended 2/17/26
- CWICNY Meeting attended 2/19/26
- Attended Water Quality Symposium 3/10/26-3/13/26.

Miscellaneous:

- Assisted Columbia County SWCD with questions about Water systems
- Assisted Rensselaer County SWCD with questions regarding Agrichemical Facilities.
- Bank Recs.

Technician's Report – Ashley Leemans – March 16th, 2026

Meetings and Trainings Attended

- 2/23 – Attended the State Envirothon Meeting. I have signed up to volunteer at the State Envirothon May 27 & 28 at SUNY Cortland.
- 2/26 – LG HWA Coalition Meeting.
- 3/10-3/13 – Water Quality Symposium.
- 3/5 – Greenwich DWSP2 meeting.
- 3/5 – TNC funding meeting
- 3/6 – Unifying Stormwater meeting.
- Ongoing - Qualified Stormwater Manager training through Envirocert.org.
- Ongoing – Green Infrastructure Champions training through Rutgers University.

Part B

- We had 4 applicants for the IS Intern position.
- We reached out to all 4 and received responses from 2. We interviewed the 2 candidates in the first week of March.
 - A third reached out after the initial interviews and we will be interviewing them.
- I have been working on pulling together assignments for the intern to work on.
- Created an invasive species-specific cooperator agreement to avoid confusion with landowners.

WQCC

- Evaluating and updating the water sampling plan.

Education and Outreach

- The Mud U presentation has been rescheduled due to the weather. I am waiting to hear what the new date will be.

CWICNY

- There is more discussion to be had on the possible funding from NYS DEC. I missed the last CWICNY meeting, but Corrina gave me some of the highlights.
- Stormwater Tradeshow:
 - Call to presenters has gone out and the due date is March 16th.
 - The Tradeshow Committee will be meeting on March 24th to go over the proposed presentations.

Lakes. This year's program will focus on helping nonfederal units of government, tribes, or incorporated nonprofit organizations reduce phosphorus contributions to waters within the Great Lakes basin. Applicants are invited to submit proposals for sediment and nutrient reduction activities associated with one of two project types: 1) agricultural non-point; and 2) shoreline or stream. The due date for applications is **April 27th, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. EST.** <https://www.glc.org/work/sediment/apply-now>

Washington County Soil & Water Conservation District

Minutes of Regular Meeting – April 20, 2026

Attending:

Board Members

Cassie Fedler, Director
Jay Skellie, Director
Sherri Slater, Director
Kate Ziehm, Director

Staff Members

Corrina Aldrich, District Manager
Lori Sheehan, Office Manager
Bob Kalbfliesh, District Technician
Amber Stark, District Technician
Ashley Leemans, District Technician

Others:

Kate Girard, Natural Resources Conservation (NRCS)
Ben Luskin, NYS-SWCC

1. Call to order at 10:10 a.m. by Vice Chairman Skellie.
2. Members of Tiashoke Farm were present to receive the Washington County SWCD AEM Award.
3. Minutes: **Motion** by Slater/Fedler to approve the minutes of the last meeting. **Unanimously carried.**
4. Treasurer's Report: After review and approval of the finances, **Motion** by Ziehm/Slater to approve the Treasurer's Report (as a whole) for March and to pay bills as presented. **Unanimously carried.** (Attachment)
5. Agency & Staff Reports:
 - A. Farm Service Agency: No Report
 - B. NRCS: Verbal Report by Girard
 - C. District Manager: Attachment, reviewed by Aldrich
 - D. District Technician: Attachment, reviewed by Kalbfliesh
 - E. District Technician: Attachment, reviewed by Stark
 - F. District Technician: Attachment, reviewed by Leemans
 - G. NYS-SWCC Report: Attachment, reviewed by Luskin
6. New Business:
 - A. **Motion** by Slater/Ziehm to approve submitting a 1-year Time Extension Amendment to SWCC for CRF Round 6 Contract #C012431 – Water Management on Grazing Land (Ghost Light Farm). **Unanimously carried.**
 - B. **Motion** by Slater/Ziehm to approve purchase of conservation seed mix for hydro-seeder (est. \$5,000 Part C – Municipal Assistance Program). **Unanimously carried.**
 - C. **Motion** by Slater/Ziehm to approve interns volunteering at the State Envirothon in May at SUNY Cortland (\$100 room fee/per person). **Unanimously carried.**
 - D. **Motion** by Ziehm/Fedler to decline approving the NYS Envirothon May Event Team Registration Fee (\$650). **Unanimously carried.**
 - E. **Motion** by Slater/Fedler to approve allocating the \$650 to the School Assistance Program fund. **Unanimously carried.**

- F. **Motion** by Ziehm/Slater to approve Leemans purchasing the two rain barrels the district has in stock for \$80 each. **Unanimously carried.**
 - G. **Motion** by Fedler/Ziehm to approve CWICNY pass-thru grant funds for Lake Champlain Basin Cover Crop Program for 2025 to make the following final payments to the 10 participating farms: (Balance Grant Funds \$9,038 + Approved Part C Funds to Match \$5,962 = \$15,000) **Unanimously carried.**

Albert Marns (\$1,500), Wayne Foote (\$1,500), Foothill Farm (\$1,500), Yorkmont Farm (\$1,500), Toolite Farm (\$1,500), Twin Brooks Farm (\$1,500), Fred Burch (\$1,500), Manor View Farm (\$1,500), Walker Farms (\$1,500), Jeffrey Bush (\$1,500)
 - H. **Motion** by Slater/Fedler to approve AgNPS Round 28 Steele Brook Waste Transfer BMP Payment to Kenyon Hill Farm (\$94,000). **Unanimously carried.**
 - I. **Motion** by Slater/Ziehm to approve CRF Round 6 – Water Management on Grazing Land BMP Payment #3 Erosion Control System (\$65,000) Assignment of Payment: Ghost Light Farm Or Grandview Fence & Farms, LLC. **Unanimously carried.**
 - J. **Motion** by Fedler/Ziehm to reject all bids received from Auctions International on the sale of the Interseeder. **Unanimously carried.**
 - K. **Motion** by Ziehm/Slater to set the sale price of the Interseeder to \$28,000 and send the sale notice out statewide to other Soil & Water Districts. Also, list the interseeder for sale on a “farm equipment for sale site,” i.e. Tractor House, Machinery Pete or Fastline. **Unanimously carried.**
 - L. **Motion** by Ziehm/Slater to approve the *Conservation Agreement and Invasive Species Conservation Agreement*, with minor change –Directors (add) *and staff*. **Unanimously carried.** The *Personal Vehicle Use Policy* requires revisions and further review.
 - M. **Motion** by Ziehm/Fedler to enter Executive Session at 11:53 a.m. to discuss a personnel matter. **Unanimously carried.**
 - N. **Motion** by Slater/Ziehm to leave Executive Session at 12:40 p.m. **Unanimously carried.**
7. The next Board meeting will be held on May 18, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.
8. **Motion** by Ziehm/Fedler to adjourn the meeting at 12:41 p.m. **Unanimously carried.**

Lori Sheehan, Secretary

Director

Reports Attached: *Treasurer Report, District Reports, NYS-SWCC Report*

District Technician Report – Bob Kalbfliesh – April 2026

AEM

- I completed a Tier II farm visit and Grown & Certified verification with Holly & Vine Farm.
- I completed a Tier I & II update and a Grown & Certified re-verification with Northern Cross Vineyard (Candy Weber).
- I am working with Lillie Valley Farm, Putnam Station, on soil sampling their fields. They completed AEM Tier I and II in the fall.
- Working on Hick's Orchard Round 19 project.

Ag Assessments

- I completed 153 soil group worksheets this year, including some late ones after the March 1st deadline.
- I have recorded them on the 2025-2026 tally sheet and have begun filing the paper copies.

CRF Round 9

- Our cover crop grant for small farms in the Hudson River Watershed will be funded. There is a webinar on Friday, April 17th for the awarded projects.

No-till Drill

- I spoke with the fair and they will be getting the no-till drill and the hydro-seeder out of storage this week (4/6 – 4/10)

Interseeder

- I have prepared and sent Marc Smith of Auctions International all the paperwork and photos to list the interseeder on their site.

Meetings / Events

- Regional Envirothon, Spa State Park – 05/06

Technician's Report-Amber Stark- April 20, 2026

Ag Non-Point Source-

- Round 28-
 - Kenyon Hill (Waste Storage and Transfer System)- Conducted a site visit to the farm to get some more photos and measurements for the engineer. Briefly spoke with the farm regarding invoices, proof of payments, etc. Still waiting for final BMP certification from the engineer.
- Round 31- Released January 5, 2026.
 - Worked on narratives, budgets and applications for two grant applications. Met with the farms and got landowner commitment signatures.
 - 2 Grants have been submitted as of 4/10/26.
 - Kings Ransom Farm (Waste Storage and Transfer System & Soil Health System)
 - Walker Farms LLC (Waste Storage and Transfer System & Soil Health System)
 - Due April 20, 2026. Awards sometime in August 2026.

Climate Resilient Farming (CRF)-

- Round 6-
 - Maple Grove Farm (Soil Health System & Erosion Control System)- Met with the farm on 3/25/26 to walk the project site with the engineer and chosen contractor. Contractor broke ground and started work on the planned pond on 4/13/26. I have been conducting site visits around twice a week or as needed and sending photos to the engineer. Perk test was to be conducted prior to pond installation to determine the water table and if a line would be needed (included in budget).
 - Ghost Light Farm (Prescribed Rotational Grazing System & Erosion Control System)- Contractor began work on 4/1/26 on the Access Road. I haven't heard too much from the farm. I will reach out this month and see where they are at with construction of the final roadway. Contract expires at the end of April.
 - Southerland (Stream Corridor and Shoreline Management System)- No new updates. I will reach out to the farm after tree sale to get an update on the project. The contractor was monitoring the stream during the winter to monitor water levels and make sure what was designed was adequate. The plan was to start construction in the Spring of 2026.

AEM-

- AEM Round 18 Closeout completed and submitted on time. We have not heard anything back from the state regarding the AEM round 18 closeout.
- AEM Round 19- First quarter of the year is over, I sent out the first quarterly reminder to update time logs to staff.
- AEM Tier 1& 2-
 - A couple of Tier 2 requests have been coming in over the past couple of weeks, and I will be working on setting up some site visits to work on those requests.
- AEM 3A Planning:
 - Partnering with Warren County SWCD to provide assistance with a Nutrient Management Plan.
 - I will be tasked with Running CropWare on fields, assisting with soil testing and interpreting and planning Best Management Practices.
- Tier 4 Cost Share-Contracts Round 19 (3 out of 4 Projects have been submitted)
 - Hepatica Farm (Prescribed Rotational Grazing System)-The farm is working on finding an engineer to do the water system and access road and then will proceed with the bid process.

- Brian Castner (Prescribed Rotational Grazing System)- I am working to set up a time this spring end of (April/ Early May) to go over timelines and guidance for the project.
- Nathan Mattison (Forestry/Agroforestry System)- I talked briefly about the project with the farm this winter, but I will set up a site visit with the farm in early May to go over more details of the project. This project is rolled over from AEM 18 as he was unable to complete the project due to doing most of the work on his own.
- Hicks Orchard (Process Wash Water Management System)-We are working on getting this project submitted still. The state had some questions about intended use, and the farm was out of the country. Due May 1, 2026.

Champlain Watershed Improvement Coalition of NY (CWICNY)

- Agricultural Engineering Grant-
 - Fuller Acres (Stream Corridor and Shoreline Management System)- The farm has notified me that they have chosen an engineer to complete the design for their stream crossing. They met with the engineer via zoom and have an onsite visit scheduled for 4/30/26.

Upper Hudson River Watershed Coalition- (President)

- Last Meeting was held on 4/9/26 at the Washington County SWCD Office.
- Working on organizing a Legislative Lunch and Learn in Hamilton County for end of September/October 2026 at The Alpine Grill.
- We will be applying for a Round 10 CRF grant as a watershed (Soil Health System).
- Closing out our WQIP contract for Roadside Erosion. Lake Champlain Lake George Regional Planning Board was administering but now Hamilton County will be taking over. Grant closes on May 9, 2026.

Landowner Assistance Program:

- Met with Jill Bialas on 4/1/26 regarding a Request for Assistance on land use, riparian areas and funding opportunities.

Education & Outreach:

- Greenwich Youth Program- I have set up and scheduled us to partner with the Greenwich Youth Program to provide 3 soil health/water quality activities for their participants. As of right now we are scheduled for the morning of July 1, 2026 @ 9:00 AM.
 - Tabletop Rainfall simulator
 - Enviroscope Model
 - Macroinvertebrates under a microscope
- CCE Youth Outreach Event- We were invited to attend a youth outreach / drop in event at Washington County CCE on April 23, 2026. I have organized to have the Ronny Raindrop costume that day for Ronny Raindrop to hand out leftover trees to youth that attend.
- Fair- I sent Lori Benson an email regarding the Fair Booth and some logistics of having Ronny Raindrop attend the fair on 3/16/2026. I have yet to hear back.

Tree Sale:

- Tree sale went well.

Trainings/Meetings Attending or Attended-

- WQIP Funding Webinar attended on 4/2/26
- DOS and DEC Bond Act Funding webinar attended 4/7/26
- Local Working Group Meeting (NRCS) attended on 3/25/26

Miscellaneous:

- Bank Recs.

Technician's Report – Ashley Leemans – April 20th, 2026

Meetings and Trainings Attended

- 3/19 – CWICNY Meeting.
- 3/23 – Attended the Lake George HWA Coalition meeting in Lake George.
- 3/24 – Attended the Unifying Stormwater Branding Kick-off meeting.
- 3/25 – Attended the NRCS working group meeting in Ballston Spa.
- 3/27 – Attended the State Envirothon meeting via Zoom.
- 3/30 – Attended the NY Citizens Advisory Committee meeting. They discussed the performance of NEIWPC as the financial administrator of the Lake Champlain Basin Program.
- 4/8 – Attended the Region 5 ReLeaf meeting. Josh DelRio gave updates on forestry related grants coming out.
- 4/8 – Attended the first half of the Warren County Water Quality Strategy Committee meeting. Jim Lieberum gave a good presentation on hazard mitigation in Warren County.
- 4/9 – Attended the Upper Hudson Watershed Coalition (UHRWC) meeting.
- 4/13 – Attended the Washington County Resiliency Committee meeting for the county resiliency plan.
- Ongoing – Green Infrastructure Champions training through Rutgers University.
- Ongoing – I have been working on Master Forest Owners training through CCE.

Tree and Shrub Sale & Pollinator Pledge

- Assisted with packing tree orders and both days of the tree and shrub sale.
- We had 20 pollinator pledges totaling 55 lbs. of pollinator seed handed out.
- I calculated and weighed out all the seed for each pledge. Seeds were handed out at the tree and shrub sale.

Part B

- We hired 2 interns for the summer.
 - Kordehlia Koopman starts on April 21st,
 - Colby McCauliffe starts on May 11th.
- I have been working on pulling together helpful materials for the interns.
 - Invasive species ID books,
 - Office phone numbers and other information,
 - County gas information,
 - Maps of monitoring sites,
 - Loose timelines of activities,
 - Training videos from Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISMs),
 - Time sheets,
 - Etc.
- I have been working on getting some scheduled activities on the calendar for the interns as well:
 - Farmer's markets,
 - Invasive species outreach at trailheads,
 - Attending some of our educational events with us,
 - Training for cyanobacteria monitoring and weekly cyanobacteria monitoring.
- I set up all of this information in an accessible G-Drive and in physical binders for each of the interns.
- Also worked on setting up their computers.
- I purchased equipment we need for the summer, including:
 - Safety glasses and vests,
 - Work gloves,
 - Magnify loupes (Hemlock Woolly Adelgid surveys),
 - Head lamps (HWA surveys).

AEM

- Amber trained me on the AEM database, and I will be entering Tier 1s and Tier 2s as they come in from site visits.

CRF

- I attended a site visit at Ghost Light Farm with Amber to check on the road construction.
- I attended a pre-construction meeting with Amber and Corrina for Beaver's Pond.

LAP

- I went on a site visit in Cossayuna to discuss native plant plantings on the homeowner's property.
- I attended a site visit to help identify areas for a pollinator patch on the homeowner's property.
- I attended a site visit with Amber to a prospective farmer's property, who also wants to utilize her farm for research.

WQCC

- Ongoing: Evaluating and updating the water sampling plan.
- We have meetings scheduled with the Cossayuna Lake Association and the Battenkill Conservancy about partnering on stream sampling.
- I scouted out some of the possible sampling sites we chose to verify accessibility.
- Next WQCC Meeting: May 12th 1:30PM – 3:30PM at the Greenwich Library.

Education and Outreach

- The Mud U presentation went well. I had 6 attendees – up from 2 attendees last year. The topic was “Invasive Species 101.”
- We will be attending CCE's Earth Day Celebration with Ronny Raindrop and handing out leftover seedlings from the tree sale. April 23rd, 3-4:30PM at the CCE Argyle Office.
- We have an invasive species removal workday official set-up at The Georgi for the Salem School Service Day. The Capital Region PRISM will be leading us in invasive species ID and removal practices.
- I am working on setting up a stream program with Camp little Notch in July.

CWICNY

- Stormwater Tradeshow:
 - We have chosen most of our presenters.
 - We just need to fill a couple spots.

Misc.

- I will be going to the Washington County Grasslands on April 23rd to take drone imagery for invasive species management.
- I completed the Qualified Stormwater Manager training through Envirocert.org.
- I have purchased a tree to plant for the Greenwich Tree Committee in Gannon Park as an Arbor Day donation. We have purchased a northern pin oak. I also created a temporary educational sign and ordered a small plaque.

NYS SWCC News

UPDATE - Managing Interest During Close Outs of SWCC Cost-Share Programs: NYS AGM's Fiscal Division recently advised all Department programs of a change to how interest earned on contracts must be returned to the Department when requesting a final payment at close out. We ask that all SWCD please use the new protocol for all future close outs; note, no change is needed for approved closed outs where claims for final payment have already been submitted to BSC.

This represents a change in the process, such that we can no longer offset the final payment to the District by the amount of interest earned during the contract. Note, the process of returning interest when a vendor (District) is returning funds at close out remains the same. The Claim for Payment / Return Funds Coversheet has been updated to reflect the change in the process of returning interest when requesting final payment. The updated close out process as well as the updated CFP coversheet have been emailed to SWCD and is available on SharePoint. Please familiarize yourself with this new protocol and coversheet and save them with your records. Feel free to reach out to the respective SWCC Program Manager or your Regional Coordinator if you have questions about the change during upcoming close outs.

Round 31 Agricultural Non-Point Source Program: The SWCC has made a total of \$25 million available through the AgNPS Round 31 RFP for SWCD's to propose AEM Tier 3 Planning and Tier 4 Implementation projects. Proposal submission uploaded to SharePoint is due **Monday, April 20, 2026 by 4:30 PM.**

AEM Round 19 - Tier 4 projects are due by **May 1st, 2026.** Make sure if you have not already gotten your Resolutions for the support of your Tier 4 Implementation projects passed you will need to at your April Board Meetings. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to reach out to Chas, chastity.miller@agriculture.ny.gov.

AEM Leopold Conservation Award 2026: NYSAGM is partnering once again with the Sand County Foundation to present the AEM Leopold Conservation Award to recognize landowners who inspire others with their dedication to ethical land, water, and wildlife habitat management on agricultural land. New York's award recipient will be presented with the \$10,000 award provided by the Sand County Foundation, in partnership with the Department, American Farmland Trust, and Cornell Cooperative Extension. A Formal announcement, and application materials were emailed to Districts in the first week of February 2026. The deadline for applications is **May 15th, 2026.**

SWCC Meeting: The next meeting of the NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee will be held on Tuesday **April 21st, 2026, starting at 10:00 AM.** The meeting will be held in person at the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Office in Syracuse, NY located at: 5786 Widewaters Parkway, Syracuse, NY 13214; lunch will be provided. To ensure we have an accurate count of attendees, please respond to Melissa Gordon (melissa.gordon@agriculture.ny.gov) no later than **April 7th, 2026.** All Districts are encouraged to attend and participate in SWCC meetings. Each meeting agenda provides an opportunity for Conservation Districts to provide reports, updates, or feedback to the SWCC. **Reminder – participation at a SWCC meeting is eligible toward PM1, Part C of State Aid to Districts.**

2026 NYS Envirothon - Volunteers Needed: The New York State Envirothon Committee is pleased to announce that we will host the 2025 New York State Envirothon at SUNY Cortland, on **May 27th-28th, 2026.** Volunteers are the heart of this event, and it doesn't happen without assistance from SWCD Directors and staff. Please consider Volunteering! A description of the volunteer positions available as well as an online registration link are available here on the NYS Envirothon website, <https://nysenvirothon.org/contact>. Any questions can be directed to nysenvirothon@gmail.com.

Soil Science Watch Party Continues: A group of SWCC Staff, district staff, and partners are working their way through 39 hours of Soil Science lectures from Cornell University's Jonathan Russell-Anelli. The group meets virtually on Monday mornings at 9:00 am to watch prerecorded lectures and answer discussion questions. CCA credits are available for each session. The group uses Webex to coordinate and the recurring meeting link is: <https://meetny-gov.webex.com/meetny-gov/j.php?MTID=m872f0a411cf3434a744799dc62f873fd>. Contact Tim Clark for more information.

Other Events

2026 NYS Wetlands Forum Annual Conference: Save the Date. The New York State Wetlands Forum 2026 Annual Conference and Business Meeting will take place on **April 14th and 15th, in Oswego, NY**. To register, please visit: <http://www.wetlandsforum.org/2026Conference.html>

Spring 2026 Great Lakes Action Agenda (GLAA) Sub-Basin Work Group Meetings: DEC's Great Lakes Program will be hosting a virtual kickoff meeting followed by in-person sub-basin workgroup meetings for regionally focused discussions. Meeting objectives include sharing DEC Regional, Program, and Great Lakes Program updates, hearing updates from partners, reviewing and discussing the Sub-Basin work planning process, as well as discussing upcoming funding and collaboration opportunities. Register for in-person meetings here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/spring-2026-glaa-sub-basin-work-group-meetings-4822191?msockid=21332227e8c46ffd0a9f350be9a36ec5>

- **Virtual Kickoff Meeting** on April 24th, from 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM via Webex. Register here: <https://meetny-gov.webex.com/weblink/register/r0fa7144931175dd29a55ddf5b23e3d6e>
- **April 30: Lake Erie Sub-Basin Work Group meeting:** Isaías González-Soto Branch Library in Buffalo, NY
- **May 4: Southeast Lake Ontario Sub-Basin Work Group meeting:** Cayuga Lake Nature Center in Ithaca, NY
- **May 5: Southwest Lake Ontario Sub-Basin Work Group meeting:** William Udicious Pavillion in Rush, NY
- **May 7: Northeast Lake Ontario/St. Lawrence River Sub-Basin Work Group meeting:** Grasse River Natural Heritage Community Room in Canton, NY

NACD Northeast Regional Meeting – Save the Date: The 2026 Northeast Region Meeting, hosted by the Delaware Association of Conservation Districts, will be held on **August 24-27, 2026**, at the Chase Center on the Riverfront in Wilmington, DE. <https://dacdnet.org/2026NACDNE/>

Other Grant Opportunities

Great Lakes Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Program: The Great Lakes Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Program (GLSNRP) Request for Proposals was recently announced, for projects that reduce nutrients and sediments entering the Great Lakes. This year's program will focus on helping nonfederal units of government, tribes, or incorporated nonprofit organizations reduce phosphorus contributions to waters within the Great Lakes basin. Applicants are invited to submit proposals for sediment and nutrient reduction activities associated with one of two project types: 1) agricultural non-point; and 2) shoreline or stream. The due date for applications is **April 27th, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. EST**. <https://www.glc.org/work/sediment/apply-now>

NYSP2I 2026-2027 Community Grants Program: The New York State Pollution Prevention Institute (NYSP2I) is accepting applications for the 2026-2027 cycle of the Community Grants Program. This program seeks projects that raise awareness and understanding of pollution prevention, and that lead to implementation of best practices at the local level. Eligible applicants may receive up to \$20,000 to support their project. Applications are due **April 24th, 2026**. <https://www.rit.edu/affiliate/nysp2i/community-grants>