



Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District

2024 Annual Work Plan

Approved October 10, 2023

Declaration of policy

Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) CHAPTER 9-B, ARTICLE 1

§ 2. Declaration of policy.

(1) Preservation of soil and water resources. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the legislature to provide for the conservation of the soil and water resources of this state, and for the improvement of water quality, and for the control and prevention of soil erosion and for the prevention of floodwater and sediment damages and for furthering the conservation, development, utilization and disposal of water, and thereby to preserve natural resources, control and abate nonpoint sources of water pollution, assist in the control of floods, assist in the drainage and irrigation of agricultural lands, prevent impairment of dams and reservoirs, assist in maintaining the navigability of rivers and harbors, preserve wildlife, protect the tax base, protect public lands, and protect and promote the health, safety and general welfare of the people of this state.

(2) Promotion of soil health and resiliency. It is further declared the policy of the legislature to promote the health and resiliency of New York's agricultural soils, including the biological, physical, and chemical components of such soils, to sustain agricultural plants and animals, produce a healthy, affordable food supply, promote climate resilient farming and the reduction of agricultural greenhouse gas emissions, and further protect and promote natural resources and the health, safety and welfare of the people of this state.

(3) Utilizing resources to enhance the quality of life. It is further declared the policy of the legislature to encourage the use of agricultural land for recreational uses which are consistent with the primary use of such land while, at the same time, promoting additional tourism and employment opportunities and income for landowners in rural areas and enhancing the quality of life of persons not otherwise able to obtain access to agricultural land for recreational uses.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Eugene Wright, Chairperson, Grange Rep
Tracey Evanick, Vice Chair, Farm Bureau Rep
James Murphy, Treasurer, At-large Rep
Linda Jones, Legislative Representative
Beau Harbin, Legislative Representative

SWCD STAFF

Amanda Barber, Manager
Jack Fox, Conservation Assistant
Chad Hill, Conservation Assistant
Shawn Murphy, Natural Resource Conservationist
Emily Olsenwik, Secretary
Stacy Russell, Natural Res. Program Specialist
Melissa Rutter, Fiscal Officer
Russell Smith, Natural Resource Conservationist

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PLAN COMPONENT

I. RESOURCE CONCERNS/PROGRAMS

A. Water Quality - Prevention of nonpoint source (NPS) pollution including, but not limited to the following sources: agricultural land use, construction sites, mining sites, stormwater runoff, streambank erosion, and roadbank erosion.

1. Agricultural Environmental Management Program (AEM)

a. Review strategy and goals	High Priority	Mar/Jun/Sept/Dec	Murphy
b. Implement strategy and AEM Base program including AEM base cost-share projects	High Priority	Ongoing	Staff
c. Coordinate with CCE, Farm Bureau, USDA, and others on outreach	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff
d. Participate in County Agricultural Emergency Response and Skaneateles Lake Watershed Large Animal Rescue	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Smith
d. 1. Support Rural Road Safety	Medium Priority	April	Barber
e. AEM Base Grant Round 17 closeout and Round 18 Implementation and Management	High Priority	Ongoing	Murphy
f. Coordinate USC data verification	High Priority	Ongoing	Smith
g. Maintain NRCS Planner certification to provide assistance in preparing plans	High Priority	Ongoing	Murphy
h. AGNP Round 24 CNMP Planning implementation closeout	High Priority	March	Murphy Barber
i. AGNP Round 25 Fredenburg HUA implementation and closeout	High Priority	November	Smith Barber
j. AGNP Round 27 Keller HUA & Storage closeout	High Priority	April	Murphy Barber

k. AGNP Round 27 Bean HUA implementation and closeout	High Priority	December	Smith Barber
l. AGNP Round 28 Ruschmann HUA implementation	High Priority	November	Murphy Barber
m. AGNP Round 28 Ullrich HUA implementation	High Priority	November	Smith Barber
n. AGNP Round 29 Park MS/SL Contracting and Design	High Priority	November	Murphy Barber
o. AGNP Round 29 Finch HUA Contracting and Design	High Priority	November	Murphy Barber
p. AGNP Round 29 Randall SL Contracting and Design	High Priority	November	Smith Barber
q. AGNP Round 29 Murray HUA Contracting and Design	High Priority	November	Smith Barber
r. Climate Resilient Farming - closeouts for Augur, Shared Roots and McUmbur	High Priority	April	Russell Barber
s. Climate Resilient Farming - Shiners Rise implementation	High Priority	November	Smith
t. Climate Resilient Farming - Brown implementation	High Priority	November	Hill
u. Climate Resilient Farming - Zogg implementation or cancellation	High Priority	November	Russell
v. Climate Resilient Farming - Merrill implementation or modification	High Priority	November	Russell
w. Climate Resilient Farming - Hicks implementation	High Priority	November	Smith

x. Climate Resilient Farming - Hall implementation	High Priority	November	Russell
y. AGNP, CRF, and other grant applications and POW development	High Priority	March	Russell Murphy Staff
z. AGNP, CRF and other reports	High Priority	As required	Russell
aa. Upper Susquehanna and Finger Lakes cover crops implementation	High Priority	September	Smith
bb. Upper Susquehanna nutrient management - including planning tool and possible urban nutrient management	High Priority	Ongoing	Fox

2. Lake and Watershed Management Programs

a. Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance (FOLLOWPA)			
a. 1. FOLLOWPA county representation and work plan management	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber
a. 2. FOLLOWPA 21/22 close-out	High Priority	April	Barber
a. 3. Technical and financial assistance per FOLLOWPA grant scopes	High Priority	Ongoing	Staff
a. 4. Coordinate with lake associations	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Hill
b. Skaneateles Lake Watershed Agricultural Program (SLWAP)			
b. 1. SLWAP cooperative agreement reporting	High Priority	July	Russell
b. 2. Represent Cortland County at Watershed Agricultural Program Review Committee meetings and act as liaison to Board	High Priority	Ongoing	Russell
c. Work with lake associations to implement Management Plans and Kettle Lake WIPs			
c. 1. Develop and coordinate Shorescaping Program	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Hill
c. 2. Coordinate and implement Little York Lake management program	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber
d. Coordinate Little York Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber
e. Represent county at lake watershed group meetings			

e. 1. Cayuga Lake IO and committees	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Murphy
e. 2. Skaneateles Lake Association	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Barber
e. 3. Skaneateles Lake 9e Watershed Advisory Committee	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Barber
f. Upper Susquehanna Coalition (USC)			
f. 1. Voting rep., Exec. Committee, and Ag Team Leader	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber
f. 2. Promote and support Upper Susquehanna Coalition Ag Team	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Fox
f. 3. Riparian Buffer Workgroup representation	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Russell
f. 4. Stream Team representation	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Hill
f. 5. Riparian Buffer Stewardship Program	High Priority	Ongoing	Russell
g. Implement Cayuga Lake Watershed Stream Corridor and Culvert Rehabilitation Program	High Priority	August	Barber Russell
h. Implement Skaneateles Lake Watershed Stream Corridor and Culvert Rehabilitation Program	High Priority	August	Barber Russell
i. SOGL Grant close-out	High Priority	April	Barber
j. Cayuga, Skaneateles, Chesapeake 1 WQIP close-outs	High Priority	December	Barber
k. Implement Chesapeake Bay Watershed Stream Corridor and Culvert Rehabilitation Program (USC and WQIP grants)	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber Russell
l. Implement WQIP Engineering Feasibility Study grants - Hoxie Gorge, Tioughnioga River (Yellow Lantern), Owego Creek, Trout Brook	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber
m. Implement County ARP Stream Corridor projects	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber Russell
n. Implement Cortland County Critical Area Road Ditch Stabilization (WQIP grant) and closeout	High Priority	Ongoing	Fox Barber
o. Implement WQIP Assessment Grants - Owego Creek and Grout Brook	High Priority	Ongoing	Staff

p. WQIP, NFWF, and other WQ grant applications and contracting	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber
3. General Water Quality Monitoring, Investigations, and Assistance			
a. SWCD WQ Monitoring Plan			
a. 1. Review and revise - coordinate with partners	Low Priority	Ongoing	Hill
a. 2. Implementation - data collection and analysis	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Hill
b. Provide technical assistance to County Health, NYSDEC, municipalities, etc. relating to water quality management	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff
c. Coordinate Landfill Monitoring, Data Management and Reporting	High Priority	Ongoing	Hill Barber

B. Natural Resources Protection - Conserve and enhance natural resources while maintaining a viable land base and encouraging the sustainable production of food and fiber

1. USDA Programs			
a. Assist USDA in promoting programs and implementing conservation best management practices	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff
2. Waste Management			
a. Support local composting efforts - municipal, school, individual	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff
b. Support recycling and reuse efforts and activities	Low Priority	Ongoing	Staff
3. Farmland Protection/Agricultural Viability			
a. Provide technical assistance to county farmland protection board, local municipalities and farmers with farmland protection	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Barber

b. Serve on Board of New York Agricultural Land Trust to create opportunities and support agricultural land protection	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Barber
c. Support Ag Summit, Ag Awareness Week, Ag Celebration Luncheon	Medium Priority	March	Barber
d. Complete soil group worksheets for landowners	High Priority	March	Fox
e. Provide technical information and assistance to further the implementation of urban conservation and urban agriculture initiatives and practices	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff

C. Rural/Urban Development - Provide soils, plant material, and land use information to facilitate sound land use decisions. Provide technical assistance on urban erosion/sediment control and stormwater management; protect infrastructure and the tax base while protecting natural resources

1. Landuse Management

a. Provide Inventory and Evaluation (I&E) reports to Coordinated Review Committee, planning boards, and municipalities related to soils, stormwater, erosion, nonpoint source pollution, agriculture, and other impacts	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Hill Barber
b. Provide other technical assistance as requested by municipalities, including code review and planning committees	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff
c. Technical assistance and resource information to landowners related to soils, stormwater, erosion, nonpoint source pollution, agriculture, etc	High Priority	Ongoing	Staff

2. Management of Flooding, Stormwater, Erosion/Sediment, Stream Corridors and Lakes

a. Provide assistance to landowners and municipalities relating to streambank stabilization, stream corridor management, and floodplain management.	High Priority	Ongoing	Russell Hill Staff
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b. Support Emergency and Disaster Planning, Management and Response	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff
c. Assist municipalities with aquifer protection and stormwater management, including review of proposed development projects	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Hill Barber
d. Town of Cortlandville assistance with Stormwater Code including plan review, site maintenance inspections and reporting	High Priority	Ongoing	Hill
e. Implement Hydroseeding program	High Priority	Ongoing	Staff
f. Implement Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Spread Prevention activities	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber
f. 1. Manage boat decontamination unit at Dwyer Park	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber
3. Permits			
a. Assistance with state/federal permits for protection of waters, wetlands, etc. where projects are consistent with our environmental goals	Priority - Varies	Ongoing	Staff
4. Resource Conservation and Development			
a. Provide technical assistance for planning, design and implementation of projects such as alternative energy, septic maintenance, etc.	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff
a. 1. Implement Septic System Maintenance Grant (WQIP)	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber
b. Provide technical assistance for planning, design and implementation of projects such as living snow fences, dry hydrants, etc.	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff
c. Provide technical information and assistance to further the implementation of forest management and tree planting	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff
c. 1. Implement Dwyer Park Community Forestry Plan	High Priority	Ongoing	Murphy
c. 2. Implement Upland Tree Planting	High Priority	Ongoing	Fox
c. 3. Provide forest management, pollinator, native species technical assistance	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff

d. Provide technical information and assistance to further the implementation of dirt, gravel and low-volume paved road maintenance	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff
e. Provide technical assistance for planning, design and implementation of riparian forest buffer projects	High Priority	Ongoing	Staff

D. Education and Outreach - Conduct education programs to heighten awareness of local natural resource conservation concerns and resource management issues

1. Envirothon - sponsor and coordinate local high school competition	High Priority	May	Rutter
2. Conservation Field Days - sponsor and coordinate event for all 6th grades in county and including DeRuyter	High Priority	September	Rutter
3. Spruce Up America - Tree planting with schools, municipalities, and community groups	Medium Priority	April	Olsenwik
4. River Clean-up – Coordinate event registration and trash disposal	High Priority	September	Olsenwik
5. Coordinate Water Festival and Water Week activities	High Priority	June	Olsenwik Staff
6. General Education - workshops, presentations, programs, and activities as requested or as otherwise necessary to promote and educate about natural resources and related concerns or issues.	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff
a. Fund raising to support conservation education programs	High Priority	Ongoing	Staff
b. Provide displays, and presentations at various public events and school functions as requested	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff
c. Committees – participate in committees for WQ Symposium, Conservation Skills Workshop, NYSCDEA, SWCS, etc.	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff

d. Stewardship Week – Provide materials to interested local churches	Low Priority	April	Staff
e. Coordinate Rural Landowner Workshop(s)	Medium Priority	May	Staff
7. Conduct outreach to heighten awareness of SWCD resource management activities	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff
a. County Legislators – Outreach at Ag and Planning committee	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber
a. 1. Outreach to full Legislature target Soil and Water Stewardship Week and Budget Outreach	High Priority	April/September	Barber
b. State Legislators – attend NYACD Legislative Day to educate on issues	High Priority	Feb/Mar	Board
b. 1. meet legislators during local visit	High Priority	August	Barber
c. Media – maintain media contacts list	High Priority	Ongoing	Staff
c. 1. contribute program press releases and weekly article to Cortland Standard for publishing	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber Staff
d. Newsletter/Annual Report - distribute at least annually	High Priority	January	Barber
d. 1. maintain database	High Priority	February	Staff
e. Website - maintain and update quarterly	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber
f. Facebook weekly posts	Medium Priority	Weekly	Murphy Barber
g. FSA County Committee - attend and report at meetings	Medium Priority	Quarterly	Murphy

E. Service/Earned Income Programs - Conduct programs as a service to assist in achieving natural resource conservation goals and help support district programs

1. Spring Planting and Conservation Program-coordinate program, manage distribution of materials, reporting	High Priority	April	Barber Rutter
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			Murphy
2. Pond stocking – bass, trout, minnows, other	Medium Priority	April-June	Rutter
3. Seek operational funds from all sources including grants, donations, etc	High Priority	Ongoing	Staff

II. OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

A. Administration

1. Develop Annual Plan - forward to SWCC and County; review quarterly	High Priority	October	Board Barber/Staff
2. Conduct bi-weekly staff meetings	High Priority	Ongoing	Staff
3. Risk Management - review policies, blanket agreements, MOUs, etc.	High Priority	January	Board
4. Board of Directors Meetings – conduct monthly meetings; Annual organizational meeting in January	High Priority	Monthly; 2nd Tuesday @ 1PM	Board
5. Maintain records for Performance Measures evaluation	High Priority	Ongoing	Olsenwik
6. Records retention, filing system and procedures	High Priority	Ongoing	Olsenwik Rutter

B. Personnel

1. Evaluations – Conduct evaluations annually	High Priority	August	Barber Board
2. Training and Training Plans – Review employee and director training plans	High Priority	January	Barber
a. Budget and promote employee development	High Priority	Ongoing	Staff/Board
b. Track and administer required training	High Priority	Ongoing	Olsenwik

3. Review Personnel Policies – update as needed	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber Rutter Board
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C. Financial

1. Maintain and manage bookkeeping system, payroll and benefits, etc.	High Priority	Varies	Rutter Barber
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2. Outside audit of books for grants and county	High Priority	Annually by county	Rutter Barber
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3. Annual Reports	High Priority	February	Olsenwik Barber
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D. Equipment Management/Maintenance

1. Maintain field and office equipment inventory	High Priority	Ongoing	Rutter
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2. Vehicles and field equipment - maintenance, inspections, purchases	High Priority	Ongoing	Smith
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3. Computers and office equipment - maintenance and purchases	High Priority	Ongoing	Murphy
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