

Minutes of the State Soil Conservation Committee Meeting



November 24, 2024

Bismarck Hotel and Conference Center, Governor's Room, Bismarck, ND

A meeting of the North Dakota State Soil Conservation Committee was called to order at 6:02 by Bob Martin, Chair.

Committee Members and guests present:

Emily Montgomery – *Area I Supervisor*

Warren Solberg – *Area II Supervisor*

David Hill – *Area III Supervisor, Vice Chair*

Bob Martin – *Area IV Supervisor, Chair*

Kelly Klosterman – *Governor Appointee*

Hannah Nordby – *Area V Program Coordinator*

Lindy Berg – *Area I Program Coordinator*

Amber Fetch – *ND State Soil Conservation Committee
Administrative Assistant*

Carrie Johnson – *NDSU Extension Assistant Director*

Andrea Travnicek – *Director, Dept of Water Resources*

Dan Hovland – *State Conservationist, USDA-NRCS*

Mark Hayek – *Assistant State Conservationist, USDA-
NRCS*

Emilee Novak – *NPS Program Coordinator, ND DEQ*

Sarah Tunge – *Partnership Director, NDASCD*

Kelli Schumacher – *Training Coordinator, NDCDEA*

Committee Members absent:

Jess O'Brien – *Area V Supervisor*

Anthony Mock – *Governor Appointee*

Introductions

SSCC member and partner introductions. New Coordinator introductions.

Approval of July Meeting Minutes

- Warren made a motion to approve the 7.8.24 meeting minutes with the correction that NASCA dues be paid with "appropriated funds" rather than "grant money." Emily seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Review of Financials

- Carrie went through a brief overview of financials. Discussion of previous years' appropriated funds used to pay for NASCA dues.

Partner Reports

- ND Forest Service – Tom Claeys, State Forester
 - A written report was provided and reviewed by the Committee, followed by a brief discussion of the emerald ash borer section of the report.
- ND Game & Fish – Jeb Williams, Director
 - No report provided; no representative at the meeting.
- ND Association of Soil Conservation Districts – Sarah Tunge
 - An oral report was given, followed by a brief discussion of grants the SSCC co-signed on previously—those did not go anywhere during this round of grant approval, but may see progress later down the line.
- ND Dept of Water Resources – Andrea Travnicek, Director
 - An oral report was given, followed by a brief discussion of the progress of federal bills related to water resources.

- USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Services – Dan Hovland, State Conservationist; Mark Hayek, Assistant State Conservationist
 - An oral report was given, followed by a brief discussion of cultural resources.
- ND Department of Environmental Quality – Emilee Novak, NPS Program Coordinator
 - An oral report was given, followed by a brief discussion of harmful algal blooms and testing for toxin levels.
- ND Conservation District Employees Association – Kelli Schumacher, Training Coordinator
 - An oral report was given, followed by a brief discussion of ensuring there’s no redundancy between the NDCDEA and Extension/supervisor training work.
- ND Department of Agriculture – Doug Goehring, Commissioner
 - No report provided; no representative at the meeting.
- NDSU Extension – Carrie Johnson, Assistant Director
 - An oral report was given, including introductions of the new coordinators and discussion of the length of the hiring process, discussion of encouraging producers, etc. to attend FARRMS meetings, and discussion of when SCDs need to turn in required documents to the SSCC.

SSCC Coordinator’s Report:

- No statewide coordinator in place yet, so no additional report was given.

Program Coordinator Updates:

- **Hannah, Area V:**
 - An oral report was given along with a handout.
 - Attended 2 Area Meetings (Area V & IV), Watershed Coordinator Annual Training, and Employees Association Meetings.
 - Attended monthly meetings in 5 counties, SCD events in 4 counties, 1-on-1 consultations with 4 counties, and collaborated with 1 county.
 - Helped provide SCD supervisor training opportunities, including 5 podcast episodes, 4 SCD Coffee Talk: Open Q&A sessions, 3 Leadership Academy Short Takes sessions, 3 Micro Lessons, 1 Webinar, a Grant Writing Workshop, and LEAD Local.
- **Lindy, Area I:**
 - Brief self-introduction.

Old Business:

- DART Reporting
 - Towner is the only district still missing DART reports for the past couple of quarters. All the other districts are up to date.
 - Amber has been following up and will be following up throughout the coming year. Amber will be sending an email to SCDs the first week of December about required documentation and due dates.
 - New SSCC members will get a welcome packet as well.
- State Assistance Funds—no further discussion.
- SSCC/NDSU Extension MOU
 - Brief discussion of changes to the MOU. Kelly made a motion to approve. David seconded. Brief discussion of timing—January 1, 2025–2026. Copy to sign will be sent to Bob via mail. Motion to approve carried.
- Kelly brought up that \$150,000 was requested legislatively for districts.

New Business:

- NASCA Dues
 - Dues will stay the same (\$3,000/year) for 2025, but in 2026, dues will be increasing to \$6,000/year.
 - Discussion on why dues increased and how much the Committee can pay.
 - Kelly moved to pay NASCA dues of \$3,000 for 2025. David seconded. Discussion of how to pay—will get an invoice and then Extension will pay in full. Motion carried.
- Committee approval of new Cass County SCD supervisor
 - Warren moved to accept Tyler Zimmerman as new supervisor in Cass County SCD. Emily seconded. No discussion. Motion carried.
- Kelly asked Sarah to discuss the resolution from Mercer County to look at the relationship between the State Committee and NDSU Extension.
 - The resolution will be brought up at the NDASCD Convention this week.
 - Bob noted that changing the partnership would require legislative changes.
 - Further discussion of the history of similar discussions over the years.

Bob called a recess at 8:14 p.m. until reconvened.

The board reconvened on Tuesday, November 26, 2024, at 7:00 a.m.

- *In attendance:*
 - Chris Walberg, new SSCC member to start in January
 - Jess, David, Kelly, Warren, Bob, Hannah
- *Absent:*
 - Anthony and Emily
- Board discussed requests for the January meeting:
 - Communicate with Association about dates
 - Ask to utilize Lincoln Oaks meeting room
 - Can the date be coordinated with the Ag Coalition meeting?
- Board requested clarification from NDSU Extension on how to handle approving new supervisors after a resignation before the end of a term. NDSU Extension will follow up after the meeting.
- Board discussed whether there is a directory of SCD supervisors, including contact information, somewhere publicly accessible. NDSU Extension will follow up after the meeting.
- Board discussed what needs to be done for the new SSCC member and returning members by the next meeting. NDSU Extension will follow up after the meeting.

Next Committee Meeting:

The next SSCC board meeting will be in January in Bismarck. Amber will send out a poll to determine date, time, and location.

Adjournment:

Kelly made a motion to adjourn. Warren seconded. Motion carried. Adjourned at 8:05 a.m. on Tuesday, November 26, 2024.