



AGENDA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
March 19, 2024 @ 11:00 a.m.
23818 Shortly Road, Georgetown, DE

- I. Call to Order
- II. Agenda Modifications
- III. Approval of Agenda
- IV. Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting
- V. Recognition of Visitors
- VI. Correspondence
- VII. Reports
 - District Account's Report – Dan Lee (P 2)
 - Equipment Program Manager's Report – Stephen Gissy (P 5)
 - District Conservationist's Report – Ziggy Savage (P 6)
 - Sediment & Stormwater Manager's Report – Jessica Watson (P 8)
 - DNREC Conservation Program's Report – Tyler Brown (P 9)
 - DACD Executive Director's Report – Jen Nelson (P 11)
 - Agricultural Program Report – Debbie Absher (P 12)
 - District Coordinator's Report – David Baird (P 14)
- VIII. Items Requiring Board Action
 - 1) Cost Share Payments
 - a. Large Animal Mortality
 - b. Conservation Cost Share Design-O'Boyle/Modification of Policy Guidelines
- IX. Joint Meeting with Sussex County Council
- X. Adjournment

Pursuant to 29 Del. C. § 10004 (e) (2), the Agenda items as listed may not be considered in sequence. This Agenda is subject to change to include additional items, including Executive Sessions, which arise at the time of the meeting.

Sussex Conservation District
Cash Report
February 2024

<i>Fulton Bank - Checking</i>	
Bank Balance Per Statement	\$557,066.97
Add: Deposits in Transit	\$0.00
Less: Outstanding Checks	(\$153,388.43)
Balance in G/L - End of Month	\$403,678.54
Beginning G/L Balance	\$357,711.56
Add: Cash Receipts	\$1,050,863.95
Less: Cash Disbursements	(\$1,004,896.97)
Ending G/L Balance	\$403,678.54
<i>Fulton Bank - Payroll</i>	
Beginning G/L Balance	\$0.00
Add: Cash Receipts	\$206,499.38
Less: Cash Disbursements	(\$206,499.38)
Ending G/L Balance	\$0.00
<i>Citizens Bank - Checking</i>	
Beginning G/L Balance	\$1,274,113.88
Add: Cash Receipts	\$0.00
Less: Cash Disbursements	\$0.00
Ending G/L Balance	\$1,274,113.88
<i>Citizens Bank - Money Market</i>	
Beginning G/L Balance	\$1,374,520.43
Add: Cash Receipts	\$23,762.64
Less: Cash Disbursements	\$0.00
Ending G/L Balance	\$1,398,283.07
<i>Fulton Bank - Merchant</i>	
Beginning G/L Balance	\$11,972.92
Add: Cash Receipts	\$8,346.25
Less: Cash Disbursements	(\$340.15)
Ending G/L Balance	\$19,979.02
<i>Artisans Bank - Certificate of Deposit - 11/06/24</i>	\$250,000.00
<i>Link Bank - Certificate of Deposit - 2/28/24</i>	\$249,679.56
<i>County Bank - Certificate of Deposit - 02/28/25</i>	\$249,551.58
<i>Community Bank - Certificate of Deposit - 06/12/24</i>	\$248,959.00
<i>Del-One - Certificate of Deposit - 4/19/24</i>	\$490,443.27
<i>Hebron Savings Bank - Certificate of Deposit - 04/04/24</i>	\$249,138.13
<i>Fulton ICS MM Accounts</i>	\$3,017,907.28
<i>WTC Investments</i>	\$3,835,490.72
<i>Petty Cash</i>	\$220.73
<i>Total All Bank Accounts</i>	\$11,687,444.78

Sussex Conservation District
Cash Report
February 2024

2024	<i>UNRESTRICTED FUNDS</i>			
	Sussex Conservation District Funds		<u>\$3,420,084.60</u>	<u>\$3,420,084.60</u>
	<i>RESTRICTED FUNDS</i>			
	Stormwater Management Funds	restricted	\$4,481,424.06	
	Stormwater Cash Bonds Held	Liability	\$1,271,623.88	
	Cost Share Funding	deferred	\$1,498,848.52	
	3921 Funding	deferred	\$750,370.58	
	Sussex County Drainage Funding	deferred	\$57,627.49	
	Stormwater Management Funds	deferred	\$7,500.00	
	Prothonotary Items	deferred	\$9,887.00	
	Various projects - 2	deferred	<u>\$190,078.65</u>	
				<u>\$8,267,360.18</u>
	<i>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS ALL ACCOUNTS @ MONTH END</i>			<u>\$11,687,444.78</u>
2023	<i>UNRESTRICTED FUNDS</i>			
	Sussex Conservation District Funds		<u>\$2,916,596.42</u>	<u>\$2,916,596.42</u>
	<i>RESTRICTED FUNDS</i>			
	Stormwater Management Funds	restricted	\$3,856,096.99	
	Stormwater Cash Bonds Held	Liability	\$1,928,726.26	
	Cost Share Funding	deferred	\$1,600,865.33	
	3921 Funding	deferred	\$443,098.40	
	Sussex County Drainage Funding	deferred	\$54,160.09	
	Stormwater Management Funds	deferred	\$7,500.00	
	Prothonotary Items	deferred	\$7,270.00	
	Various projects	deferred	<u>\$331,420.00</u>	
				<u>\$8,229,137.07</u>
	<i>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS ALL ACCOUNTS @ MONTH END</i>			<u>\$11,145,733.49</u>
2022	<i>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS ALL ACCOUNTS @ MONTH END</i>			\$ 9,613,087.37
2021	<i>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS ALL ACCOUNTS @ MONTH END</i>			\$ 7,611,695.56
2020	<i>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS ALL ACCOUNTS @ MONTH END</i>			\$ 10,979,593.97
2019	<i>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS ALL ACCOUNTS @ MONTH END</i>			\$ 9,479,208.49
2018	<i>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS ALL ACCOUNTS @ MONTH END</i>			\$ 9,652,964.83

SUSSEX CONSERVATION DISTRICT
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS FOR FEBRUARY 2024

February had a net profit (loss) of \$1,477 compared to a net profit (loss) of (\$2,688) for the same period in 2023. Year to date, the District has a net profit (loss) of (\$189,796) compared to a net profit (loss) of (\$10,592) for 2023. The following is a net profit (loss) summary by department:

Department	February		Year To Date	
	2024	2023	2024	2023
Equipment	\$4,482	\$33,865	(\$40,748)	\$71,306
Agriculture	(\$71,833)	(\$68,857)	(\$169,030)	(\$113,667)
Stormwater	\$108,108	\$68,125	\$112,238	\$105,454
Administrative	(\$37,033)	(\$38,130)	(\$87,402)	(\$74,360)
Project Design	(\$2,247)	\$2,309	(\$4,854)	\$675
Operating Profit (Loss)	\$1,477	(\$2,688)	(\$189,796)	(\$10,592)
Investments	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Net Profit (Loss)	\$1,477	(\$2,688)	(\$189,796)*	(\$10,592)

(*) Year to Date Net Income:

Total Revenue	\$ 1,049,917
Cost of Sales	\$ 219,789
Gross Profit	\$ 830,128
Expenses	\$ 1,019,924
Net Income (Loss)	(\$ 189,796)*

COST SHARE DOLLARS

Department	Paid Out February		Paid Out Year to Date	
	2024	2023	2024	2023
General Cost Share	\$7,713	\$9,302	\$26,270	\$26,725
3921 Funds	\$94,213	\$53,414	\$144,090	\$76,664
County Drainage	\$10,465	\$8,916	\$16,705	\$16,206
Total Cost Share Dollars	\$112,391	\$71,632	\$187,065	\$119,595

Department	Cash Balance	
	2024	2023
General Cost Share	\$1,499,149	\$1,600,865
3921 Funds	\$750,371	\$443,098
County Drainage	\$52,733	\$54,160
Total Cost Share Dollars	\$2,302,253	\$2,098,123

EQUIPMENT PROGRAM REPORT

Over the past month, the equipment program has completed various projects. We are currently focusing on completing ag-related tax ditch and private drainage projects. Dip Outs with ag are nearing completion, and we are currently running two dozers spreading spoil. We are focusing on ag-related mowing for tax ditches. RC&D projects are steady, and we are currently working on a significant private drainage cleanout west of Seaford called N. Oak Grove Rd/Willin.

Total Estimates for 2024: 88

Total Estimates for February: 53

Recently Completed Projects:

- Blackarm Tax Ditch- Dip Out
- Bridgeville Branch- Tree Removal
- Bucks Branch Tax Ditch- Mowing
- Cart Branch Tax Ditch- Dip Out
- Coulburn Farms- Dip Out & Pipe Crossings
- Jones Mill Tax Ditch- Spoil Spreading
- Stafford Tax Ditch- Erosion Repair
- Holly Branch Tax Ditch- Pipe Replacement
- Greg Hudson- Dip Out
- Iron Mine Tax Ditch- Spoil Spreading
- Meadow Branch Tax Ditch- Maintenance
- Middleford Tax Ditch- Maintenance and Mowing
- Mirey Branch Tax Ditch- ROW Clearing
- Bucks Branch Tax Ditch- Emergency Pipe Replacement
- Paynters Mill- Drainage Improvements
- Dean Ricks- Ditch Dip Out
- Shelah Branch Tax Ditch- Dip Out
- St Johnstown Tax Ditch- Erosion Repair
- Burbage Road- Vegetation Clearing
- Vanderwende- Private Clearing & Drainage Work
- Shelah Branch Farms- Private Drainage

Recently started or Projects starting soon:

- Bearhole Tax Ditch- Dip Out
- McGee Tax Ditch- Spoil Spreading
- Double Fork Tax Ditch- Spoil Spreading
- Holly Branch Tax Ditch- Dip Out
- Neal School Road- Phase II- WIP
- N. Oak Grove/Willin- Drainage Improvements-WIP
- Peach Tree Run/ Walsh- Drainage Improvements-WIP
- Banks Harbor Retreat- Drainage Improvements
- Pepper Creek-Prong 10 Bank Stabilization
- Mowing various tax ditches

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST REPORT

February 23, 2024, through March 15, 2024

EQIP

- Planners are well into the planning phase for 1st batch applications. They are also working with 2nd batch applicants collecting eligibility documents.
- June 7th is when the contracts need to be completed by planners for 1st batch applicants.
- We are now collecting second-batch applications. Deadline: March 15th.
- We are accepting applications on a continuous process and batching accordingly.

EQIP/CIC

- These are 5-year contracts. Application batching follows the EQIP guidelines.
- Contract limits are \$200K per Farm Bill and are not part of the overall \$450K payment limit attached to the Farm Bill.

EQIP/IRA (Inflation Reduction Act)

- Funds are targeted towards Climate Smart Ag. Practices. The categories are Soil Health, Nitrogen Mgt., Livestock Partnership, Grazing & Pasture, Agroforestry, Forest and Upland Wildlife habitat, Energy, and Wetlands. The funding level for FY-24 is \$10.3M.

AMA/RMA

- Funding level is approximately \$80K.
- Normally used for small farm scenarios with a cap of \$50K per year.
- Batch dates are the same as EQIP.

CSP/IRA

- Like EQIP/IRA, it is for participants who sign up for the same targeted Climate Smart Ag through CSP. Practice categories.
- 5-year contracts up to \$200K.
- We are accepting applications for the 1st batch until March 22, 2024.

CSP

- We are accepting applications for FY-24 until March 22.

WRE

- Field offices are accepting applications for FY-24 until March 10.
- Field staff are directing participants to Elena Stewart (Program Manager) and Emily Palmer (Coordinator) for the specific details of the program.

1. Inspections and Site Visits

- **Conservation Practice Installation and Completion Inspections:**
Korey continues working with landowners and contractors to complete project installation/inspections for prior-year contracts. David Stuckey (CD Tech.) is working with Korey to understand NRCS's survey, design, and inspection processes.

2. Surveys/Designs

- Korey is working on surveys and designs for FY-24 projects with some assistance from Reed.

3. Other Business

- Planners continue reviewing prior year management practice records for payment and reporting progress.
- There are still positions being advertised for Delaware NRCS positions. District Conservationist (Dover/ New Castle F.O.), Outreach Coordinator (Dover S.O.).
- Sussex F.O. is still working to backfill for a Soil Con. Tech. Position.
- New hires: Sussex, James Pinkney, Soil Conservationist, replacing Kyle Hearn. Kent, Emily Gentry, Soil Conservationist. Dover S.O., Jennifer Richardson, Program manager for CSP and RCPP.

SEDIMENT AND STORMWATER PROGRAM REPORT

Detailed Plan Review/Approval:

Staff continued to process plan submittals, pre-app/engineering meetings, and technical support. They reviewed 12 plans and approved six detailed plans and two standard plans. They also had 7 pre-application meetings.

Standard Plan Review/Approval: 2 Total

- 2 Non-Residential

Inspection: - 334 Inspections

Field staff continue to be busy. New projects continue to contact us for pre-construction meetings. Pre-construction meetings – 11

Maintenance Inspection – 47

Closed-out stormwater projects are inspected, and reports are generated that provide information on routine/preventive maintenance. The goal is to ensure the continued function of the stormwater facility.

Buddy Griffith provides compliance inspections on single-family lot construction. He also works with builders on the requirements under the Residential Standard Plan (silt fences and stone construction entrances). He and Faith work together on home construction complaints and reach out to non-compliant builders.

Drainage/Construction Complaints: - 27

Other News:

March 7, 2024 – Conservation Stewardship Award Banquet

March 14, 2024 – Flocculant Training – using chemicals to treat turbidity.

DNREC CONSERVATIONS PROGRAM REPORT

Program Updates and News

District Operations

- The Department's Bond Bill Hearing will occur in April this year; a date has yet to be selected. According to the Legislative Hall calendar, Bond Hearings will occur on **April 29th and 30th**.

Tax Ditch and Drainage Programs

- Tax Ditch warrant change requests due to Michele Garner by **March 31st** to ensure all changes are brought before the respective District Board for approval in April for going into effect on 2024 Property Tax Bills.

Staffing Updates:

- **Posting Live! Planner IV – Merit Position** – This position will manage and oversee the administrative or technical services the Tax Ditch Program provides to Tax Ditch organizations and residents across the State.
- **Coming Soon - KCD Contractual - Planner II Position** – Tax Ditch Officer Coordinator – This position will be the primary point of contact for the Tax Ditch Officers across the State to help facilitate their needs and be responsible for officer recruitment and retention strategy implementation.

Sediment & Stormwater Program

- The 2024 CCR certification course is live! Course modules and exam completion with a passing score of 80% or higher are due **March 22nd**. CCR course field trips will occur for all eligible students on **March 28th**.

Staffing Updates:

- The SSP would like to welcome William Lesmerises to the Program! He will start on March 25 as an Engineering/Planning Surveying Technician IV and primarily conduct sediment and stormwater inspections on construction sites in DE.

Nonpoint Source

- The FY24 Request for Proposals (RFP) closed on Friday, 3/1/24, for the Clean Water Act Section 319 grant funding. The NPS Program was advertising for up to \$324,000 in water quality BMP projects and received multiple proposals requesting approximately \$540,000. A grant review/ranking committee has been established and will meet on Monday, 3/18/24, to score all submitted proposals and select those that will receive awards. EPA Grant Project Officers will review those selected proposals before official approval.
- An environmental consultant is working on updating three existing watershed implementation plans for the NPS Program. These watersheds include the St. Jones River, Appoquinimink River, and Christina Basin (consists of the White Clay, Red Clay, Brandywine Creek, and Christina River sub-watersheds).

- A cover crop transect survey was completed throughout the State following the same protocols and survey route as the annual cropland residue transect. The study's data are being analyzed with assistance from the Chesapeake Bay Implementation Program.

Staffing Updates:

- No significant updates. All current Program positions are filled.

Chesapeake Implementation Programs

- The Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant (CBIG) Request for Proposals period closed on March 1, 2024. Staff is reviewing and ranking project proposals. If a project is funded, the contact will be notified by the end of March or the beginning of April. Chesapeake Implementation Program staff may contact submitters for clarification or more details.
- Team members of the Chesapeake Implementation Program (CHIP) have assisted the NonPoint Source Program with mapping and data related to the Cover Crop and Tillage Transect Surveys.
- Staff from the Chesapeake Implementation Program attended the 2024 Delmarva Soil Summit from February 6th to 7th and staffed a booth providing information about DNREC's Chesapeake funding, CREP, and new incentive programs.
- Additional staff from the Chesapeake Implementation Program (CHIP) attended the Delaware Wetlands Conference from February 6th to 7th. During this time, they networked with different partners and agencies to expand programs and enhance mapping and analysis.
- The Chesapeake Implementation Program is currently setting up site visits for projects related to the Delaware Community Conservation Assistance Program (DeCAP). DeCAP is aimed at implementing conservation landscape best management practices for local landowners. Conservation landscape practices include – converting turfgrass areas to native meadow plantings, tree plantings, rain gardens, stormwater enhancements (bioswales, basins, and vegetated channels), constructed wetlands, and rainwater harvesting (rain barrels).
- The Chesapeake Implementation team is currently working on expanding the Forest Buffer Incentive Program to include grass buffers. This effort will help Delaware meet its Watershed Implementation Plan goals through 2025 and beyond.

Staffing Updates:

- No significant updates. All current Program positions are filled.

Spotlight

On February 6th and 7th, CPS staff attended the Delmarva Soil Summit in Salisbury, MD. The CPS had a booth where our available programs were promoted at the event, and staff were on hand to answer questions. The exhibit focused on DeCAP, the Buffer Incentive Program, and practices that homeowners can use to help improve local water quality. This event was partially funded by the CBIG, managed by CHIP of CPS, and put on by the Sussex Conservation District and partners.

DACD REPORT

UPDATES:

- **DACD-NRCS Agreement-** NRCS and the districts met on 3/5 to discuss the expectations from the State Office and the NRCS Grants and Agreements Division (GAD) regarding the workload distribution between the districts and how to calculate costs for deliverables. As agreements and reporting receive ever greater scrutiny from GAD, these conversations help create a shared understanding between the partners. Another A meeting is planned 3/29 to discuss deliverables and ensure consistency between NRCS and the districts regarding allowable activities and expenses.
- **Delaware Envirothon Agreement**—DACD is also working with NRCS on an agreement to support the Envirothon. NRCS and the districts recognize the Envirothon as a valuable outreach and education opportunity! Our draft agreement includes funding for part of the Envirothon coordinator, event, and travel expenses to the NCF Envirothon, representing \$21,419, or slightly less than half of the overall budget.
- **Delaware Envirothon Fundraising-** Did you know you can make a one-time or recurring donation to the Envirothon? Visit <https://delawareenvirothon.org/sponsors/donate/> or scan the QR code on the right.
- **DNREC/DACD Call on 3/15-** Topics for discussion included an update on DNREC’s Fee Bill, the Governor’s Recommended Budget, and DNREC’s upcoming Bond Bill Hearing



Upcoming Dates:

<i>DATE</i>	<i>EVENT</i>
<i>March 20</i>	NACD Fly-In, Washington DC
<i>April 25</i>	Delaware Envirothon, Abbott’s Mill, Milford, DE
<i>April 30</i>	Governor’s Conservation Awards, Delaware Ag Museum
<i>August 10 - 13</i>	NACD Summer Meeting & Northeast Region Meeting, Boston, MA

AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS REPORT

Grants

- Grant proposals for the Nonpoint Source Pollution (NPS) and Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant (CBIG) were submitted on March 1, 2024. The DNREC Division of Watershed Stewardship’s NPS Program already has \$75,000 set aside for SCD for cover crops, and the CBIG Program has \$364,540 set aside for SCD for cover crops in the Chesapeake Bay Most Effective Basin. SCD submitted two proposals for the following:
 - NPS - \$125,000 for cover crops in the Inland Bays, Broadkill subwatershed of the Delaware Bay, and the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.
 - CBIG III - \$250,000 for cover crops in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.
- As part of the NRCS Contribution Agreement NR1921J2XXXXC005 – SCD will host a Wetland Reserve Enhancement (WRE) workshop on March 19, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. at the Harrington Fire Hall. NRCS is organizing the program and will be lining up speakers. Please attend the workshop to learn more about the NRCS – WRE Program. As of the time of this report, 65 people have registered with hopes of getting 100 interested landowners from throughout the state to attend. If you are interested in attending, please [Register Here](#).
- David and I attended the quarterly meeting with NRCS and the other districts to discuss the NRCS-DACD Agreement. Another meeting is scheduled for March 28, 2024, to review deliverables and determine what constitutes a deliverable. Discussions will also start soon to develop next year’s FY 2025 work plans.
- SCD is also reviewing the FY 2025 Chesapeake Bay Regulatory and Accountability Grant (CBRAP) work plan, which funds compliance inspectors in the Ag and Stormwater Programs. The agreement's funding is \$150,000.



Cost-Share

- Cover Crop destruction forms were mailed out on March 6th. Destruction can begin on March 15, 2024, and we anticipate forms being submitted in the coming weeks.
- Oyster Aquaculture Program Update—Seven oyster farmers are currently enrolled in the program. Payments are made quarterly—October, January, April, and July. After the January payments (oysters harvested July-December), five of the seven oyster farmers submitted harvest reports, harvesting 149,771 oysters and receiving a total of \$7,488.55 in cost-share assistance. We anticipate receiving additional harvest reports in early April for oysters harvested from January through March.

3921 Funds

- Letters will be mailed on March 21st reminding tax ditch officers that their FY 2023 and FY 2024 State and County Matching Funds (tax ditch cost-share) will be expiring July 1, 2024, and to submit any outstanding bills (mowing, bonding, and maintenance) for reimbursement. This year, there will be a new process to have all unused funds expire, requiring officers to reapply if they have not completed their planned maintenance projects. We also ask officers to notify us by June 14th if they are scheduling any tax ditch work over the summer months so we can hold those funds back.

Miscellaneous

- SCD will hold the 2024 Local Work Group Meeting on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, at 9 a.m. at the Vanderwende-Evans Conservation Center in Georgetown. A virtual option is also available for stakeholders who cannot join in person. Your input is essential to help determine the conservation needs of Sussex County and to shape the programs offered by the USDA-NRCS and the Sussex Conservation District. To register for the Local Work Group Meeting, please [Register Here](#).

DISTRICT COORDINATOR'S REPORT

USDA Lease Updates & SCD Progress

In late February, we received a notice from USDA that the current "pre-solicitation" for office space issued on Nov. 22, 2023, was modified two times on Feb. 16 and Feb. 20 to reflect changes to parking requirements, electric vehicle charging stations, reduced the full term of the lease from 20 to 13 years. SCD was informed the Shortly Rd. location was not eligible due to its location within the 500-year flood plain. Letters of interest were due on March 7, 2024, and the results have yet to be shared. We understand that USDA and GSA are planning site visits within the next 30 days, and SCD is scheduled to participate in that activity.

Additionally, we are evaluating a proposal to engage GMB to assist with developing a plan that would allow us to locate the SCD Ag Program staff at Shortly Rd.

Stormwater Conservation Stewardship Awards

SCD recognized the winners of the 2024 Stormwater Conservation Stewardship Awards on Thursday, March 7, 2024. Approximately 75 recipients and guests attended.

Cover Crops and Ag Census Data

For the past few years, the three districts agreed to allocate the DDA cover crop money based on the acres of corn harvested in each county based on the most recent Ag Census Data (2017). The 2022 Ag Census Data was recently released, and the harvested corn acres shifted significantly between the counties, with Sussex Co. seeing a substantial reduction. Below is a comparison of the FY2024 DDA funding based on the 2017 and 2022 data. At this time, FY24 funding will be based on the 2017 Ag Census data, but this will prompt a discussion for FY25.

FY24 DDA Cover Crop Allocation (based on the 2017 Ag Census)				FY24 DDA Cover Crop Allocation (based on 2022 Ag Census)				
Kent	55,961	29.78%	\$ 1,724,252	Kent	67,554	35.97%	\$ 2,082,594	\$ 358,342
New Castle	20,112	10.70%	\$ 619,463	New Castle	24,832	13.22%	\$ 765,648	\$ 146,185
Sussex	111,890	59.52%	\$ 3,446,286	Sussex	95,409	50.81%	\$ 2,941,758	\$ (504,528)
	187,963	100.00%	\$ 5,790,000		187,795	100.00%	\$ 5,790,000	

Upcoming Events:

- The next board meeting will be held Tuesday, April 23, 2024, at 7 p.m., at 23818 Shortly Road, Georgetown, DE.
- Governor's Conservation Awards, April 30th, at the AG Museum in Dover, DE

ACTION ITEM 1A

COST SHARE PAYMENTS-LARGE ANIMAL MORTALITY

BACKGROUND:

Cost-share payment for Large Animal Mortality to John Kohout.

February

Total Cost	\$5,900	Cows:	8
SCD Cost	\$5,900	Horses:	6
SCD Admin	\$1,380		

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve cost-share for payment for Animal Mortality.

MOTION:

Moved by _____ and seconded by _____, to approve cost-share payment to John Kohout.
Motion _____.

ACTION ITEM 1B

CONSERVATION COST SHARE DESIGN-O'BOYLE WILDLIFE POND

BACKGROUND:

This item was tabled from the February 2024 meeting as the board requested more information on the landowner's contribution to the project's design phase.

Should the Board want to require a landowner contribution during the design phase, staff recommends that it consider a 20% deposit option, as described on the following page.

With that said, my recommendation to the Board is to continue its policy of providing the landowner with the survey and design phase at no charge. This recommendation is based on the March 23, 2021, action by the Board to establish a pilot program utilizing \$50,000 of Conservation Cost Share funds for preliminary costs involved in developing a conservation project. The rationale behind this effort was to improve access to conservation programs while increasing the likelihood of implementation. Additionally, completing the design could improve access to other funding sources for implementation and provide the necessary matching funds when applicable. Additionally, SCD has utilized \$25,518.25 in funding on four projects, with another two in development (including O'Boyle), and I believe we should continue to see our initial commitment all the way through the process. Finally, as part of our mission, SCD has historically provided technical assistance to landowners at no cost, and I feel that this effort is no different.

BACKGROUND ON O'BOYLE PROJECT

SCD was contacted by Jordan O'Boyle, who owns a 9.5-acre parcel south of Mollyfield Rd. Dagsboro DE (Tax Map ID 233-10.00-71.04). Mr. O'Boyle is seeking SCD's assistance with designing and constructing an approximately 1/3rd acre wildlife/water quality enhancement pond on his property. An existing private ditch runs through the property, which would serve as an outlet for the pond. A water control structure would be installed to manipulate the water level based on significant rain events and time of year. This proposed project would create a habitat for various wildlife species, including fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, macroinvertebrates, etc. For the pond to provide optimal wildlife habitat, it is proposed to include a wetland bench around the entire pond for beneficial aquatic plants. It would also have microtopography within the pond to provide different water depths. Excavated material will be used around the adjacent area to create minor topography and additional habitat. A final construction estimate will be developed once the design is complete, and a cost share request for implementation will be placed on a future agenda for the Board's consideration.

Estimated Pond Survey and Design Costs: \$6,625.00

Proposed SCD Conservation Cost Share- \$6,625.00 - Per 2024 Conservation Cost Share Guidelines

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve using allocated design funds within the Conservation Cost Share account to complete the survey and design.

MOTION:

Moved by _____ and seconded by _____ to approve the use of \$6,625.00 of allocated design funds within the Conservation Cost Share account to complete the survey and design. Motion _____.

NOTE: AGENDA AND MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 23, 2021, BOARD MEETING

ITEM: **Conservation Cost Share Program – Special Project Guidelines**

ITEM NO: 5b

DATE: **March 23, 2021**

PRESENTER: David Baird

DESCRIPTION: Our Ag and Equipment Staff have been seeing an increased interest from property owners in installing wildlife ponds, habitats, wetland creation/enhancement, and similar practices. At the same time, many of these landowners are not looking to enter some of the more rigorous programs offered through some of the NRCS programs.

District Staff is requesting \$50,000 in Conservation Cost Share funding to develop a pilot program to determine the actual demand for these practices, how the program should be structured, and whether it should be incorporated into the District's Conservation Cost Share Program annually.

The initial pilot would seek to fund 2-3 projects in Sussex County. The District would complete the initial design using 100% cost-share funds. The implementation could be completed by the District, the landowner, or another contractor, and cost-share funding would be available for at least 75% of the cost of implementation.

The program aims to improve landowners' access to voluntary conservation activities while meeting the water quality goals in the TMDLs, Watershed Implementation Plans, etc., for various watersheds.

RECOMMENDATION: **Approve \$50,000 in Conservation Cost Share Funds for Special Projects to establish a Pilot Cost Share Program for the Creation of Wildlife Ponds, Habitats, Wetlands, and Related Practices.**

MOTION: Moved by _____, seconded by _____, to approve \$50,000 in Conservation Cost Share Funds towards Special Projects to establish a Pilot Cost Share Program for the Creation of Wildlife Ponds, Habitat, Wetlands, and Related Practices. Motion _____.

MINUTES FROM MARCH 23, 2021

Conservation Cost Share Program – Special Project Guidelines

Received request to approve \$50,000 in Conservation Cost Share Funds towards Special Projects to establish a Pilot Cost Share Program for the Creation of Wildlife Ponds, Habitats, Wetlands, and related practices.

Ag and Equipment Staff have been seeing an increased interest from property owners in installing wildlife ponds, wildlife habitats, wetland creation/enhancement, and similar practices. The initial pilot would seek to fund two to three projects in Sussex County. The District would complete the initial design using 100% cost-share funds. The implementation could be completed by the District, the landowner, or other contractors, and cost-share funding would be available for at least 75% of the cost of implementation.

Moved by Dale Ockels and seconded by Joe Booth to approve \$50,000 in Conservation Cost Share Funds towards Special Projects to establish a Pilot Cost Share Program for the creation of wildlife ponds, habitats, wetlands, and related practices. The board will also approve proposed projects. Motion passed. (7 yes, 0 no)

PROJECTS UTILIZING DESIGN COST SHARE FUNDS SINCE MARCH 2021

Project	Amount	Status
Progress School Rd.	\$ 6,973.25	implemented
Wagenhoffer	\$ 5,347.50	addressing NRCS project first
Riley Poultry Farm	\$ 8,881.25	TBD
Yoder Wetlands	\$ 4,316.25	Construction Summer 2024
Carlisle Farms		In Development
O'Boyle		TBD
Total	\$ 25,518.25	