

ONTARIO COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Board of Directors Meeting
March 19, 2025
Minutes

Meeting held at the Cornell Cooperative Extension (District Office)

PRESENT

DIRECTORS: Vice Chairman Jim Malyj, Ed Jackson, Dale Stell (4:10pm), Amanda Amadon (4:14pm), Mark Venuti (4:37pm)

ABSENT: Chairman Sam Casella, Ken Livermore

STAFF: Megan Webster, Diana Thorn, Jeremy Paris

USDA

FSA: Joann Rogers

NRCS: Dan Weykman

CALL TO ORDER REGULAR MEETING

Vice Chairman Malyj called the regular meeting to order at 4:05pm and led the pledge to the flag.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Diana reviewed her Treasurer's Report with the Board, which includes the financial statements for February 28, 2025. Megan has reviewed and signed payrolls #4 and #5; the February bank statements; and the reconciliation reports from QuickBooks. All bank accounts are reconciled successfully through February 28th.

District Savings Certificate of Deposit #2 matured. It was rolled over for 90-days at a rate of 4.20%. The CD earned \$720.14.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Ed Jackson

1. Ed shared that Seneca County is hosting the Onsite Treatment Network (OTN) training and inquired if anyone from OCSWCD was going to attend. After reviewing the provided flyer with staff, Megan discerned that this is NOT the OTN training and it would not be of benefit to staff.

FSA

Joann Rogers

County Committee (COC): The next COC meeting is on Tuesday, 03/25/2025 at 9AM

EMERGENCY COMMODITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ECAP): payments to eligible agricultural producers of eligible commodities for the 2024 crop year to help commodity producers mitigate the impacts of increased input costs and falling commodity prices; for more information: <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/tools/informational/fact-sheets/emergency-commodity-assistance-program-ecap> factsheet or website: <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/ecap>

Dairy Margin Coverage Program: has been announced for 2025, enrollment started on 01/29/2025 with a deadline of 03/31/2025; for more information <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/resources/programs/dairy-margin-coverage-program-dmc>

Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) & Price Loss Coverage (PLC): has been announced for 2025, enrollment started on 01/21/2025 with a deadline of 04/15/2025; for more information: <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/resources/programs/arc-plc>

Disaster Programs: FSA offers a variety of disaster programs that assist with honeybee losses, livestock losses, milk losses, tree and vine losses, and feed losses. We request producers contact the office if they have any weather related losses to report.

Farm Program Loans:

Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL): interest rates range from 4.250% to 4.625% for terms from 3 years to 12 years; the FSFL program has a variety of loan options from bulk tanks, hay barns, grain bins/dryers, telehandlers and storage coolers just to name a few; [farm storage facility loan programs fact sheet july 2022.pdf \(usda.gov\)](#)

Market Assistance Loans (MAL's) are short-term commodity loans with interest rate of 5.250% for grain stored in bins. [mal ldp fact sheet.pdf \(usda.gov\)](#)

Farm Loan: has a variety of loans available and funding is still available. **Farm Loan staff:** Abbey Combs (abbey.combs@usda.gov), Acting Farm Loan Manager; and Kim Weykman (Kimberly.veykman@usda.gov), and Denise Buisch (denise.buisch@usda.gov) assist with new farm loan inquiries; Abbey and Kim can be reached at 585-394-0525 ext. 2 and Denise can be reached at 315-946-9912 ext. 112.

Farm Record: if new producers are interested in getting their farm records established please have them contact the office to make an appointment to get these established; here is a factsheet for your reference: [farmersgov-getstarted-factsheet-06-15-2021.pdf](#)

Reminder to complete the AD-1026 form PRIOR to any clearing or tiling projects.

Please feel free to refer any inquiries on any FSA programs or what programs we have to offer by contacting our office at 585-394-0525 ext. 2. In addition to myself there are Program Analysts: Faith Avedisian, and Courtney Kautz; Sarah Potter has left FSA.

NRCS

Dan Weykman – No report.

➤ **All Programs**

- FY25 Application deadline was November 1, 2024.
 - ~35 applications submitted
 - ACT-NOW – expedited contracting approvals for specific funding pools. 8 high tunnel applications selected, 7 contracted in January/February. 1 will be signed shortly
 - IRA funds appropriated in 2022

➤ **EQIP**

- FY25 Round 2 signup: deadline was 3/11/25.

- 15 applications received: Cover Crops, High Tunnels, Forestry, Combustion System Improvement (engine replacement with electric or more efficient)
- Existing Contracts Payments:
 - ~\$44,405– Brush Mgmt, Cover Crop, Forest Stand Improvement
- **CSP**
 - FY25 Round 1: 1 applicant eligible, awaiting preapproval
 - FY25 Round 2: 3/11/25 deadline. 2 applications, 1 forestry, 1 cropland.
 - Existing Contracts:
 - Annual payments complete FY24
 - Remaining \$27960 paid by Jan 31.
 - 15 Total contracts active
 - All contracts will now have \$4000/year minimum payment
- **Food Security Act Determinations**
 - On going priority
 - All wetland determination requests are now being completed by 2 Area (15 counties) staff, 80%+ of their job duties
 - Backlog of both HEL & WC remain, slowly progressing
 - **Reminder—AD-1026 to be completed for cropland activities (tiling, clearing) with FSA staff for NRCS assessment.
- **Staffing**
 - Liv-Ont-Yates team is now at 4 staff from 7 in January
 - Julie Miller, DC, Yates
 - Dan Tighe, RC, Livingston
 - Dan Weykman, RC, Ontario
 - Ali Barner, Prog Spec, Livingston duty station
 - Also lost Area Engineering help—J. Paris (lucky for SWCD!!)

MINUTES

Vice Chairman Malyj asked for any comments, changes, or corrections to the minutes from February 19, 2025. The following motion was offered:

Motion that the minutes of February 19, 2025 be accepted as submitted.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Dale Stell.

All in favor, motion approved. (Mark Venuti not present yet)

Resolution #20250319-01

BILLS

A spreadsheet was provided that shows the bills that appear in the Abstract listed with more detail and in their current status. The bills were available for review.

Motion to approve the bills as submitted and Abstract #3 in the amount of \$49,794.71.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Amanda Amadon.

Vice Chairman Malyj reviewed and signed the bills earlier today.

All in favor, motion approved. (Mark Venuti not present yet)

Resolution #20250319-02

Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and the February financial statements.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Dale Stell.

All in favor, motion approved. (Mark Venuti not present yet)

Resolution #20250319-03

STAFF REPORT

Jeremy Paris

Jeremy introduced himself and reviewed his experience.

The Board welcomed Jeremy.

Megan shared that Jeremy has started right in helping with ongoing projects and project planning.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence was going around the room.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Megan Webster, District Manager Report

Megan explained that now that Jeremy is here and working, we have additional opportunities.

Job Approval Authority

Megan explained Job Approval Authority to the Board and shared that this gives Jeremy the ability to sign off on certain NRCS approved practices. His JAA approvals will be kept on file with the District.

Motion to acknowledge Job Approval Authority for Jeremy Paris for specific NRCS practices.

Motion made by Dale Stell, seconded by Jim Malyj.

All in favor, motion approved. (Mark Venuti not present yet)

Resolution #20250319-04

Seneca County SWCD

Megan explained to the Board that Seneca County SWCD is interested in contracting with OCSWCD for Jeremy's services and JAA. She stated that we will create an Agreement for Services similar to the current agreement we have for Alaina Robarge to provide Educational Services to Seneca County SWCD.

Motion to approve entering into an Agreement for Services with Seneca County SWCD for Jeremy Paris to provide project support and JAA services.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Amanda Amadon.

All in favor, motion approved. (Mark Venuti not present yet)

Resolution #20250319-05

Ranking Sheet

Megan discussed with the Board the need to formalize an internal project ranking procedure now that we have a large number of projects and so many funding sources. She explained that staff have been working on this and she described the ranking sheet that has been developed based on staff discussions. She reiterated that this will be an internal ranking structure only. Potential projects will earn points based on a range of criteria including but not limited to things like watershed plans, 9E plans, AEM action plan and AEM planning unit, project readiness, match, new producer status, and proximity to a water resource.

Motion to approve the internal project ranking procedure recommended by Megan and the staff.

Motion made by Dale Stell, seconded by Ed Jackson.

All in favor, motion approved. (Mark Venuti not present yet)

Resolution #20250319-06

Vehicle

Megan reported that the PO has been sent to the dealership for the new Toyota Rav4. The trade in offer extended by the dealership was not acceptable so we will arrange to sell the existing vehicle on Auctions International once the new vehicle arrives.

Grants & Projects Updates

Ag NPS Round 28

Megan reported that the engineer is working on the final design for the waste transfer system at J Minns Farms. Once the design is completed the project will begin.

CRF Round 7

Megan shared that we are working on the final plans for all three projects in this round.

CRF Round 8

Megan reported that we are waiting on contracts for this round. Additionally, we have not been given any update on the tracks that include IRA funds.

AEM Strategic Plan

Megan explained that we are working on our next AEM Strategic Plan for 2026-2030. The completed plan is due this fall. At this time, we are sharing our draft with partner agencies and seeking public comment.

AEM Implementation

The projects at Hickory Lane and Catalpa are planned for spring. The Rogers project is planned for summer and the Reifsteck project for summer-fall. Staff are still working with Amberg on a revised budget and design.

GLRI

Megan shared that we have three projects we are planning for spring implementation. They will be for Strykers, DeHond, and Fa-Ba.

NY Grown & Certified

B & M Cattle is moving along with their project. They have the barn done and are working on getting the concrete installed. We hope to close this project out in April.

NFWF SOGL: Lake Ontario Basin Regenerative Agriculture Implementation Project

Megan reported that we are being told that the funding is available and she will be vouchering for it once the project planning is finalized.

WQIP Round 20

Megan shared that this award was recently featured on the news and on DEC's website. She reminded Board members that there is a training requirement for these funds. Megan has the video of the virtual training from Cornell Local Roads. She has organized two virtual meeting times to show the video to staff from municipalities that have been awarded funding or that are interested in applying for the next round of funding. Training must be completed before the contracts can be executed.

Mark Venuti arrived at 4:37pm

Megan reported that she and Jeremy are meeting with Town and Village of Naples representatives for the Naples Creek Planning Grant awarded in this round. Culvert replacement and aquatic passage considerations are being reviewed.

Seneca Pure Waters SNPR

Megan applied for funding for two projects. One will be at the Kashong Conservation Area and the other is a continuation of work we did on Armstrong Road last year. Awards will be announced in May.

Ontario County Water Resources Council

2024 Projects

Tucker and Jeremy have surveyed the project at J Minns and they are working on the final design. This should be installed this spring. The project on West Swamp Rd is scheduled with Ontario County DPW for spring installation.

2025 WRC Implementation Projects

Megan announced that all three of our applications were funded. The Sandy Bottom Shoreline Stabilization project was awarded at a lower amount than requested. Megan is working with the Town of Richmond on a design. Megan is meeting with DEC at the site to discuss permitting.

The other two projects funded include stabilization along Jones Road in the Town of Bristol and an Erosion and Sediment Control project on Rocky Run with Calman Farms in the Town of Hopewell. We will work with the municipalities and the County on designs and we will follow up with DEC on permitting.

EFLC

Megan will attend a meeting Monday, March 24th. We continue to wait on contracts and more information regarding capacity and implementation funding. The District has projects lined up for implementation as soon as funds are available. The contract periods for both capacity and implementation were back dated and are already in progress.

Envirothon

Alaina is working on planning this year's regional Envirothon. The District partners with Yates and Seneca Counties to share the event and the related costs. A change for this year includes a porta-potty at the site since the nearest building with facilities is a long walk away and takes the students out of the competition for a significant amount of time.

Motion to approve the purchase of supplies including but not limited to food and t-shirts, and the rental of a porta-potty for the 2025 Regional Envirothon not to exceed \$1,500 per the budget.

Motion made by Amanda Amadon, seconded by Ed Jackson.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20250319-07

Megan reported that she has been in correspondence with the County Planning Department and FLCC regarding the possible new building. She will be meeting with representatives later this week to assist in developing language to promote partnerships for use in fund raising. No final designs or cost assessments are available at this time.

Upcoming Events:

DEC endorsed 4 Hours Erosion and Sediment Control course – March 27th

Soil Health Workshop / Manure Roadshow – March 28th

Road Salt Reduction Grant required training - March 31st and April 1st

Tree and Shrub Sale Pick-up – April 25th & 26th

Vice Chairman Malyj shared that there have been discussions in his Town regarding battery pod installations. Megan had no knowledge of this. Mark added that municipalities are working to consider developing code for such structures.

Megan shared that a watershed group in Chautauqua is challenging the wetlands delineation changes. The Board asked her to put together a draft comment for the DEC comment period.

Dale reported to the Board that the meeting time change is really not helpful to him

Motion to change the meeting time back to 4:30pm.

Motion made by Dale Stell, seconded by Ed Jackson.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20250319-08

Next meeting: April 16, 2025 4:30PM

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 4:52pm.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Amanda Amadon.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20250319-09

Ontario County Soil and Water Conservation District

2025 Board Meeting Schedule

Wednesday January 15, 2025 4:30-6:30 PM

Wednesday February 19, 2025 4:30-6:30 PM

Wednesday March 19, 2025 4:30-6:30 PM

Wednesday April 16, 2025 4:30-6:30 PM

Wednesday May 21, 2025 4:30-6:30 PM

Wednesday June 18, 2025 4:30-6:30 PM

Wednesday July 16, 2025 4:30-6:30 PM

Wednesday August 20, 2025 4:30-6:30 PM

Wednesday September 17, 2025 4:30-6:30 PM

Wednesday October 15, 2025 4:30-6:30 PM

Wednesday November 19, 2025 4:30-6:30 PM

Wednesday December 17, 2025 4:30-6:30 PM

ECAP

EMERGENCY COMMODITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



Overview

Authorized by the American Relief Act, 2025, the Emergency Commodity Assistance Program (ECAP) provides economic assistance payments to eligible agricultural commodity producers for the 2024 crop year.

These payments help producers mitigate the impacts of increased input costs and falling commodity prices.

Eligible Acreage

- Acreage reported as intended for harvest, haying, grazing, silage, or other similar purpose is eligible.
- 50 % of the acreage on the farm reported as prevented from being planted.
- In cases where an initial eligible commodity failed or was prevented from being planted and the producer planted a subsequent eligible commodity for the 2024 crop year, eligible acreage is limited to the initial crop.

- Acreage reported as a planted or prevented planted subsequent eligible commodity after an initial crop that is not an eligible commodity or a fruit, vegetable, or wild rice, and the combination is not an approved double cropping situation (for example, an initial crop of mixed forage followed by a subsequent crop of corn).
- Acreage that has been reported with both an initial commodity and a double crop commodity will be eligible for payment on both plantings if in an approved double cropping combination.
- Acreage that has been reported with both an insured initial small grain crop that was intentionally destroyed before harvest by grazing or other means and is timely reported to the producer's crop insurance provider and is then followed with a subsequent eligible commodity that is not an approved double crop scenario, is eligible for payment on both plantings of eligible commodities.

Producer Eligibility

Eligible producers must meet the following requirements:

- Be actively engaged in farming.
- Have an interest in input expenses for a covered commodity.
- Have reported acreage of eligible commodities to FSA for the 2024 crop year using an FSA-578, Report of Acreage form.
- Have reported acres that were prevented from being planted to FSA for the 2024 crop year on an FSA-576 (if applicable).

Note: Producers who have not previously reported 2024 crop year acreage or filed a notice of loss for prevented planted crops, must submit an acreage report by the August 15, 2025, deadline.

- In cases where the same acreage of a commodity was reported with two different intended uses, FSA will not issue duplicate payments for that acreage based on each intended use and the ECAP application will need to be

adjusted to reflect one planting and intended use. If both intended uses were reported by the same producer, the producer will receive one payment based on the eligible acres of the commodity. If the two different intended uses

were reported by two different producers, the producer with responsibility for input expenses for the acres will be eligible.

Eligible Commodity Payment Rates (per acre)

BARLEY		\$21.67	RICE		\$76.94 (LONG AND MEDIUM)	
CHICK-PEAS		\$31.45 (SMALL) \$24.02 (LARGE)	SORG-HUM		\$42.52	
CORN		\$42.91	SOY-BEANS		\$29.76	
COTTON		\$84.74 (UPLAND & EXTRA-LONG STAPLE COTTON)	WHEAT		\$30.69	
LENTILS		\$19.30	 OIL SEEDS			
OATS		\$77.66	 CANOLA	\$31.83	 RAPESEED	\$23.63
PEANUTS		\$75.51	 CRAMBE	\$19.08	 SAFFLOWER	\$26.32
PEAS		\$16.02	 FLAX	\$20.97	 SESAME	\$16.83
			 MUSTARD	\$11.36	 SUNFLOWER	\$27.23



Applying for ECAP

ECAP applicants can:

- Review and sign the pre-filled ECAP application mailed to producers who reported acreage of eligible commodities to FSA for the 2024 crop year and return to their FSA county office by one of the following methods:
 - ◆ In-person
 - ◆ Electronically using Box and One-span
 - ◆ Email
 - ◆ Fax
- Complete an application online at fsa.usda.gov/ecap using a secure login.gov account.
- Visit a local FSA county office to request an application.

Only one application is required for all ECAP eligible commodities nationwide.

Producers must have the following forms on file with FSA for the 2024 crop year:

- [Form AD-2047](#), Customer Data Worksheet
- [Form CCC-901](#), Member Information for Legal Entities (if applicable)
- [Form CCC-9021](#) (if applicable), Farm Operating Plan for an Individual
- [Form CCC-902E](#) (if applicable), Farm Operating Plan for an entity
- Form CCC-943, 75 % of Average Gross Income from Farming, Ranching, or Forestry Certification (if applicable)
- [AD-1026](#), Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELIC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification

Payment Limitations

PAYMENT LIMIT	IF...
\$125,000	less than 75% of the average gross income of the person or legal entity for the 2020, 2021, and 2022 tax years is derived from farming, ranching, or forestry activities; and
\$250,000	not less than 75% of the average gross income of the person or legal entity for the 2020, 2021, and 2022 tax years is derived from farming, ranching, or forestry activities.

These payment limitations are separate from the payment limitations that apply to other programs. Gross income will be calculated based on the applicable three-year average (2020, 2021, and 2022) of the reported "total income" on IRS forms 1040, 1041, 1065, and 1120, or similar reported income.

A payment made to a legal entity will be attributed to those members who have a direct or indirect ownership interest in the legal entity, unless the payment of the legal entity has been reduced by the proportionate ownership interest of the member due to that member's ineligibility.

- [SF-3881](#), ACH Vendor/ Miscellaneous Payment Enrollment Form (Direct Deposit)

Except for the new Form CCC-943, most producers, especially those who have previously participated in FSA programs, will likely have these forms on file. However, those who are uncertain and want to confirm the status of their forms or need to submit the new Form-943, can contact their local [FSA county office](#).

ECAP Payments and Calculator

Payments will be issued as applications are approved and will be calculated using a flat payment rate for the eligible commodity multiplied by the eligible reported acres. Initial ECAP payments will be factored by 85% to ensure

total program payments do not exceed available funding. Payments are based on acreage and not production. For prevent plant acreage, ECAP will be limited to 50% of reported or determined acres. If additional funds remain FSA may issue a second payment.

For an ECAP payment estimate, producers are encouraged to visit fsa.usda.gov/ecap to use the ECAP online calculator.

For more details and access to the online application and calculation tool scan the QR code below.

