

**Empire State Chapter  
Soil and Water Conservation Society  
Annual Meeting  
December 4, 2001**

The Annual Meeting of the Empire State Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society was called to order at 9:55 AM by President, Karl Czymmek in Auburn, NY. Karl had everyone introduce himself or herself. A sign in sheet showed the following also were present:

|                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Jim Perry          | Scott Potter       |
| Bill Keating       | Dick Dale          |
| Tibor Horvath      | Charles Hyland     |
| Rick Neuman        | Dan Dostie         |
| Dale Gates         | Scott Fitscher     |
| Erwin Rice         | Don Lake           |
| Shawn Bossard      | Ed Moffett         |
| Mike Dennis        | Fred Gaffney       |
| Henry Kelsey       | Bruce Hopkins      |
| Margaret Fusco     | Leslie "Bill" Kick |
| Marilyn Stephenson | Richard Wildman    |
| Jim Calhoun        | Jim Scilen         |
| Gary Lamont        | Jim Hotaling       |
| Frank Winkler      | Jeff Carmichael    |
| John Lacey         | Dana Chapman       |
| Ellen Luchsinger   | Craig Cox          |
| Linda Szeliga      | Paul Webb          |
| Dan Weykman        | Elaine Dalrymple   |
| Tom DeRue          | Julie Burger       |

**2000 Annual Meeting Minutes** – The minutes of the 2000 Annual Meeting held at the Syracuse Holiday Inn were approved with a motion from Frank Winkler and a second by Scott Potter. Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report** – Jeff Carmichael presented the Treasurer's Report. The Empire Chapter is in decent shape financially. The fiscal year for the Chapter is October to September. The net worth of the Chapter last year in September was \$30,604. This year it is \$40,399. A major source of income for the Chapter is the sale of publications. Jeff reviewed the various accounts that the Chapter has including the checking, savings, 3 Money Market accounts, the Fletcher Scholarship Fund and the endowment fund. The Chapter members need to think about priorities for the best use of our funds. The Treasurer's Report was approved with a motion by Jim Hotaling and a second by Fred Gaffney. Motion carried.

**Election Report** – Linda Szeliga discussed that the ballots are due by December 15, 2001. So far, roughly 20% of the ballots have been returned. Next year we would like to have competition for the various officer positions.

**Membership Report** – Jeff Carmichael gave the report for Bub Barra. In January 1999, there were 171 members; in January 2000 there were 182 members; in September 2001 there were 162 members. There is a downward trend in membership in the society nationwide and New York membership reflects this. All of us need to help get members and we need to do this one person at a time. We are a membership driven organization.

**Newsletter Report** – Karl Czymmek gave the report for Craig Schutt. The goal was to get two newsletters out this year. Craig is always looking for articles.

**Scholarship Report** – Ellen Luchsinger reported that four scholarships are given out annually plus the Ron Fletcher Memorial Scholarship which is available only to Paul Smith's students. This year there were no applications for the Fletcher Scholarship. Ellen sent mailings to 60 colleges and universities and to NRCS and SWCD. There were 11 applicants and each applicant was required to submit an essay. Ellen asked that if there is any interest by members to serve on the Scholarship Committee to contact her. Present members include Scott Fitscher, Bill Keating, and Jim Perry. The winners of this year's awards will be announced at lunch. Each winner receives \$500 and a membership to SWCS.

**Awards Report** – Margaret Fusco reported that there were no applications for the awards this year and we need to work at reviving this program. The fact that there was no fall newsletter may have hurt on the publicity. The awards are the SWCS commendation award, a media award, a merit award, a special achievement award, and an educator award. A special award was given this year to John Wildeman. He received a \$250 gift certificate to Cabella's.

**Publications Report** - Don Lake reported that the new Stormwater Management Design Manual is now done and should be available in two weeks. It sells for \$25. 100 copies have been printed and 67 are already sold. This publication is also available on CD and can be downloaded from the DEC stormwater website. 34 courses have been proposed related to stormwater and erosion and sediment control including 65 days of training. 400 Erosion and Sediment Control (the big blue books) books, 240 Field Handbooks, and 280 new design manuals will be needed. Fred Gaffney made a motion to give Don the authority purchase of up to 300 design manuals and more copies as needed. Frank Winkler seconded the motion and the motion carried. It costs \$16.50 to produce the design manual. Jeff needs to make sure there are enough of the other manuals. Don reported that Syracuse University is again sponsoring courses in stormwater management. This will be the fifth year that they have done so. They will be given in two locations – Fishkill and Liverpool. Karl Czymmek thanked Don Lake for all his work and also Jim Hotaling whose staff maintains the inventory and oversees the selling of the manuals through the Cayuga SWCD.

**Envirothon Report** – Jeff Carmichael reported that the Empire Chapter is the second biggest contributor (after the District Employees Assoc.) to the State Envirothon. We give \$2,000 each year. 56 teams and counties participate including approximately 300 students. Jim Hotaling suggested that a brochure about our scholarships be included in Envirothon handouts so that high school students that plan on attending college will know about the scholarships. The brochure should be available at regional and county Envirothon events as well. Shawn Bossard commented that students could get hurt on their financial aid applications if scholarships are received since they must be reported. Dan Dostie said that scholarships and awards should be promoted at SWCD training sessions and Dan volunteered to do this. Henry Kelsey also volunteered to help Ellen promote the scholarships.

**National Report** – Dana Chapman reported that New York is part of the Northeast Division, which also includes Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Washington DC, and the New England states. This is Dana's last year as the Northeast Division rep to the national association. There is now a job description for the position of Regional Rep. The Regional Rep. should go to the annual meetings of each chapter in the Northeast region. The Northeast Leadership Conference is March 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> 2002. Stormwater issues will be discussed along with the CPESC program. Dana encouraged New York members to attend the conference, which will be held in New Hampshire this time. Dana reported that the Soil and Water Conservation Journal and Conservation Voices publications have been combined into one publication. Dana commented that membership is declining nationally and everyone needs to try to get new members. The new chief of NRCS seems to support the SWCS strongly.

### **Other Business**

Karl Czymmek reported that survey results from the membership indicated that members wanted more **professional development sessions**.

Regional training sessions on the Phosphorus Index were held throughout the state and over 80 people attended.

Karl also reported that the location for the 2002 SWCS **National Annual Meeting** is Indianapolis. In 2003, it will be held in Spokane, Washington; in 2004 it will be in Minneapolis, Minnesota and in 2005 in Rochester, NY.

Jim Perry asked about why we have **service charges** on our checking account when some banks offer combined checking and savings accounts that earn interest. Jeff said that he hadn't had time to check out various banks and their options. Jim will help if he can to go to local banks and find the best deals.

Gary Lamont asked about the **committee structure** of the Empire Chapter. Karl said that it needs work and that the council is trying to attach this via the mission session, which will follow today's business session.

Julie Burger asked about **student members**. Cornell is the only official chapter and there are no active members at present. Jim ? wondered if the problem was the students or the leadership and said he feels it is probably a leadership problem.

**Web Page** – The old web page has been “killed.” We need someone who has the time and ability to design a new one. Fred Gaffney offered to work with someone. Other names suggested who might be able to help were Bob Elders and John Whitman.

**Adjournment** – The business meeting of the Empire Chapter adjourned at 11:05 AM.

**The remainder of the day – Vision for the Future, Awards, and Conservation in China**

Craig Cox, the Executive Vice President of the national SWCS spoke to the group on the topic - ‘National Perspective on the Future of Conservation.’

Ellen Luchsinger announced, during lunch, the students who received scholarship awards. They were Andrea Chaloux, Cornell University; Stacy Davis, Plattsburgh State University; Quentin Gahan, Plattsburgh State University; Lindsay Wilkins, Clarkson University.

After lunch, a draft mission and vision statement and ‘evidences of success’ reviewed and discussed. The draft Empire Chapter vision statement that was presented was: The vision of the Empire Chapter is to be a key network for the multiplication of innovative natural resource management solutions by providing various forums for the exchange of knowledge and ideas. The draft mission statement that was presented was: The Soil and Water Conservation Society fosters the science and the art of soil, water and related natural resource management to achieve sustainability. We promote and practice an ethic recognizing the interdependence of people and the environment. **The NYS Empire Chapter protects, enhances, and improves the natural resources of NYS through education and multi-disciplinary development.**

Someone suggested that the vision statement be shortened so that it ends after the word ‘solutions.’ Another member suggested that the word ‘professional’ be added before the last word ‘development’ in the mission statement.

A draft list of ‘evidences of success’ was handed out and small groups added items and suggested goals.

Karl Czymmek showed slides of a trip he took to China to close the meeting.

Submitted by Elaine Dalrymple, Secretary