



CORTLAND COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT (SWCD)

2016 ANNUAL PLAN OF ACTION

VISION STATEMENT: Assist with the wise use and conservation of Cortland County's natural resources, and the maintenance and improvement of our environment.

MISSION STATEMENT: To provide education, technical and financial expertise and assistance relating to environmental management to units of government, private landowners, other land users and other decision makers to facilitate the wise use and conservation of our natural resources.

ACTIVITIES: The SWCD assists citizens and units of local government in making sound decisions regarding the management of soil, water, and related natural resources based on their priorities. We develop and implement programs and services as necessary to address the needs of the county. Furthermore, SWCD strives to improve water quality, control and abate nonpoint sources of pollution, assist in the control of floods, protect the tax base, protect public lands, utilize resources to enhance the quality of life, and protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the people of the county. SWCD assists in the implementation of resource management decisions to accomplish these things by seeking and coordinating technical and financial assistance from federal, state, and local governments, and private sources.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PROGRAM DELIVERY: Our guiding principles are to practice teamwork and to communicate, coordinate and cooperate with other agencies, individuals, groups, and units of government; promote mutual respect, support, trust, and honesty among staff and between staff and customers; share the leadership and ownership, the credit and the responsibility. We strive to improve efficiency and effectiveness by putting quality first, empowering people to make decisions, demonstrating professionalism and dedication, and striving for continuous improvement.

Citizens and units of local government with identified resource problems will be given service on a first come basis with consideration also given to the resource concern, the severity of the problem, and the location of the problem. Units of state and federal government will be given service utilizing the same priority system.

Priority Watersheds include:

1. Dry Creek/Otter Creek	2. Upper Tioughnioga River	3. Otselic River
4. Lower Tioughnioga River	5. Virgil Creek	6. Owego Creek
		7. Skaneateles Lake

SWCD will coordinate activities with the Cortland Field Office of the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to maximize the utilization of all available resources.

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 and update strategy; Report Card	High Priority	March	Smith	
b. Implement strategy and AEM Base program	High Priority	Ongoing	Staff	
c. Provide support to CCE and Farm Bureau for education and outreach	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff	
d. Facilitate and participate in County Agricultural Emergency Response and support Rural Road Safety Week	Medium Priority	Ongoing April	Barber Smith	
e. Year 11 Close-out	High Priority	June	Murphy	
f. Update and manage AEM Database; USC data	High Priority	Ongoing	Murphy, Smith Barber	
g. Provide assistance in preparing CNMP's; pursue AEM Planner certification	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber Murphy	
h. Upper T. Round XVI implementation-Currie; close out	High Priority	June	Russell Barber	
i. Upper Tioughnioga Round XVII implementation-Dawson; close out	High Priority	July	Russell Barber	
j. Lower Tioughnioga Round XVII implementation-Evanick; close-out	High Priority	July	Murphy Barber	
k. Otselic Round XVII implementation-Tuning; close out	High Priority	July	Smith Barber	
l. Upper Tioughnioga Round XVIII implementation-Currie; close out	High Priority	June	Russell Barber	

m. Otselic Round XVIII implementation-VanErden cover crops; close out	High Priority	Ongoing	Murphy Barber	
n. Upper Tioughnioga Grazing Round XVIII implementation-Eldridge; close out	High Priority	Ongoing	Russell, Smith, Barber	
o. Lower Tioughnioga Round XIX implementation-Drake; close out	High Priority	September	Russell Barber	
p. Upper Tioughnioga Cover Crop Round XIX implementation -Head, Griswold, Forbes, Currie	High Priority	Ongoing	Murphy Barber	
q. Factory Brook Round XX implementation-McMahon	High Priority	Ongoing	Russell Smith	
r. Otselic Round XX implementation-Ruschmann	High Priority	Ongoing	Murphy	
s. E. Br. Tioughnioga River Ag Waste Round XXI implementation-Whey Street Dairy	High Priority	Ongoing	Russell Smith	
t. Upper Tioughnioga AGNPS Reduction Round XXI implementation-Butts; East River	High Priority	Ongoing	Smith Murphy	
u. Grant applications, contract development, and coordination with other counties	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber Murphy	
v. Climate Resilient Agriculture Farming implementation and technical assistance	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber Murphy	
2. Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance (FOLLOWPA)				
a. Administer grants-close 2011/12, 12/13, and 13/14	High Priority	Nov 15, Jan 16, Sept 16	Reidy	
b. Technical and financial assistance to implement BMPs	High Priority	Ongoing	As assigned	
c. Conduct water quality monitoring	Medium Priority	Ongoing	As assigned	
d. Work with lake associations to implement aquatic weed harvesting and other management strategies	High Priority	Ongoing	Reidy Barber	
e. Work with lake associations to implement lake management plans	High Priority	Ongoing	Reidy Barber	
f. Coordinate education and outreach activities	Medium Priority	Ongoing	As assigned	

3. Upper Susquehanna Coalition (USC)				
a. Attend regular meetings	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber Popoli	
b. Legislative efforts, program administration including Ag Team Leader activities and CIG grant administration and implementation	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber	
c. Seek funding for best management practices to help meet TMDL	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber	
d. Promote and support Upper Susquehanna Coalition; includes services for Stream Corridor Mgmt. Program, Emergency Stream Intervention Program, Riparian Buffer Workgroup, and Wetlands Program as TWT representative.	High Priority	Ongoing	Popoli Barber Murphy	
4. General Water Quality Monitoring, Investigations, and Assistance				
a. Data collection and analysis-update and implement SWCD County WQ Monitoring Plan	Low Priority	Ongoing	Reidy	
b. Provide technical assistance to County Health, NYSDEC, municipalities, etc. relating to water quality management, including use of Mod-Flow	High Priority	Ongoing	Reidy	
c. Conduct Landfill Monitoring, Data Management and Reporting	High Priority	Ongoing	Reidy	
d. Assist municipalities implementing aquifer protection and stormwater management	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Reidy	
e. Implement Water Quality Implementation Project Grants for hydroseeding and Dry Creek Stabilization	High Priority	Ongoing	Popoli Barber Reidy	
5. Skaneateles Lake Watershed Agricultural Program (SLWAP)				
a. Facilitate use of cooperative agreement funding for watershed activities.	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber Russell	

b. Represent Cortland County at Watershed Agricultural Program Review Committee meetings and act as liaison to Board	High Priority	Ongoing	Russell	
6. Cortland County Water Quality Coordinating Committee (WQCC)				
a. Facilitate Annual Meeting and review the County Water Quality Strategy	Low Priority	Oct	Barber	
B. Agricultural and 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 – including Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)				
a. Assist USDA in promoting programs including Special Streambank Stabilization Initiative and Conservation Reserve Program	High Priority	Ongoing	As assigned	
b. Cooperate to perform conservation planning and implement best management practices	Medium Priority	Ongoing	As assigned	
c. Provide technical assistance through contribution agreement	High Priority	Ongoing	As assigned	
2. Waste Management				
a. Assist Ag Plastics Baler Program	Low Priority	Ongoing	Popoli	
b. Support ag and municipal composting efforts including Special Project (Part B)	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Popoli	
3. Farmland Protection/ Agricultural Viability				
a. Provide technical assistance to county farmland protection board and local municipalities	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Barber	
b. Provide technical assistance to farmers and resource information for program applications	Medium Priority	Ongoing	As assigned	
c. Serve on Board of New York Agricultural Land Trust to support agricultural land protection	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Barber	

d. Attend County Local Ag Promotion Subcommittee Meetings and support Ag Summit, Ag Awareness Week, Ag Celebration Luncheon	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Barber	
e. Complete soil group worksheets for landowners	High Priority	Jan-Feb	Popoli	
f. Complete farmland easement monitoring for county on existing eased parcels	High Priority	Oct	Popoli	
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. Coordinated Review Committee				
a. Provide inventory and evaluation reports to committee, county planning board, and municipalities related to soils, stormwater management, erosion/sediment control, nonpoint source pollution, and agriculture	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Russell Reidy As assigned	
2. Management of Flooding, Stormwater, Erosion/Sediment and Stream Corridors				
a. Provide assistance for compliance with Code for Town of Cortlandville including stormwater plan review, site maintenance inspections and reporting.	High Priority	Ongoing	Reidy Popoli	
b. Review development plans and landuse plans for natural resource impacts as requested by other communities and developers	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Reidy As assigned	
c. Provide other technical assistance as requested by municipalities and landowners	Medium Priority	Ongoing	As assigned	
d. Participate in Emergency and Disaster Planning, Management and Response; attend LEPC meetings	High Priority	March Ongoing	Barber Smith Popoli	
e. Assist City of Cortland with flood mitigation project and grant for Otter Creek	High Priority	Ongoing	Reidy Barber	

f. Provide assistance to landowners and communities to identify and apply for funding and grants	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Barber As assigned	
3. Permits				
a. Assistance in applying for and complying with state/federal permits for protection of waters, wetlands, and resource extraction where projects are consistent with our environmental goals	Priority - Varies	Ongoing	Russell Popoli	
4. Homeowner Inventory/Evaluations				
a. Assist with soils/plant materials/water management	Medium Priority	Ongoing	As assigned	
5. Resource Conservation and Development				
a. Living Snow Fences- provide technical assistance for planning, design and implementation	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Smith	
b. Hydroseeding - provide services as requested and consistent with policy.	High Priority	April-Sep	Popoli	
c. Alternative Energy – provide education, information and technical assistance to landowners and municipalities related to planning, review and implementation of alternative energy technologies and practices	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff	
d. Climate Resiliency – support landowners interested in applying for climate resiliency grants	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff	
D. Education and Outreach				
1. Conduct education programs to heighten awareness of local natural resource conservation concerns and resource management issues				
a. Envirothon - Local high school competition	High Priority	Feb-May	As assigned	
b. Conservation Field Days - 5th and 6th grades	High Priority	May-Sep	As assigned	
c. Spruce Up America - Tree planting with schools, municipalities, and community groups	Medium Priority	Feb-Apr	Miner	

d. River Clean-up – Coordinate event registration and trash disposal	High Priority	Jun-Sep	Staff	
e. Fund raising to support conservation education programs	High Priority	Ongoing	Miner	
f. Newsletter - publish at least annually; maintain database	High Priority	January Ongoing	Popoli Staff	
g. Website - maintain and update quarterly	High Priority	Ongoing	Miner	
h. Provide displays, and presentations at various public events and school functions as requested	Medium Priority	Ongoing	As assigned	
i. State-wide Committees/Programs - Water Quality Symposium, Conservation Skills Workshop, Operation Manual, etc.	Medium Priority	Ongoing	As assigned	
j. Stewardship Week – Provide materials to interested local churches	Low Priority	Feb-Apr	Miner	
k. Coordinate Rural Landowner Workshop(s)	Medium Priority	Jan-May	Popoli As assigned	
l. Coordinate Water Festival and Water Week activities	High Priority	Mar-Jun	Miner Staff	
2. Conduct outreach to heighten awareness of SWCD resource management activities				
a. County Legislators – Outreach at Leg. Session	High Priority	March	Staff	
b. State Legislators – attend NYACD Legislative Day; meet legislators during “Town Meetings”	High Priority	Feb/Mar Ongoing	Barber Board	
c. Media – maintain media contacts; contribute weekly article to Cortland Standard for publishing	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber Staff	
d. Coordinate SWCD 70 th Anniversary Celebration	High Priority	Mar-Jun	Barber Staff	
E. Service/Earned Income Programs				
1. Conduct programs as a service to assist in achieving natural resource conservation goals and help support district programs				
a. Spring Planting and Conservation Program including trucking of NYSDEC seedlings	High Priority	Jan-Apr	Miner Smith	

b. Pond stocking - bass, trout, minnows, other	Medium Priority	Feb-Jul	Popoli	
II. OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT				
A. Administration				
1. Review of Annual Plan – Staff and Board	High Priority	Quarterly	Barber	
2. Conduct bi-weekly staff meetings	High Priority	Ongoing	Staff	
3. Seek new grant funding and administer grants	High Priority	Ongoing	Staff	
4. Develop Annual Plan - forward to SWCC and County	High Priority	October	Barber Board	
5. Risk Management - review policies, blanket agreements, memoranda of understanding, etc.	High Priority	January	Board	
6. Board of Directors Meetings – conduct monthly meetings; Annual organizational meeting in January	High Priority	Monthly	Board	
7. FSA County Committee meetings	Medium Priority	Quarterly	Murphy	
8. County Legislative Committee meetings	High Priority	Monthly	Barber	
9. Coordination with other agencies and groups	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber As assigned	
10. Represent SWCD on committees/attend meetings - GIS Focus Group, Flooding Subcommittee, etc.	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Barber As assigned	
11. Maintain filing system and procedures	High Priority	Jun-Dec	Miner	
B. Personnel				
1. Evaluations - Conduct evaluations annually	High Priority	June	Barber Board	
2. Training and Training Plans – Develop employee and director training plans. Budget and promote training opportunities	High Priority	January	Barber Staff/Board	

3. Review SWCD Personnel Policies - update as needed	High Priority	Ongoing	Barber Board	
4. Administer State Contracts for Services	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Barber Miner	
5. Recruit volunteers/interns	Medium Priority	Ongoing	Staff Barber	
C. Financial				
1. Improve computer bookkeeping system	High Priority	Ongoing	Miner	
2. Private audit of books for grants and county	High Priority	Varies	Miner	
3. Annual Reports	High Priority	Jan-Feb	Barber Miner	
4. Capital Improvement Plan	High Priority	Feb-Mar	Barber Miner	
D. Equipment Management/Maintenance				
1. Maintain field equipment inventory - review in December	High Priority	Ongoing	Popoli	
2. Survey equipment - inventory and peg check	High Priority	Dec-Jan	Murphy	
3. Vehicles - maintenance, inspections, purchases	High Priority	Ongoing	Smith	
4. Computers and office equipment inventory and maintenance - review in December	High Priority	Ongoing	Miner	