



Genesee County Soil & Water Conservation District

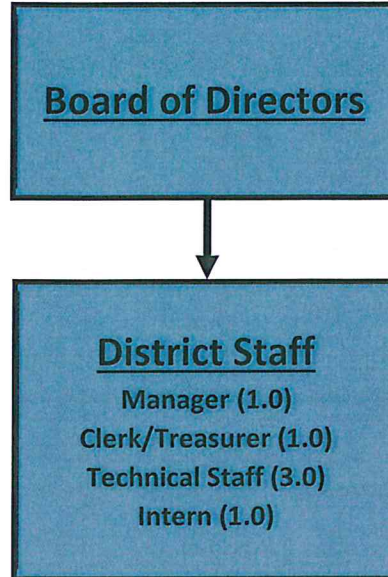
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Genesee County Soil & Water Conservation District

2023 Program Budget

Organizational Chart 2022



Appropriation Request Overview

The following document outlines both Genesee County Soil and Water Conservation District's (District) goals and objectives for 2023, as well as the District's request for funding from Genesee County for that fiscal year. In 2022, the District received an enhanced appropriation of \$21,960 from the County to support the addition of a staff member. The District added a third technician position in January 2022. Since then, the District has had to adjust employee's salaries mid-year due to inflation and additional increases have been budgeted for 2023. Cost-saving measures are being made to minimize the impact of additional salary and benefit expenses but maintaining the enhanced County support is critical to maintaining the current staff level.

2022 Key Accomplishments

With the County's support, the District has been able to provide technical and financial assistance to a variety of agricultural producers, landowners, and municipalities. Below are some of the highlights of work performed so far in 2022.

- New York State's Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) program supports the District's staff time to provide conservation planning to farm operations. This year is the first year of our AEM Round 17 contract, where we have \$219,984 of staff time, \$9,890 for

soil health testing, and \$100,000 for implementation projects available for 2022 and 2023

- Through the AEM program the District has provided technical assistance to 38 farms.
- Funding applications were submitted to the NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee on behalf of eight Genesee County farms for a total of \$894,742. If funded, these projects will help farms to reduce their impact on climate change and mitigate the impacts of extreme weather.
- The District utilized \$89,200 from the Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance (FL-LOWPA) to provide technical and financial assistance to improve surface and ground water quality. This includes support of the District's water quality monitoring program, as well as implementation of conservation practices.
- Conservation practices will have been completed on 14 farms, two towns, the Genesee County Agricultural Society, and two private landowner's properties with financial assistance from state and federal sources in 2022.
- \$6,000 in state funding was utilized to recycle tires for landowners within Genesee County. Over 2,400 tires have been recycled to date, with another event planned for the fall.
- The District's Conservation Tree and Shrub Program sold over 17,000 plants to landowners to promote reforestation, ground cover, and wildlife habitat improvements on their properties.
- The District's Fish Program has sold 1,032 fish so far in 2022, with another delivery planned for mid-October. These fish are used to enhance and maintain landowner's ponds.
- The District will have worked with at least six towns, the County and a private landowner to stabilize disturbed soils and prevent erosion with the hydroseeder in 2022. Several areas are planned to be hydroseeded in September 2022.
- The District has prepared to host a webinar on September 17, 2022, in partnership with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation staff and the Genesee County Fish & Game Protective Association, to educate the public on how to properly plant, protect, and maintain trees.
- The Genesee County Envirothon was resumed after having been cancelled the past two years due to the pandemic. 22 students from four schools participated in this

environmental education competition, learning about forestry, aquatics, soils, wildlife, and solid waste management. The winner, Alexander High School, represented Genesee County in the NYS Envirothon competition.

- A Conservation Intern position was hosted by the District to support the education and career development of a college student from Genesee County.
- Technical assistance was provided as members of or liaisons to the following entities: Genesee County Water Hookup Committee; NY Green; Genesee County Water Quality Coordinating Committee; Tonawanda Creek Watershed Committee; Oatka Creek Watershed Committee; Oak Orchard Creek Small Watershed Protection District; Genesee River Watershed Coalition of Conservation Districts; Chamber of Commerce Ag Committee; Genesee County Farmland Protection Board; and NYS Fish and Wildlife Management Board.

2023 District Goals and Objectives

The Genesee County Soil & Water Conservation District (District) has continued to serve Genesee County taxpayers by providing multiple services through the District's three program areas: conservation planning and technical assistance; research, inventory, and monitoring; and conservation education and outreach. Each year, the District completes an Annual Plan of Work, which outlines objectives to fulfill the District's mission in the three program areas. The District's objectives also align with the Genesee County Comprehensive Plan, especially to the agricultural land base, livable communities, technical assistance to local governments, shared services, and coordination items.

Below are the District's FY-2023 objectives and measurable outcomes as they pertain to its three core program areas.

Conservation Planning and Technical Assistance

1. Assist clients in developing and implementing conservation plans to protect, conserve, and enhance natural resources.
 - a. Continue to work with agricultural producers through the Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) program to provide conservation plans and protect the county's

natural resources. The AEM program provides funding to support technical and financial assistance for conservation planning on farm operations.

- b. Use the AEM process to apply for grants through various State and Federal funding programs for projects to implement on agricultural land. These programs typically target improvements to water quality or the mitigation of agricultural impacts on climate change.
- c. Continue to administer and implement 13 open grant contracts during 2022 (as well as any approved projects from the five funding applications that were submitted in May), and close at least four (4) of the currently open grant contracts.
- d. Assist with conservation planning, implementation, and assessments on non-agricultural land through grants and the District's fee-based and non-fee-based programs.
- e. Promote shared services with municipalities in the County by providing staff time, equipment, and materials to assist or support the planning, permitting, implementation, or financial assistance for various natural resource management projects, as requested. These activities may include:
 1. Hydroseeding bare soil to prevent erosion.
 2. Assisting in state and federal permit applications.
 3. Provide technical and financial assistance to reduce environmental impact at municipal-owned property, utilizing programs such as the FL-LOWPA program to improve water quality and quantity concerns.
 4. Implement best management practices in the watershed to help prevent flooding.
 5. Continue to assist municipalities with planning, as specified in local zoning laws, by conducting pond site reviews on private lands, create animal waste management plans, and to provide Agricultural Assessments for partial tax exemptions.
 6. Provide coordination and communication with other planning and environmental organizations, including: New York Green, Inc., Genesee River

Coalition of Districts, Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance, Oak Orchard Small Watershed Protection District, Tonawanda Creek Watershed Committee, Oatka Creek Watershed Committee, Water Quality Coordinating Committee, Chamber of Commerce Ag. Committee, the Genesee County Water System Hookup Administrative Review Committee, the Genesee County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board, the NYS Fish and Wildlife Management Board, and the Genesee County Planning Board.

- f. Design and implement habitat conservation practices, including forested and grass riparian buffers, pollinator habitats to provide vital pollination services for our agricultural community, and streambank stabilization that can protect municipal investments and infrastructure.

Research, Inventory & Monitoring

1. The District will continue to conduct surveys, investigations, and research relating to the character of soil erosion, floodwater, sediment damage, nonpoint source water pollution, and preventative and control measures needed, and publish results and disseminate information. The District performs these activities collaboratively with colleges and universities, as well as any local, State, and Federal agency interested.
 - a. The District will continue its Water Quality Monitoring Program. We will collaborate with SUNY Brockport researchers to complete the final report. Results are used to support watershed management plans, support grant applications, write our AEM action plan, and target key natural resource projects for grant applications.

Conservation Education

1. The District will expand its education outreach by bringing information regarding natural resources to schools, youth organizations, municipalities, and the general public to promote the wise use of natural resources.
 - a. Coordinate and conduct Genesee County's Envirothon for local high school students in coordination with the Genesee County Parks, Recreation, and Forestry staff.
 - b. Attend career days and educational events at middle and high schools.

- c. Promote the District services and programs through the publication of four (4) quarterly newsletters.
- d. Award and announce the 2023 Conservation Farm of the Year to promote an example of good stewardship of the land.
- e. Conduct or assist in at least one (1) public workshop that promotes natural resource conservation or the District programs and services.

2023 Proposed Budget and Request

The table below shows the District’s approved budget for 2022 and the proposed budget for 2023. Financial support from New York State is expected to decrease in 2023 due to the two-year funding cycle of the Agricultural Environmental Management program, which provides up to \$220,000 over two years of reimbursement for staff time spent working on the program. Increases to revenue are expected from the tree and shrub program, interest accrual, and sale of equipment.

Category	2022	2023-Draft	Change
Income			
2160 - Earned Income Programs	\$32,200.00	\$36,200.00	\$4,000.00
2401 - Interest	\$500.00	\$11,000.00	\$10,500.00
2655- Sale of Supplies	\$3,200.00	\$3,200.00	\$0.00
2665 - Sale of Equipment	\$20,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$30,000.00
2770 - Misc Revenue	\$7,110.00	\$6,110.00	-\$1,000.00
2771- County Aid and Reimbursement	\$173,851.00	\$173,851.00	\$0.00
3989z - District Support/Reimbursement	\$254,919.00	\$210,273.00	-\$44,646.00
631- Sales Tax Due to Other Gov't	\$300.00	\$500.00	\$200.00
	\$492,080.00	\$491,134.00	-\$946.00
Expenses			
8730.1 Payroll Expenses	\$263,940.00	\$302,304.00	\$38,364.00
8730.2- Equipment	\$49,000.00	\$29,500.00	-\$19,500.00
8730.4 Contractual	\$80,200.00	\$70,060.00	-\$10,140.00
8730.8 Benefits	\$98,940.00	\$89,270.00	-\$9,670.00
	\$492,080.00	\$491,134.00	-\$946.00

Table 1: Proposed Genesee County Soil and Water Conservation District budget for 2022.

Payroll expenses are expected to increase by \$38,364.00 for 2023 to adjust salaries for inflation. Payroll expenses are based on five full-time employees and an internship, which is the same staffing level as 2022. In order to minimize the impact of increases to payroll expenses, costs

are being cut to equipment and contractual expenses. The District plans to downsize from three trucks to two, which will reduce costs associated with purchasing, maintaining, and insuring a third vehicle. Expenses for the newsletter, Envirothon program, and a third-party financial audit (which is planned to be completed in 2022) have been reduced in the contractual category. Reductions to employee benefits have occurred due to changes in health insurance and retirement expenses.

The District is making every effort to offset reduced revenue from New York State and increased payroll expenses. Downsizing to two vehicles will net approximately \$27,000 for the 2023 budget. Cuts to newsletter, Envirothon, and consultant expenses will further offset budget constraints. Employees are the primary expenses to the District, with payroll expenses and employee benefits expected to account for approximately 80% the total expenses in 2023. By maintaining the current level of staffing, the District is projected to earn an additional \$45,620 in state funding that would not be attainable at a lower staffing level. In order to maintain the current staffing level, the District asks to maintain the enhanced appropriation level of \$173,851 for 2023. This amount is \$21,960 above the District's base funding of \$151,891. The additional funding would continue to support part of the technician position that was added in 2022, although most of the position would be supported by additional earned income.

Respectfully,



Jared G. Elliott

Senior Field Manager