

**Connecticut River Watershed Farmers Alliance Board Meeting**  
**10am December 13th, 2016 at the WRJ USDA Service Center**

Board present: Paul Doton, Steve Stocking, Bill Emmons, Linda Corse, Amy Richardson  
WRNRCD Representative: Marina Welch, taking minutes  
UVM Ext. Representative: Dan Hudson, Kimberly Hagen  
Members: Jed Davis (non-voting)  
Public: Laura Hardie (New England Dairy), Susan Buckholds (Legislative Rep.)

*Welcome at 10:15am*

**General Board Discussion**

Approved November minutes.

New member-Jeff Dunklee in Vernon (VernMont farm). Approved

Another signature for signature authority. Hopefully last one needed!

Treasurer's report:

- New expense-website by Thor = \$165
- Net income = \$880.01
- Approved.

How to recruit new members:

- Send around an email about potential member to make sure they haven't already been contacted.
- Call them to discuss. Better than email.
- Potential business members?
- Membership lasts a year from the time they pay. Should it be just one time a year where memberships are renewed, rather than staggered and having to keep track?
- Rather than reaching out, perhaps just use events to network and recruit new members so they feel that their money is going to something. Such as VT Livestock and Grazing conference.
- Set a quota for recruiting? Prioritize potential members?

Potential meetings/events to attend: Northeast Pasture Consortium (contact Kim Hagen for more info), VT Farm Show, VT Livestock and Grazing conference, Agronomy Plus

**Follow up on farmer interview email from Kim Hagen**

Martha Caswell is doing farmer interviews for a research project on climate change (deniers and supporters). Potentially using a room at the Livestock and Grazing Conference to interview producers. She should cold call farms rather than asking for references from UVM and CRWFA. She's done interviews in Franklin County and with Champlain Valley Farmers Coalition.

**Presentation from Laura Hardie**

Follow up on last year's meeting between CRWFA, Franklin County Farmers Alliance and Champlain Valley Farmers Coalition. Discussion on where everyone is at and how can we all work together? Decided to create a video to showcase how farmers are being environmental stewards.

Video: 'More than manure: recycling a natural resource for a healthy environment.' Aimed at the general public to show positive things farmers are doing, such as improved manure management and cover crops. Will be promoted through social media and shorter version as TV ads. The video should apply to any farm, and could be showed in any state theoretically.

Feedback/suggestions:

- Change from 'More than Manure' since it's a product farms use. Call it 'Feeding the Land'?
- Maybe setting up public to think if a farm isn't doing manure injection, then they're doing something wrong? Mention that farms spread manure in many different ways depending on topography.
- Perhaps discuss manure composting in the video?

Agency of Ag is doing a series of videos discussing VT dairy farms that are going up on social media. PBS is doing a series as well.

Possibly show new draft of the video at the annual meeting.

**Action:** watch video from Laura Hardie and send any feedback by Friday, Dec.16th

#### **Stakeholder Meeting for Dam Relicensing-Steve Stocking attended**

Consensus: FERC is not responding to the public because 'TransCanada could have FERC in their back pocket'.

Suggested that the group needs political clout and address it towards the recreation of the river rather than focusing on erosion issues.

PLP misunderstood what the stakeholders were asking for.

Dam company says they aren't above allowable water elevation changes. They measure fluctuations from airplane.

Another meeting will be scheduled in April or May.

**Action:** Write a letter stating that CRWFA will support efforts of the stakeholder group. See if David Dean or David Mudge could come to a CRWFA meeting and discuss everything?

#### **LISW-RCPP Meeting on Dec.6<sup>th</sup>**

Meeting with all of the organizations involved in the Regional Conservation Partnership Program for the Long Island Sound Watershed. People from NH, CT, MA and VT discussed nitrogen loading, what's being done, and goals.

About 0.6% of Nitrogen in LIS is from Vermont agriculture.

#### **Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition meeting-Jed Davis attended**

The Addison County group is a good model for CRWFA to aspire to. They've done a good job securing grant money and is related to their success. Got the money mostly because they're in the Lake Champlain Basin.

Programs they're doing: figured out acreage for cover crops in their county and reported. They sent out a small postcard to any farmer they could. Anonymous. Asked questions about their cropping practices. Those who filled it out got a bumper sticker.

CRWFA should do another model rather than relying on grant money that isn't really in this area.

### **Upcoming meetings**

CRWFA annual meeting-January 10<sup>th</sup>, 11am to 2pm, Public House in Quechee

Price of the meal=\$25, not sure we can get it any lower. Might be too high for folks.

Last year, 45 attended. Have to guarantee a number for Public House, as they're closing for the day for it.

Possibly hold it at the Forest Center? Or the visitor center/ampitheater? Order food to bring there?

**Action:** send out invitations and get RSVPs, compare prices for lunch options

*Meeting adjourned at 12:30pm*

*Minutes taken by Marina Welch*