

Minutes of the State Soil Conservation Committee Meeting



April 13, 2026

Carrington REC, 663 Hwy 281 N, Carrington, ND 58421

Committee Members and guests present:

Emily Montgomery – *SSCC, Area I Supervisor (via Zoom)*
Chris Walberg – *SSCC, Area II Supervisor (via Zoom)*
David Hill – *SSCC, Area III Supervisor, Chair*
Bob Martin – *SSCC, Area IV Supervisor*
Mary Podoll – *SSCC Appointee*
Bruce Schmidt – *SSCC Appointee*

Carrie Johnson – *NDSU Extension Assistant Director (via Zoom)*
Lindy Berg – *Area I Program Coordinator (via Zoom)*
Paula Comeau – *NDSU Extension Program Coordinator*
Amber Fetch – *ND State Soil Conservation Committee
Administrative Assistant*

Committee Members absent:

Jess O'Brien – *SSCC, Area V Supervisor*

A meeting of the North Dakota State Soil Conservation Committee was called to order at 2:01 p.m. by David Hill, Chair.

Introductions

- Brief updates on goings on in each area from SSCC members and guests.

Review of Prior Meeting Minutes

- Emily made a motion to approve the prior meeting minutes from the 2/6/26 regular meeting and 3/31/26 special meeting as written. Mary seconded the motion. No further discussion. Motion carried.

Review of Financials

- Paula gave a brief overview of the financial report. Nothing significant to report at this time. No further discussion.

Chris Walberg has to leave the meeting early, so Chair David Hill decided to shift the remaining reports to the end of the meeting so all Committee members are present for old and new business.

Old Business:

- Subcommittee Update
 - Overview of ND Century Code, the services NDSU Extension delivers in relation to those statutory duties, and what NDSU would be willing to contract for should the SSCC move to a different agency.
 - Prolonged discussion of the subcommittee's findings thus far.
 - Committee has decided not to make a decision yet. Paula will send a letter to the Agriculture Commissioner that outlines the services NDSU Extension supplies to the Committee. The Committee will likely hold a special meeting to discuss any response from the Dept of Agriculture.

New Business:

- Proposed DART Updates for Required Documents
 - Proposal to add the SSCC required documents (reorganization forms, annual plan of work, etc.) to DART so that SCDs have to submit them before they can access and fill out their Q1 DART Activity Report each year.
 - Discussion of the documents the SSCC has required SCDs to submit annually.

- Mary motioned to remove the requirement to receive oath of office copies from SCDs. Bob seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried.
- Mary motioned to remove the requirement to receive inventories from SCDs. David seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried.
- Bruce made a motion to add Annual Plans of Work and Reorganization Forms as requirements in DART similar to the Supervisor Training Reports. Emily seconded. Discussion about due date. No further discussion. Motion carried.
- ND Century Code Updates for Governor Appointees
 - Propose language at the next meeting to update the language around governor appointees to the Committee, as requested by the Boards Review Task Force.
 - Bruce noted that ND Century Code 77-01-01-01 also needs to be updated; Paula will review prior to next meeting.
- SSCC/ND Conservation District Employees Association MOU (DART)
 - The SSCC/NDSU Extension MOU will be discussed once subcommittee work has concluded.
- Prioritize Resource Concerns
 - Mary suggested the Committee could discuss resource concerns to prioritize.
- NASCA Annual Dues Offered at \$3,000
 - The Committee decided to wait until closer to the end of the fiscal year to make a decision to see if the budget supports paying these dues.
- NDASCD Compiling Data
 - Chris noted that the NDASCD is reaching out to districts to collect information on federal funding.

Chris Walberg left the meeting.

NDSU Extension Update

- Carrie gave a brief report on NDSU and Extension updates.
 - SBARE communication should be coming out soon about legislative priorities.
 - Governor's budget came out last week. No new FTEs. Governor has asked for a 10% budget reduction from NDSU Extension (and other similarly financially situated agencies).
 - New NDSU President, Dr. Marshall Stewart, starting May 28, 2026. Extensive Extension & Agriculture background.

State Program Coordinator's Report – Paula Comeau:

- Paula gave an update on recent activities.
 - Final interviews for second Area Coordinator position to take place on Wednesday this week.

Area Program Coordinator Updates:

- **Lindy, Area I:**
 - Lindy gave an oral report on her activities since the last meeting along with an infographic (attached).

Next Committee Meeting:

The next regular SSCC board meeting will be in early August in Fargo. Details about the specific time and location will be shared via email in advance of the meeting.

Adjournment:

David called to adjourn the meeting at 4:14 p.m.

IMPACTS:

- **Succession Plan**
 - Shared succession planning resources at the Annual Meeting Share Fair, resulting in increased awareness and adoption by staff and their boards.
 - Provided targeted support to Cavalier Soil Conservation District, leading to a reset of their Plan of Work and improved supervisor onboarding practices.
- **Helped Eddy SCD successfully launch its first school program, expanding local education and outreach efforts.**
- **Assisted Wells Soil Conservation District in successfully creating and initiating their first Plan of Work.**



MAKING CONNECTIONS: SHARING TIPS ON RECRUITING, DOCUMENTING INVENTORY, PLAN OF WORK, POLICY, & BOARD GOVERNANCE

7

Board Visits

7

Outreach events

14

One on One's

1

New Hire!



MIKE BUCK PRESENTING SOIL HEALTH

Cultivating Conservation Practices with SCDs

2026 Spring Conference

Welcome!

NDSU | EXTENSION

NETWORKING TO BUILD WATER QUALITY PARTNERSHIPS & PROGRAMS

Upcoming Goals:

- Continue building resources for DEQ, Envirothon, Eco Ed
- Explore collaboration with Master Gardeners & water quality
- Finalize survey data: Coordinator Survey & BMP's
- Locally Led Strategies