

**MINUTES OF MERCER COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING
590 HUGHES DRIVE
HAMILTON SQUARE, NJ 08690
May 7, 2026**

MCSCD SUPERVISORS

Scott Ellis
Theodora Wang
Lucia Huebner

STAFF

Paul Schiariti
Linda Sandusky

OTHERS

Lewis Goldshore, Esq.
Diane Kottas, MC Planning

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, S. Ellis at 12:31 pm. The Statement of Adequate Notice was read. The attendees rose for the flag salute.

The minutes of the April 9, 2026 meeting were reviewed by the Board.

MOTION 1

A motion to approve the minutes was made by L. Huebner seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

The Treasurer's Report was presented to the Board. The District was in the red for this period. Larger the normal expenses were paid and only 11 applications received.

MOTION 2

A motion to receive and file the Treasurer's Report pending audit was made by L. Huebner, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

The Director's Report was given.

NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION PROGRAM

11 - APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
1 - PREREVIEW INSPECTION
19 - CHAPTER 251 REVIEWS
94 - CHAPTER 251 INSPECTIONS
0 - PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING
61 - FINAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
7 - CONDITIONAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
0 - VIOLATION NOTICE

- 0 - STOP WORK ORDER
- 0 - DENIALS
- 0 - CERTIFICATION DELEGATIONS
- 4 - 251 EXEMPTION DETERMINATIONS

CHAPTER 251

The majority of field inspections throughout the month of April were concentrated on finalizing conditional reports of compliance issued over the winter months. A significant number of projects were inspected and finalized. As the month of May progresses, field inspections will transition back to active construction sites since the Spring seeding season is essentially over.

REGIONAL SUPERVISOR'S MEETING

The district manager and supervisor's S. Ellis and L. Huebner attended the Central Jersey Regional Supervisor's Meeting held at Villa Mannino Restaurant in Bordentown, Burlington County. Topics of discussion included: The 2026 Envirothon; 2026 Annual Conference & Business Meeting; NRCS Update; NJACD Update; Spring Fly-In-Meeting in Washington DC; NJDA / SSCC Department Updates and Rule Changes. The meeting was well attended by managers and supervisors from the central region of the state.

HUNT LAKE DAM

Nature's Way completed the brush and small tree removal at Hunt Lake Dam. The district manager field verified that the work was completed. The work was satisfactory. The Invoice in the amount of \$3,500.00 will be paid for the work.

BUDGET

The office administrator prepared the FY 2027 Budget for the district. Expenses and revenues were generated based upon the most current Treasurer's Report analysis, and recent trends in expenses and revenues. Reasonable cost increases were also added to our annual reoccurring expenses, based upon past increases. The district manager reviewed the budget as well. Chapter 251 Income was established based upon balancing the budget to ensure that revenues equaled expenses.

BULDING MAINTENANCE

The air conditioner unit was in need of maintenance. The office administrator contacted our HVAC contractor and scheduled maintenance for the system, which was subsequently repaired.

The district manager brought the fire extinguishers to our testing agency for verification that they were fully charged, as is required to be completed annually. The office administrator contacted our Fire Alarm contractor for the annual fire alarm testing and report. The fire alarm was tested, and the report was forwarded to Hamilton Twp. Fire Prevention Bureau.

The district's landscape contractor provided a price for the annual landscape maintenance around the building. The quote was for a total of \$2,030.00 for typical landscape

maintenance around the office building grounds. The district accepted the estimate, and the maintenance will proceed shortly.

MOTION 3

A motion to approve the Director’s Report was made by L. Huebner, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Auction Notice was received for a Vineyard & Winery for sale in Cap May Courthouse, NJ
2. Annual Stewardship Proclamation received from the New Jersey Governor to the District for Soil & Water Stewardship Week.

CHAPTER 251

2022-6334-T(R)	2025-6853-T	2025-6748-T	2026-6929-EW
2026-6939-E	2026-6944-H	2024-6700-H(R)	2026-6931-H
2026-6933-H	2026-6921-H	2026-6934-HB	2025-6780-L
2026-6936-P	2026-6924-P	2025-6849-P	2026-6937-P
2026-6901-R	2026-6920-WW	2022-6327-WW(R)	
		NJG0339946	

MOTION 4

A motion to approve plans recommended for certification by staff was made by T. Wang, seconded by L. Huebner, carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The board discussed in greater depth the succession planning regarding the district future.

As was previously discussed, there are two (2) potential options regarding the district succession. The first would be to replace current staff upon individual retirement with the possibility of hiring an additional technical staff person, for a total of two (2) technical staff, and an office administrator.

The second would be to go through an acquisition process with another district. Since the Mercer District originated within the Freehold District, and has had Shared Services Agreements in the past, this would be the logical choice. Several board members thought this option should be investigated further.

The District Manager distributed potential costs to hire new staff with a couple different scenarios, which included an additional technical/inspector position.

The District Manager informed the Board that Frank Minch, Director with the Department of Agriculture will attend the next District meeting for further discussions on the District acquisition process and procedures.

L. Goldshore indicated that if Districts’ are combined, the term of the Office of

Supervisors will terminate and new Supervisors will be appointed by the State Soil Conservation Committee, with representatives from each combined district. Once a district is created it is perpetual, but the members are not.

The Board also discussed balancing current employee needs with the future direction of the district. The board is desirous in remaining sensitive to and balancing staff concerns with the succession plan.

The board will continue these discussions and speak to Frank Minch for further clarification.

NEW BUSINESS

An additional billing from L. Goldshore was discussed for payment.

MOTION 5

A motion to approve additional billing by L. Goldshore was made by L. Huebner, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

The Board discussed the current Budget for Fiscal Year 2027. All expenses are estimated based on the previous year's expenses with revenues and expenses balancing.

MOTION 6

A motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget was made by T. Wang, seconded by L. Huebner, carried unanimously.

The Dinner Tour to the Trenton Thunder game will be on July 24, 2026 at 7 pm. Total number of attendees needs to be determined by the next meeting on June 11, 2026.

Next Meeting: June 11, 2026 at 12:30 pm

The meeting adjourned at 2 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Schiariti, P.E.
Secretary to the Board

**MINUTES OF MERCER COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING
590 HUGHES DRIVE
HAMILTON SQUARE, NJ 08690
APRIL 9, 2026**

MCSCD SUPERVISORS

Scott Ellis
Lucia Huebner
Theodora Wang
Dan Pace

STAFF

Paul Schiariti, P.E.

OTHERS

Kelly Steimle, NJ Dept. of Ag.
Lewis Goldshore, Esq.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, S. Ellis at 12:32 pm. All attendees rose for the flag salute. The Statement of Adequate Notice was read.

STATE SOIL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE (SSCC)

Kelly Steimle from the NJ Department of Agriculture presented an update to a Farm Conservation Plan for a farm located in Hopewell Twp. The Farm currently grows corn, soybeans, and wheat. Flower and vegetables are also produced on some of the acreage as well.

She presented the board with a copy of the plan and discussed the practices that have been included in the plan. A discussion regarding the plan ensued. The board also reviewed the plan.

MOTION 1

A motion to approve the update to the Conservation Plan was made by D. Pace, seconded by L. Huebner, carried unanimously.

The minutes of the March 12, 2026 meeting were reviewed by the Board.

MOTION 2

A motion to approve the minutes was made by L. Huebner, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

The Treasurer's Report was presented to the Board. The district was in the red for the month and is in the black for the Fiscal Year.

MOTION 3

A motion to receive and file the Treasurer's Report pending audit was made D. Pace, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

The Director's Report was given.

NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION PROGRAM

- 14 - APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
- 1 - PREREVIEW INSPECTIONS
- 27 - CHAPTER 251 REVIEWS
- 84 - CHAPTER 251 INSPECTIONS
- 0 - PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING
- 9 - FINAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
- 6 - CONDITIONAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
- 0 - VIOLATION NOTICE
- 0 - STOP WORK ORDER
- 0 - DENIALS
- 0 - CERTIFICATION DELEGATIONS
- 2 - 251 EXEMPTION DETERMINATIONS

CHAPTER 251

Since entering the Spring seeding season, inspections will be concentrated on finalizing winter conditionals. The district manager began contacting applicants who are currently on winter conditionals, to bring their projects into compliance for the issuance of a Final Report of Compliance.

POSTER CONTEST

The district received seven (7) posters for this year's National Association of Conservation District's annual Poster Contest. This year's theme was Soil. Where It All Begins. Judging was performed by district staff as well as supervisor T. Wang. Winners were chosen in each category where there were entries. The Office Administrator purchases Rosette Ribbons for the first through third place categories. The winners are notified by letter along with the Rosette Ribbon, specific to their placing. The district manager drops off the first-place winners to the Freehold SCD Office for Statewide adjudicating. The first-place winners in each age group at the state level are sent to the National Association of Conservation Districts, for judging at the National level.

COMPUTER

The district manager received a new computer that was installed by the district's computer consultant, earlier this month. Approximately 4 hours was spent getting the computer set up with the appropriate software installed and to establish communications with all other district devices.

HUNT LAKE DAM

District counsel and the district manager conducted a conference call with the district's auditor, for the purpose of discussing the district's finances, particularly how they relate to expenditures for Hunt Lake Dam's required routine maintenance and bi-annual reporting. The auditor indicated that he could not provide a legal opinion regarding this matter but from an auditing perspective, his office was aware of the Hunt Lake expenditures. There has not been a negative comment or question related to those expenditures, in the Annual Audit Reports. It is their opinion that the State Committee is the ultimate arbiter for the proper use of any district funds. District counsel noted that he had provided a legal opinion indicating that the district was obligated to make these expenditures by a Consent Order entered in the New Jersey Superior Court.

L. Goldshore expanded on potential options that the district might have moving forward. His opinion is that the district should continue with performing the items enumerated in the Consent Order. He also indicated that if we are approached with any additional items, not identified within the Order, we would respond appropriately at that time.

S. Ellis indicated that the contractor hired to perform the maintenance work on the Dam, will be proceeding as soon as the ground becomes dry enough to access the site with the necessary equipment.

MOTION 4

A motion to approve the Director's Report was made by D. Pace, seconded by L. Huebner, carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence was presented to the board:

1. March 2026 edition of New Jersey Farmer Periodical
2. Volume 36 of Estuary News Periodical
3. An Auction Notice for a Farm located in Hopewell Twp.
4. A Thank You card from the Mount Family for the donation to the NJ Horticultural Society Research Fund

The March 2026 Chapter 251 Plan Certifications and Request for Authorization's (RFA's) was provided to the board.

CHAPTER 251

2026-6909-T	2022-6332-H(R)	2026-6902-H	2022-6305-H(R)
2026-6927-HT	2026-6930-HT	2026-6922-L	2025-6882-L
2025-6820-P(R)	2024-6729-P(R)	2024-6714-P(R)	2025-6740-P(R)
2025-6925-P	2026-6916-P	2022-6306-WW(R)	2026-6918-WW
2021-6076-WW(R)			

MOTION 5

A motion to approve plans recommended for certification by staff was made by L.

Huebner, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

RC & D

No update for South Jersey RC & D

NRCS

A Report from M. Devine, District Conservationist, USDA NRCS was provided.

NRCS is Currently Processing 2026 EQIP/CSP Applications as follows:

- 90 applications total, totaling \$1,786,978+ (still working on cost estimates so this number will increase) are being processed
- The Ranking deadline is April 17th 2026
- This year, EQIP money is allocated by region (benefit is that we are not competing with the entire state): the Central region: Monmouth, Middlesex, Mercer, Ocean, Burlington, and Camden
 - EQIP numbers may fluctuate depending on the applications, but in general per statute, NRCS must dedicate funds: 50% livestock, 5% beginner farmer (BFR), 5% socially disadvantaged (SDFR), and 10% wildlife

NRCS monitors dams within the Assunpink Watershed, and several require significant renovation. As a preventative measure, NRCS is looking at prioritizing erosion control practices within the Assunpink watershed in their 2027 program ranking. They will be analyzing aerial imagery and conducting on the ground outreach to look for fields with erosion, where they may be able to assist financially with practices. Such practices would include Grassed Waterways, Rock Lined Waterways, Diversions, etc. to help control erosion and sedimentation occurring on private land, within the watershed.

EXTENSION UPDATE

M. Melendez provided a report to the district.

Last month M. Melendez spoke with a Rutgers undergraduate class regarding the realities of farming in New Jersey. She was joined by Jennifer and Andrew from Stone Circle Farm to discuss creative ways to add value to their farm products and create experiences for their customers on their farm. They host dinners at the farm, conduct cooking classes, and sell their own, and other's products in the farm market.

She also conducted a food safety workshop for the Mercer County Community College (MCCC) host program. They discussed produce safety risks on farms and preventive practices, conducted a risk ranking exercise based on photos from farms, and evaluated outdoor growing spaces, for wildlife risks. The students were very engaged and enjoyed the exercises.

Agricultural Agents in the mid-Atlantic region are now able to participate in monthly Zoom meetings to discuss emerging issues in their areas. This was inspired by a similar activity that takes place in New England. There is a great deal of excitement about this, and it feels like a simple but effective way to be prepared for issues farmers are/will face.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The board discussed in greater depth the succession planning regarding the district future.

As was previously discussed, there are two (2) potential options regarding the district succession. The first would be to replace current staff upon individual retirement with the possibility of hiring an additional technical staff person, for a total of two (2) technical staff, and an office administrator. The district is also operating with four (4) Supervisor's, as a result of the passing of long time Supervisor G. Mount. Several other Supervisor's will also be approaching the end of their terms in the next year or so.

The second would be to go through an acquisition process with another district. Since the Mercer District originated within the Freehold District, and the Mercer and Freehold Districts have had multiple Shared Service Agreements in the past, this would appear to be the logical district, if this path is chosen, to acquire the Mercer District. Several board members thought this option should be investigated further, and would like additional details on the process, to be better informed in making this decision.

L. Goldshore indicated that there is likely some language within the statute that provides direction on how the process should be handled, if chosen.

The board requested that we ask F. Minch of the NJ Dept. of Agriculture to attend a board meeting to discuss the acquisition process in greater detail, to provide some clarity and answer any questions or concerns from the board as well as the staff.

The board also discussed balancing current employee needs with the future direction of the district. The board is desirous in remaining sensitive to and balancing staff concerns with the succession plan.

NEW BUSINESS

The next district meeting is scheduled for May 7, 2026 at 12:30 PM.

The meeting adjourned at 2:09 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Schiariti, P.E.
Secretary to the Board

**MINUTES OF MERCER COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING
590 HUGHES DRIVE
HAMILTON SQUARE, NJ 08690
MARCH 12, 2026**

MCSCD SUPERVISORS

Scott Ellis
Theodora Wang
Lucia Huebner
Daniel Pace

STAFF

Paul Schiariti
Linda Sandusky

OTHERS

Lewis Goldshore, Esq.
Meredith Melendez
Diane Kottas, MC Planning

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, S. Ellis at 12:34 pm. The Statement of Adequate Notice was read. The attendees rose for the flag salute.

The minutes of the February 11, 2026 meeting were reviewed by the Board.

MOTION 1

A motion to approve the minutes with three corrections was made by D. Pace seconded by L. Huebner, carried unanimously.

The Treasurer's Report was presented to the Board. The District was in the black for this period. No large expenses were paid in this period.

MOTION 2

A motion to receive and file the Treasurer's Report pending audit was made by D. Pace, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

The Director's Report was given.

NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION PROGRAM

13 - APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
0 - PREREVIEW INSPECTIONS
19 - CHAPTER 251 REVIEWS
48 - CHAPTER 251 INSPECTIONS
0 - PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING

1 - FINAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
15 - CONDITIONAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
0 - VIOLATION NOTICE
0 - STOP WORK ORDER
0 - DENIALS
0 - CERTIFICATION DELEGATIONS
2 - 251 EXEMPTION DETERMINATIONS

CHAPTER 251

Due to the significant amount of snowfall during the month of February, the number of field inspections on active construction sites is down somewhat, relative to winter months without significant snowfall. Report of Compliance and Conditional Report of Compliance Inspections are still being conducted on an as requested basis. This is the second month in a row where field inspections have been significantly impacted by snow fall.

POSTER CONTEST

The district received notification from the Executive Director of the New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts (NJACD) that three (3) Posters entered into the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) 2025 Poster Contest from New Jersey, were selected as National winners. Two (2) of the contestants were from Mercer County, in the 7th through 9th and 10th through 12th grade categories. In order to be considered, the posters were adjudicated as winners at the county level and the state level prior to being entered at the national level. We congratulate the winners from Mercer County as well as all of the other winners in this significant accomplishment.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

As a result of the recent snow storm, approximately 10 significant sized branches from the White Pine Trees broke off and fell. Several of the limbs were tangled in the power lines and cable / phone lines into the building.

PSE & G was immediately contacted. They sent out several representatives within the hour. It was explained that tree branches that had fallen on the Service Line between the main line and the house, were the responsibility of the owner to have removed. Princeton Tree care was contacted immediately. They sent out an arborist who provided a quote for the removal of the branches tangled in the power line and cable / phone line and the removal of the remainder of the branches around the building that had also fallen. The district manager approved the quote. Crews showed up by the end of the day and performed the service.

Upon return to the office the next day, the cable / phone line services were out. Upon inspection it was noted that the cable line was completely disconnected from the building. Optimum was immediately contacted. They arrived by midday and provided a new service connection for the cable and phone service.

The postage meter malfunctioned and would no longer print any postage. Pitney Bowes

technical service was contacted, and it was determined that the meter was no longer functioning properly and had to be replaced. The new meter was installed by staff as soon as the cable / phone service was repaired by Optimum. The new meter is functioning properly. The old meter was returned directly to Pitney Bowes in the box they provided with a pre-paid UPS postage slip.

EXEMPT MUNICIPALITY

The district manager completed and submitted the Annual Exempt Municipality Report online for the 2025 year. The only Exempt Municipality that implements all aspects of the Chapter 251 program within Mercer County is Lawrence Township. They received a Satisfactory rating for 2025.

MOTION 3

A motion to approve the Director’s Report was made by D. Pace, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Hamilton Post Newspaper
2. New Jersey Farmer Newspaper
3. New Jersey Law Journal article by: Lewis Goldshore, Esq. titled REAL or not so REAL

L. Goldshore explained the new regulation from DEP called REAL Rules. These rules impact the coastal areas and development/redevelopment along tidal regulated waters due to climate change, sea level rise, and tidal flooding.

CHAPTER 251

2026-6910-E	2018-5642-H(R)	2026-6917-H	2026-6907-H
2025-6803-H	NJG0291943	2025-6864-HT	2021-6103-L(R)
2026-6905-L	2026-6906-L	2026-6908-P	NJG0360902
2026-6895-P	2020-5898-P(R)	2022-6226-P(R)	2026-6919-WW
	NJG0338320		

MOTION 4

A motion to approve plans recommended for certification by staff was made by L. Huebner, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

EXTENSION UPDATE

M. Melendez attended Ag Day, which was held at Howell Living History Farm. Handouts provided consisted of: Farming and New Jersey Seals and Use Tax Informational Guide with Farmers Sales Tax Exemption Form; Respiratory Protection for Occupational Users of Pesticides Bulletin & Worker Training Protection Standard Handouts.

Terry Vesacone, Extension Weed Specialist brought a Robotic Weeder that can be used for seeding, cultivating, and weeding. Pete Watson requested to have the Robotic Weeder brought back in the Spring for an educational demonstration.

M. Melendez has been working with AI looking for specific images for presentations. National Association of State Departments of Ag (NASDA) gave permission to use AI to coordinate Farms Readiness Review Survey's open ended responses to categorize and compile the results.

A training event is being held at the Extension Office for Federal Regulations on March 17, 2026 and at the research farm in Cream Ridge for a beginner Food Safety, firsthand in the field presentation.

SSCC UPDATE/NJACD UPDATE

The District received an invitation to the Central Regional Supervisor Dinner Meeting being held on April 14, 2026, 6 pm at Villa Mannino, Bordentown, New Jersey.

NEW BUSINESS

Next Meeting: April 9, 2026 at 12:30 pm.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

The District Manager conducted a slide show presentation for the Board of Supervisors regarding options if the District staff resigns/retires. This included: replacing staff at the current office; combining and relocating with another District; and combining with another District but keeping the office as a satellite office. The District Manager explained salaries, benefits, and time for staff training.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Schiariti, P.E.
Secretary to the Board

**MINUTES OF MERCER COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING
590 HUGHES DRIVE
HAMILTON SQUARE, NJ 08690
FEBRUARY 11, 2026**

MCSCD SUPERVISORS

Scott Ellis
Theodora Wang
Lucia Huebner
Daniel Pace

STAFF

Paul Schiariti
Linda Sandusky

OTHERS

Lewis Goldshore, Esq.
Diane Kottas, MC Planning

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, S. Ellis at 12:32 pm. The Statement of Adequate Notice was read. The attendees rose for the flag salute.

The minutes of the January 8, 2026 meeting were reviewed by the Board.

MOTION 1

A motion to approve the minutes with one correction was made by D. Pace seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

The Treasurer's Report was presented to the Board. The District was in the black for this period.

MOTION 2

A motion to receive and file the Treasurer's Report pending audit was made by T. Wang, seconded by L. Huebner, carried unanimously.

The Director's Report was given.

NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION PROGRAM

12 - APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
0 - PREREVIEW INSPECTIONS
21 - CHAPTER 251 REVIEWS
75 - CHAPTER 251 INSPECTIONS
0 - PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING

14 - FINAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
16 - CONDITIONAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
0 - VIOLATION NOTICE
0 - STOP WORK ORDER
0 - DENIALS
0 - CERTIFICATION DELEGATIONS
1 - 251 EXEMPTION DETERMINATIONS

CHAPTER 251

Due to the significant amount of snowfall during the month of January, the number of field inspections on active construction sites is down somewhat, relative to winter months without significant snowfall. Report of Compliance and Conditional Report of Compliance Inspections are still being conducted on an as requested basis.

ANNUAL RECORDS DISPOSAL

Authorization to dispose of records was received through the State of NJ's Department of Treasury – ARTEMIS (Records Retention and Disposition Management System) web site. All records that received authorization for disposal were subsequently taken to the Hamilton Township Ecological Center for recycling, by the district manager on January 21, 2026.

After disposal, a follow up close out summary was also filed through the same web-site to officially close out the request.

ASSUNPINK ENVIRONMENTAL INSTITUTE (AEI)

The district manager filed the IRS Form 990-N (e-postcard) for the required tax filing year 2025 and also officially terminated the 501 c3 status of the organization.

AEI was officially disbanded and “retired” as a charitable organization by an official act of the Board of Supervisors prior to the filing. The “retired” status has also been provided and filed with the State of New Jersey.

POSTER CONTEST

The district received this year's annual Poster Contest theme and brochure from the New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts. This year's theme is: Soil. Where It All Begins.

The Office Administrator added the local district rules to the brochure and distributed it to all of the County wide school districts on our email list. The due date to be submitted to the district is March 27, 2026. Local judging will take place shortly thereafter. First through third place winners in each age category will be selected and provided with a rosette ribbon and congratulatory letter. The first-place winners in each age category, will be submitted to the NJACD for statewide judging, no later than April 9, 2026.

HUNT LAKE DAM

The district manager and district counsel researched the lake lowering status of Hunt Lake Dam. Included in the document search were: Scope of Work Stony Brook

Watershed #7 (Hunt Lake) Dam Interim Lowering and the Project Award information for the consultant who was awarded the bid: GZA Geoenvironmental, Inc.

The district manager also reached out to the NJ State Department of Treasury (who awarded the contract) and directly to GZA Geoenvironmental for status updates.

MOTION 3

A motion to approve the Director’s Report was made by L. Huebner, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. New Jersey Farmers Newspaper
2. Hamilton Post Newspaper
3. Auction Notice – Plumsted Township Farm (193 acres)
4. State Soil Conservation Committee Resolution Posthumous Recognition of Gary Mount.

CHAPTER 251

2025-6881-E	2024-6655-E(R)	2022-6255-H(R)	2025-6889-H
2025-6890-H	2025-6883-H	NJG0333760	2025-6827-H
2025-6840-HB	2026-6896-HB	2026-6900-HT	2025-6886-L
2025-6872-P	2025-6887-P	2026-6893-P	2026-6894-P
2022-6310-P(R)	2021-6160-WW(R)	2022-6297-WW(R)	2025-6893-WW
	NJG0347621		

MOTION 4

A motion to approve plans recommended for certification by staff was made by D. Pace, seconded by L. Huebner, carried unanimously.

USDA/NRCS UPDATE

An update was received by the District from M. Devine, USDA-NRCS.

39 applications for 2026 were received for EQIP and CSP programs.

More information has been received on the Regenerative Agriculture Pilot Program. This is not a stand-alone program; the money goes directly to the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). To be eligible participants are required to: conduct Soil Health Testing (CEMA 216) at the beginning and end of the 5-year contract; have a full farm conservation plan (not just focusing on the practices they are interested in but implementing and looking at all resource concerns across the farm).

Freehold Soil District is hosting a Local Working Group Meeting on Wednesday, February 25th. Even though Mercer County is not in Freehold, the Freehold District would like to have Mercer County Farmers included in the meeting to discuss their resource concerns and issues.

NRCS is sponsoring Partner Grants for the Mid-Atlantic Monarch and Pollinator Habitat Kit Program. These kits are designed to increase the Eastern Monarch Butterfly population. The 2026 program will open on January 16, 2026 and close on February 17, 2026. Kits are designed to be appropriate for community gardens, urban farms, working lands, town and city parks, educational institutions, Indigenous tribes, and other shared community spaces. Kits are not for residential use or private homes.

NRCS is sponsoring Partner Grants for The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund 2026. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is soliciting proposals through the Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund to conserve, restore, and protect habitats on public and private land, across rural, urban, and Tribal areas, that contribute to the overall health of the Delaware River watershed. The deadline is March 26, 2026 and grant sizes range from \$100,000.00 to \$500,000.00 for a 3 year duration.

EXTENSION UPDATE

An update was received by the District from M. Melendez, Mercer County Extension Office.

M. Melendez attended multiple meetings:

1. NOFA NJ Winter Conference on January 31, 2026 in Asbury Park
2. Rutgers Cooperative Extension Annual Meeting on the Rutgers Campus
3. New Jersey Ag Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey
4. Northeast Center for Food Safety Annual Meeting in Providence, RI

The Mercer Ag Day is scheduled for March 6, 2026 at the Howell Living History Farm. M. Melendez applied for 1 CORE credit for a talk that will be given and an additional CORE credit for those who return pesticide containers for recycling.

The Central Jersey Vegetable meeting will be held on February 20, 2026 at Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County in Freehold.

The North Jersey Vegetable meeting will be held on February 25, 2026 in Flemington, New Jersey.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The District Manager spoke to a representative at New Jersey State Health Benefits regarding whether or not an employer can pay an additional amount towards an employee's health care premium. The result is yes; an employer can pay an additional amount towards an employee's health care premium. The only requirement is to send New Jersey State Health Benefits a Resolution authorizing the change percentage of premiums paid form.

The Board agreed to pay 75% of the health care premiums for the employees.

MOTION 5

A motion to approve the District to increase their share of health insurance premiums costs to 75% and the employees pay 25% was made by L. Huebner, seconded by D. Pace,

carried unanimously.

The Board is required to authorize the District Manager to start a Nominating Committee for the open Board Supervisor position.

MOTION 6

A motion to approve the District Manager to convene a Nominating Committee for the open Board Supervisor position was made by L. Huebner, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

The Board discussed nominating a current supervisor to the Vice Chair position.

MOTION 7

A motion to approve Lucia Huebner as the Vice Chair for the District was made by D. Pace, seconded by T. Wang, with L. Huebner not voting, carried.

A quote was presented to the Board for a new desk top Dell Pro QCS1250 computer for the District Manager.

MOTION 8

A motion to approve a new desk top Dell Pro QCS1250 computer was made by T. Wang, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

The District received a membership dues request from National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). It was agreed to send a \$250.00 for 2026 dues the same as previous years.

MOTION 9

A motion to approve membership dues in the amount of \$250.00 to the National Association of Conservation Districts was made by D. Pace, seconded by T. Wang, with L. Huebner absent, carried.

The District received a donation request for the Envirothon from the New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts (NJACD).

MOTION 10

A motion to approve a donation to the Envirothon in the amount of \$500.00 was made by T. Wang, seconded by D. Pace with L. Huebner absent, carried.

The District received a membership dues request in the amount of \$850.00 from New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts (NJACD).

MOTION 11

A motion to approve membership dues in the amount of \$250.00 to the New Jersey Association of Conservation District was made by T. Wang, seconded by D. Pace with L. Huebner absent, carried.

HUNT LAKE DAM

The district manager conducted a Power Point Presentation on the current status of the Hunt Lake Dam, lake lowering project. GZA Environmental was contracted by NJDEP to prepare the engineering study to conduct the lake lowering operation.

Several technical hurdles, including the absence of a dewatering valve on the primary spillway, and the presence of bedrock several feet below the ground surface of the emergency spillway, have caused delays in the lowering operation.

Due to the perceived technical difficulties and associated costs in conducting an interim lake lowering, NJDEP recommended that GZA Environmental conduct a complete Dam decommissioning analysis. The Department of Treasury is in the process of adjusting the contract to change the award amount to cover the additional costs for a complete decommissioning study.

The NJDEP initially appropriated \$500,000.00 for the decommissioning of Hunt Lake Dam. The engineering costs for the decommissioning study, will be taken from this appropriation. The initial contract award to GZA Environmental for the Lake Lowering study was \$145,975.00.

Next Meeting – March, 12, 2026 at 12:30 pm

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Schiariti, P.E.
Secretary to the Board

**MINUTES OF MERCER COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING
590 HUGHES DRIVE
HAMILTON SQUARE, NJ 08690
JANUARY 8, 2026**

MCSCD SUPERVISORS

Scott Ellis
Theodora Wang
Lucia Huebner
Daniel Pace

STAFF

Paul Schiariti
Linda Sandusky

OTHERS

Lewis Goldshore, Esq.
Meredith Melendez
Diane Kottas, MC Planning

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, S. Ellis at 12:31 pm. The Statement of Adequate Notice was read. The attendees rose for the flag salute.

The Board took the first few minutes to honor long time, friend, colleague and District Supervisor, Gary Mount, who recently passed away. It was decided the District would donate to the New Jersey State Horticultural Society in Gary Mount's honor.

MOTION 1

A motion to send a donation in the amount of \$500.00 to the New Jersey State Horticultural Society was made by D. Pace seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

The minutes of the December 11, 2025 meeting were reviewed by the Board with one correction required to Motion #4, the word 'mad' should be 'made'.

MOTION 2

A motion to approve the minutes with one correction was made by D. Pace, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

The Treasurer's Report was presented to the Board. The District was in the black for this period.

MOTION 3

A motion to receive and file the Treasurer's Report pending audit was made by L. Huebner, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

The Director's Report was given.

NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION PROGRAM

14 - APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
0 - PREREVIEW INSPECTIONS
24 - CHAPTER 251 REVIEWS
81 - CHAPTER 251 INSPECTIONS
0 - PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING
8 - FINAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
27 - CONDITIONAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
1 - VIOLATION NOTICE
0 - STOP WORK ORDER
0 - DENIALS
0 - CERTIFICATION DELEGATIONS
5 - 251 EXEMPTION DETERMINATIONS

CHAPTER 251

The district issued a Violation for a project in Robbinsville related to incomplete stormwater management facilities. The district manager received a complaint from Allentown Borough regarding sediment discharge into Indian Run Lake. This previously had been a chronic issue. Prior inspections were performed and several issues likely contributing to the problem were noted and addressed.

After receiving the complaint, the district manager conducted a site inspection. Detention basins that previously had been stabilized were essentially being rebuilt and regraded. However, building construction has occurred. Basins are required to be fully constructed and permanently stabilized prior to the installation of any impervious surfaces, to control sediment discharge. Since the basins are currently bare soil, they are in essence, a sediment source.

Due to the potential impacts and sensitive nature of the downstream receiving area, the district manager referred the matter to NJDEP Bureau of Water Quality Enforcement. NJDEP subsequently met with the developers and conducted an inspection of the project site. Typically, NJDEP will prepare a field report and or Notice of Violation (NOV) associated with the inspection findings. The district will receive a copy of that report once it has been prepared.

ANNUAL RECORDS DISPOSAL

The district manager is in the process of compiling Chapter 251 files that are eligible for disposal under the Records Retention Act (RRA). Under the Act, project files are required to be retained and accessible for a period of at least 6 years after the date that they have been officially closed out. Project files are temporarily archived by date of close out in the district office. After this period, the files can be disposed / recycled. Typically, the files are brought to the Hamilton Twp. Ecological Center for recycling.

An official request must be made by the district through the State of NJ's Department of Treasury – ARTEMIS (Records Retention and Disposition management System) web site. Upon authorization, the records can be disposed of and recycled. After the disposition, follow up reporting must also be made through the same site, to close out the process.

MOTION 4

A motion to approve the Director's Report was made by T. Wang, seconded by L. Huebner, carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. New Jersey Conservation District Employees Association donation thank you letter received by the District Manager.
2. New Jersey Farmers News Letter
3. Hamilton Post Newspaper
4. New Jersey Law Journal: New Jersey Environmental Case Law July – December, 2025 by Lewis Goldshore.

CHAPTER 251

2025-6871-T	2022-6274-T(R)	2024-6571-E(R)	2025-6879-H
2023-6546-H	2025-6833-HT	2025-6878-P	2025-6880-P
2025-6848-P	2025-6847-P	2025-9885-P	

MOTION 5

A motion to approve plans recommended for certification by staff was made by L. Huebner, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

NRCS UPDATE

USDA announces January 15th National Batching deadline for major NRCS Conservation Programs.

EXTENSION UPDATE

M. Melendez is getting ready for the Ag Convention in Atlantic City in two weeks. She is putting together proceedings required by the Vegetable Growers Association which includes vegetable track, livestock track, tree fruits, small fruits, specialty crops, ag technology, and Ag environmental issues.

Travel has been cut back due to lack of funding. More online programs are being offered. The Northeast Region Center for Food Safety Training Meeting will be held in Providence, RI.

The department has cut funding for Grants, including a USDA Grant proposal focusing on produce safety educational outreach, led by the University of Florida.

Next week is the Extension Winter Conference at the Rutgers Campus. This will allow all Ag Agents in New Jersey to share their methods, and findings, to help farmers with

grant funding, climate change risk assessment, and form better partnerships with NOFA New Jersey and Federal programs.

SSCC UPDATE/NJACD UPDATE

1. SSCC Committee and NJACD meeting is scheduled for Monday January 12, 2026.
2. New staff will be reaching out to meet with District staff.
3. The Ag Convention is at the end of the month.
4. F. Minch is monitoring the governor transition.
5. Farmland assessment bill is moving through the legislature.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The District is required to readopt the Schedule of Annual Meetings for 2026 per L. Goldshore.

MOTION 6

A motion to readopt the District Schedule of Annual Meetings for 2026 was made by L. Hueber, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

The brochure for this years poster contest was handed out to the Board. This year's theme is: Soil. Where it all Begins
March 27, 2026 is the deadline for receiving posters.

A motion is required for retaining the District General Counsel, Lewis Goldshore, Esq. at the same rate as last year. The Board discussed the reasoning to have an attorney present at the monthly meetings.

MOTION 7

A motion to retain Lewis Goldshore, Esq. as the District General Counsel for the year 2026 was made by D. Pace, seconded by L. Huebner with T. Wang opposing, carried.

The District is required to have five Supervisors on the Board. There is currently a need for another supervisor and all nominees are welcome.

The District received the new health insurance billing for 2026. The premium increase is 35.442% over last year. The District Manager will have to incur the 35.442% increase in his portion of the health insurance reimbursement required by the State of New Jersey. In this salary range, the percentage is 35% of the cost of the total health insurance billing. The District Manager will incur this premium increase.

The Board discussed whether anything can be done to reduce the District Manager's cost. This was tabled to be discussed at the next meeting.

Next Meeting: February 11, 2026 at 12:30 pm. Note: This is a Wednesday.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Schiariti, P.E.
Secretary to the Board

**MINUTES OF MERCER COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING
590 HUGHES DRIVE
HAMILTON SQUARE, NJ 08690
DECEMBER 11, 2025**

MCSCD SUPERVISORS

Scott Ellis
Lucia Huebner
Theodora Wang
Daniel Pace

STAFF

Paul Schiariti
Linda Sandusky

OTHERS

Lewis Goldshore, Esq.
Meredith Meledez
Diane Kottas, MC Planning
Morgan Devine, USDA, NRCS

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, S. Ellis at 11:16 am. The Statement of Adequate Notice was read. The attendees rose for the flag salute.

The minutes of the November 10, 2025 meeting were reviewed by the Board.

MOTION 1

A motion to approve the minutes was made by D. Pace seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

The Treasurer's Report was presented to the Board. The District was in the black for this period. 18 applications were received this month.

MOTION 2

A motion to receive and file the Treasurer's Report pending audit was made by T. Wang, seconded by L. Huebner, carried unanimously.

The Director's Report was given.

NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION PROGRAM

18 - APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
0 - PREREVIEW INSPECTIONS
25 - CHAPTER 251 REVIEWS
69 - CHAPTER 251 INSPECTIONS
0 - PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING

- 30 - FINAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
- 8 - CONDITIONAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
- 1 - VIOLATION NOTICE
- 0 - STOP WORK ORDER
- 0 - DENIALS
- 0 - CERTIFICATION DELEGATIONS
- 2 - 251 EXEMPTION DETERMINATIONS

CHAPTER 251

The district issued a violation for a project in Hamilton related to a sediment control issue. The district manager met with and requested that sediment barriers be installed in front of a discharge culvert, receiving runoff from a newly graded area consisting of bare soil with no vegetative cover. After several requests, adequate sediment barriers were still not installed. The district proceeded with the issuance of a Violation Notice. A follow up inspection ensued, and it was determined that the items within the notice were substantially complied with.

The majority of inspections have transitioned back to active construction site inspections since we are no longer within the Fall seeding season. There are a significant number of sites that have been under construction for some time, that are nearing completion as well and will likely require Conditional Report of Compliance inspections between now and the Spring 2026.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The district manager, along with Supervisors: S. Ellis; T. Wang., L. Huebner and D. Pace, attended this year's Annual Conservation Partnership Conference held at the Conference Center at Mercer County Community College. The conference was very well attended by districts and cooperating partners throughout the state.

Topics of discussion included: NJ Department of Agriculture Division Update; NJ Department of Treasury State Contract Purchasing; Technology and Outreach Panel Discussion; Soil Analysis Technical Session; NJACD Conservation Achievement Awards; District Staff Roundtable and the NJACD Business Meeting & Supervisor Updates.

The Soil Analysis Technical Session included presentations on Soil Sampling, Testing and Diagnostics for Agriculture, Construction, Engineering, & Landowners. Presenters were from Rutgers and the USDA NRCS.

The District Staff Roundtable topics included: Review & Implementation of Soil Compaction Mitigation Requirements; Field Route Efficiency; District Data Base Improvements.

There are several software programs available to map out and provide the most efficient routes to inspect multiple sites, that are being used by several of the larger districts, with a good degree of success. These "apps" which are downloadable on a smart phone, map out the route between sites providing the most efficient route times.

MOTION 3

A motion to approve the Director’s Report was made by L. Huebner, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Hamilton Post Newspaper
2. Municipal Sewer & Water Monthly
3. Farm Focus Fall 2025 Edition
4. New Jersey Conservation District Employees Association donation letter
5. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service press release on launching a new regenerative pilot program to lower farmer production costs & advance MAHA agenda.
6. New Jersey Farmer
7. New Jersey Department of Agriculture annual notice prohibiting accepting gifts memo

MOTION 4

A motion to approve the New Jersey Conservation District Employees Association donation of \$50.00 was made by L. Huebner, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

CHAPTER 251

2025-6870-T	2025-6807-EW	2025-6866-E	2025-6867-E
2025-6769-H(R)	2025-6869-H	2025-6860-HT	2025-6865-HT
2024-6594-P(P)	2025-6862-P	2025-6861-P	2025-6868-P
2018-5614-P(R)	2025-6873-P	2025-6876-P	2025-6875-P
2025-6677-P	2025-6845-R	2025-6857-R	2021-6145-WW(R) NJG0333956

MOTION 5

A motion to approve plans recommended for certification by staff was made by D. Pace, seconded by L. Huebner, carried unanimously.

USDA/NRCS UPDATE

Application deadlines for all programs is January 15, 2026. There is increased funding for Conservation Stewardship Programs (CSP).

New Air Quality Initiative for 2026 includes engine combustion replacement for farm equipment. An example would be replacing diesel engines. Part of a large conservation system including practices to reduce/no till, hedgerows, cover crop, etc.

NRCS is promoting Local Working Group meetings with local community involvement. The Working Group deadline for sign up is March 31, 2026.

Memorandum of Understanding between NRCS and NJDA is still not signed They are currently discussing the agreement.

This limits the District from discussing and signing certain conservation plans.

The plan presented by M. Devine at this meeting is a special program that the Farm Bill requires the District to sign. The plan is a CRP Program (10-year program the Farm Service Agency manages). The plan includes warm season grass and a wildlife grass planting that needs to be mowed every 3-years for maintenance.

MOTION 6

A motion to approve a Conservation Plan – CRP Program for warm season grass & wildlife grass mowing was made by D. Pace, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

EXTENSION UPDATE

M. Melendez attended the Mid Atlantic Vegetable Conference last week. A two day zoom meeting event for Extension Specialists, County Agents from the region and students to working with vegetable growers.

Next week M. Melendez will be presenting at the Northeast NOFA Meeting online discussing product safety.

Organic Regenerative Farming Board survey work is still ongoing. The data will be presented at different meetings, including the Rutgers Board of Managers Meeting in February, 2026.

The Department of Agriculture has a grant up to \$100,000.00 from the Federal Government to support Agro Tourism on New Jersey Farms. This is for farms that support visitors on their farms for tours, including wineries.

The New Jersey Agricultural Convention & Trade Show will be held next year from January 21-23, 2026 in Atlantic City, NJ. Co-sponsored by Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE), NJ Department of Agricultural (NJDA), and the Vegetable Growers Association of NJ (VGANJ). This convention offers extensive education, workshops like FSMA training, and networking for farmers and industry professionals.

The Vegetable Grower of the Year Award for 2026 is Jess Niederer. This is a prestigious award voted on by the Ag Agents.

NEW BUSINESS

Supervisors received copies of the Annual District Audit. There are no recommendations required from the audit. Chapter 251 fees collected appear to be in accordance with the adopted fee schedule. Revenue and receipts were properly recorded according with the accounting records. The District made deposits within the required 5 business days. Purchases were made with proper authorization. District budget was presented in the format prescribed by the revised financial accounting manual.

L. Huebner mentioned that her term expires June 30, 2026. A couple of months before term expiration, the Department of Agriculture will send out notices for Supervisor reappointments.

Next Meeting: January 8, 2025 at 12:30 pm

The District Manager mentioned the Office Administrator received a telephone call from a representative of the Trenton Thunder Organization, inquiring if the District would be interested in going to a Trenton Thunder Baseball Game.

The Office Administrator suggested going to a ballgame for the next dinner tour. The ballpark is currently undergoing renovations and upgrades. The district currently has a Chapter 251 Plan for the ballpark project. The options of regular seating, picnic area seating or booking a suite were discussed. The prices were discussed for all three options, which includes food. The ballfield renovations are expected to be completed by June, 2026.

S. Ellis asked L. Goldshore, esq. if this would be an acceptable dinner tour? L. Goldshore agreed this is fine and no different than a dinner out or a catered affair.

The Board agreed to have the Dinner Tour next year at the Trenton Thunder ballgame choosing the Suite option on July 24, 2026 or July 31, 2026 that includes 25 people. The district meeting will still be held at the regular date and time, July 9, 2026 at 12:30 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 1:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Schiariti, P.E.
Secretary to the Board

**MINUTES OF MERCER COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING
590 HUGHES DRIVE
HAMILTON SQUARE, NJ 08690
NOVEMBER 10, 2025**

MCSCD SUPERVISORS

Scott Ellis
Theodora Wang
Lucia Huebner
Daniel Pace

STAFF

Linda Sandusky

OTHERS

Lewis Goldshore, Esq.
Meredith Melendez

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, S. Ellis at 12:33 pm. The Statement of Adequate Notice was read. The attendees rose for the flag salute.

The minutes of the October 9, 2025 meeting were reviewed by the Board.

MOTION 1

A motion to approve the minutes was made by D. Pace, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

The Treasurer's Report was presented to the Board. The District was in the red for this period. A large insurance payment and three payroll periods this month were recorded.

MOTION 2

A motion to receive and file the Treasurer's Report pending audit was made by L. Huebner, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

The Director's Report was given.

NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION PROGRAM

21 - APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
0 - PREREVIEW INSPECTIONS
28 - CHAPTER 251 REVIEWS
121 - CHAPTER 251 INSPECTIONS
1 - PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING

- 69 - FINAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
- 0 - CONDITIONAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
- 0 - VIOLATION NOTICE
- 0 - STOP WORK ORDER
- 0 - DENIALS
- 0 - CERTIFICATION DELEGATIONS
- 3 - 251 EXEMPTION DETERMINATIONS

CHAPTER 251

The district was alerted to the commencement of demolition activities at St. Francis Hospital. The district manager followed up with an inspection and noted that the super-structure of the parking garage was being razed. The district manager subsequently contacted the demolition contractor as well the Construction manager and Owner's Representative and met with them to discuss the project. They agreed to provide a plan to the district as soon as possible.

The district received copies of several articles from a local online publication regarding the Emergency Repair of the Bridge carrying Mercer County Route 654 over the Stony Brook, near the Hopewell Valley Golf Course. The NJDEP Bureau of Water Quality Enforcement was contacted and subsequently followed up with a site inspection, which led to the issuance of a Notice of Violation (NOV). The county will be required to provide a restoration plan which may include the removal of the soil material that was deposited in the Stony Brook.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The district manager provided additional technical assistance to Somerset Union SCD, for the same project assistance was previously provided on. The state erosion control engineer is back in the office. The district manager strongly recommended that the state erosion control engineer provide additional assistance for this project due to several concerns that require their support / backing.

ASSUNPINK ENVIRONMENTAL INSTITUTE (AEI)

The District Manager received an email from NJ Division of Consumer Affairs regarding the Charity Close out. According to the email the Charity has been retired. However, the registration from 2019 was not completed. Instructions were provided on how to close this out, with a specific instruction on who to contact if the online close out did not work. An attempt was made to complete the close out online. This did not work, so the district manager reached out to the individual from DCA several times, with no response.

FARM ASSISTANCE

The district manager met with representatives from the Mercer County Ag. Development Board, the farmer leasing the property and District Board Chairman, on several farm plots in Hamilton Twp., located near the NJ Turnpike, Uncle Pete's Road, and Merrick Road. Severe erosion gullies have been forming for some time on these fields. Based upon the description provided by the tenant farmer, the gullies have worsened since the turnpike widening project was completed. The district manager was able to locate a plan of the Turnpike Service area

that depicts several storm drain discharge locations, directly onto one of the fields. These are likely causing the formation of the gullies and additional erosion on the one tract of land.

The erosion gullies forming on the two (2) other fields appear to have originated at the downslope ends of the fields, head cutting back towards the center of the fields. These gullies were in existence prior to 1997, based upon historical aerial mapping. Through natural processes and head cutting erosion, they appear to be getting larger.

Mercer County is researching potential support that may be available to assist the tenant farmer in the repair of these gullies.

MOTION 3

A motion to approve the Director's Report was made by T. Wang, seconded by L. Huebner, carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. New Jersey Farmers New Paper provided by S. Ellis
2. Hamilton Post Newspaper
3. Chief River Nursery Co. Brochure/Catalogue

CHAPTER 251

2025-6841-EW	2023-6506-E(R)	2025-6843-E	2025-6835-H
2025-6858-H	2025-6851-H	2025-6850-H	2025-6843-HT
2025-6819-HT	2025-6837-L	2025-6855-PB	2024-6643-P(R)
2025-6844-P	2024-6582-P(R)	2025-6842-P	2025-6852-P
2025-6839-P	2025-6854-P	2018-5631-R(R)	2025-6846-R
2023-6548-R	2021-6161-WW(R)	NJG0358550	

MOTION 4

A motion to approve plans recommended for certification by staff was made by D. Pace, seconded by L. Huebner, carried unanimously.

EXTENSION UPDATE

M. Melendez has been attending food safety farm visits at various locations. Also visited TCNJ to meet Desmond Hayes of Geo Greens hydroponic farm. D. Hayes created a manual for hydroponic growing. He is instructing people with disabilities about hydroponic growing in micro businesses. He has worked with the boys and girls clubs regarding food growing. He is currently setting up a lab at TCNJ for hydroponic growing.

Are You Ready to Farm Program showing equipment was held yesterday at HLubik Farms. M. Melendez attended and worked on her food safety equipment. Urban producers, beginning farmers, SADC and NOFA were in attendance.

Next week there is the Farm Bureau Convention in Cherry Hill, New Jersey at the Double Tree Hotel.

Food Safety Training will be held online starting next month.

M. Melendez is wrapping up the Beginning Farmer Food Safety Grant. She is working on creating fact sheets and additional farm visits.

SSCC UPDATE/NJACD UPDATE

Supervisor's and District Manager have signed up for the 2025 Annual Partnership Conference and Business Meeting on November 24th at Mercer County Community College.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The District Manager was copied on NJDEP violations after bridge repair sediment washed into the Stony Brook. D. Pace provided the meeting attendees with articles from the Mercer Me Hopewell Valley Connected Newsletter on the Stony Brook violations.

NEW BUSINESS

2026 District Meeting Calendar was discussed.

MOTION 5

A motion to approve the 2026 Annual Notice of Meetings was made by L. Huebner, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

The 2026 District Holiday Calendar was discussed.

Next Meeting: December 11, 2025 at 11 am

The District Manager was contacted by Tim Thomas, District Manager at the Freehold Office. They are looking to implement a program they are modeling after a Barnegat Bay Partnership Guide to landscape residential lots with native plants. The supervisors are on board with having our name on the brochure and would like to see the brochure before it is released. We may possibly put it on our web site.

The meeting adjourned at 1:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Schiariti, P.E.
Secretary to the Board

**MINUTES OF MERCER COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING
590 HUGHES DRIVE
HAMILTON SQUARE, NJ 08690
OCTOBER 9, 2025**

MCSCD SUPERVISORS

Scott Ellis
Theodora Wang
Lucia Huebner
Daniel Pace

STAFF

Paul Schiariti, P.E.
Linda Sandusky

OTHERS

Lewis Goldshore, Esq.
Diane Kottas, MC Planning
Merideth Melendez

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, S. Ellis at 12:30 pm. The Statement of Adequate Notice was read. The attendees rose for the flag salute.

The minutes of the September 11, 2025 meeting were reviewed by the Board.

MOTION 1

A motion to approve the minutes was made by D. Pace seconded by T. Wang, with L. Huebner not in attendance, carried.

The Treasurer's Report was presented to the Board. The District was in the red for this period. Only 6 applications were received for this month.

MOTION 2

A motion to receive and file the Treasurer's Report pending audit was made by T. Wang, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

The Director's Report was given.

NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION PROGRAM

6 - APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
0 - PREREVIEW INSPECTIONS
18 - CHAPTER 251 REVIEWS
79 - CHAPTER 251 INSPECTIONS
0 - PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING

- 45 - FINAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
- 3 - CONDITIONAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
- 2 - VIOLATION NOTICE
- 0 - STOP WORK ORDER
- 0 - DENIALS
- 0 - CERTIFICATION DELEGATIONS
- 4 - 251 EXEMPTION DETERMINATIONS

CHAPTER 251

The district issued a Violation Notice for a project in Hopewell Twp. regarding expired Conditional Reports of Compliance. There are approximately 30 outstanding conditionals that are required to be finalized during the Fall growing season. This was previously an issue with this same developer during this past Spring (2025) and last Fall (2024). The district reached out several times to the developer with specific requests to comply, prior to the issuance of the Violation Notice.

The district issued a Violation Notice for a warehouse project in Hamilton Twp. for out of sequence work associated with the detention basin. The project also originally started without their 5G3 Permit being filed, and no work at all on the stormwater management basins, as required. The district manager reached out to the applicant over a several month period to achieve compliance. However, very little progress was achieved on the basins, resulting in the issuance of the Violation Notice.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The district manager is continuing to provide technical assistance as needed for several districts, including Somerset Union SCD, Ocean SCD and Cape-Atlantic-Camden SCD. Somerset-Union SCD was invoiced for services. The state erosion control engineer is currently not due back until the end of October. The district manager has also provided guidance to several districts who are in the process of Fee Schedule changes.

ASSUNPINK ENVIRONMENTAL INSTITUTE (AEI)

The District Manager filed the Form 990-N for Tax Year 2024 for Assunpink Environmental Institute. The district manager contacted the IRS regarding the dissolution of AEI and the requirements to notify the IRS to close out the Charitable organization from the IRS's perspective. This cannot be done until the end of the year 2025. There are several documents that may be required to be sent to the IRS during the process including the Resolution authorizing the dissolution of AEI.

FIVE YEAR FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The Office Administrator heard back from the district auditors regarding the recording of income / expenses associated with the receipt of RFA fees. A portion of the RFA fees received by the district gets transferred to the SSCC. Moving forward, the district will not expense the SSCC fees and will record them as a liability only. This will decrease the income by same amount as the SSCC fees.

MOTION 3

A motion to approve the Director’s Report was made by L. Huebner, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. National Association of Conservation District annual membership notice.
2. Strobel Native Grass Seeder Pamphlet
3. Hamilton Post Newspaper
4. Email from Jess Niederer: Report Announcement of Organic Regenerative Farming Board Survey Results
5. Organic and Regenerative Farming Board Farm Owner Survey Report 2025
6. Estuary News

CHAPTER 251

2025-6779-EW	2020-5985-E(R)	2022-6319-E(R)	2025-6829-E
2025-6828-H	2021-6168-H(R)	2002-3062-H(R)	2021-6039-H(R)
2024-6672-H(R)	NJG0334880	11-03-03-349	2024-6724-HT
2022-6257-HT(R)	2025-6796-P	2025-6832-P	2025-6836-P
2019-5808-R(R)	2022-6236-WW(R)	2025-6838-WW	
NJG0304107			

MOTION 4

A motion to approve plans recommended for certification by staff was made by L. Huebner, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

USDA/NRCS UPDATE

A reminder from L. Huebner, EQIP deadline is 10/17/25.

EXTENSION UPDATE

New Jersey Department of Agriculture has been cut with FDA funding for Outreach specific to Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). The Department of Ag was able to provide \$40,000.00 to support the education portion of FSMA.

FDA funding cuts also affect National Association of State Department of Agricultures (NASDA) support the training of on farm readiness reviews out on the farms for assessments. All training will now be online only, without onsite firsthand training.

The University of Florida has submitted another grant proposal for Food Safety Outreach and M. Melendez will be the principal investigator representing Rutgers on that project.

M. Melendez passed out the Organic and Regenerative Farming Board Farm Owner Survey Report for 2025. A survey was conducted to describe organic and regenerative farming in NJ and what the farmers most need to be successful. Who are the farmers, where are they farming, what are the farms growing and the size of the farms, were amongst the questions asked within the survey.

New Jersey State Senator, Shirley Turner presented a bill in the State Senate for Urban Agriculture. M. Melendez is concerned about soil issues in urban areas. There will be a need for Extension Outreach.

SSCC UPDATE

District Manager asked who will be attending this year's Annual Partnership Conference. Supervisors, S. Ellis, L. Huebner, D. Pace, T. Wang, and the District Manager all agreed to attend.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

HUNT LAKE DAM

District Manager gave verbal authorization to Nature's Way Farm & Trees, LLC to conduct the dam embankment cleanup and mowing.

NEW BUSINESS

L. Huebner brought up a turbidity/sediment issue in the Stony Brook River. The District Manager has been contacted by DEP and the Watershed Institute regarding the river. Mercer County is conducting an emergency bridge repair as a result of scouring at the bridge piers, to stabilize the bridge. The District Manager has also contacted the Assistant County Engineer for information. This is an emergency repair and under 5,000 square feet, so the District is not involved with this repair project.

L. Goldshore has been in touch with D&S Castings attorney regarding the current stop work order. He was informed they are in contact with Roberts Engineering Group, LLC to comply with the district's regulations. This site is located off of East State Street in Hamilton Township.

Next Meeting: November 13, 2025 at 12:30 pm.

S. Ellis informed the Board he will not be attending the next meeting.

S. Ellis spoke about an erosion problem on County properties at Uncle Pete's Road, and the New Jersey Turnpike. Merrick Road and the New Jersey Turnpike has the same problem likely related to salt runoff. These areas are not farmable. The District Manager will look into this with D. Kottas.

The meeting adjourned at 1:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Schiariti, P.E.
Secretary to the Board

**MINUTES OF MERCER COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING
590 HUGHES DRIVE
HAMILTON SQUARE, NJ 08690
SEPTEMBER 11, 2025**

MCSCD SUPERVISORS

Scott Ellis
Daniel Pace
Theodora Wang
Lucia Huebner

STAFF

Paul Schiariti
Linda Sandusky

OTHERS

Lewis Goldshore, Esq.
Diane Kottas, MC Planning

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, S. Ellis at 3:03 pm. The Statement of Adequate Notice was read. The attendees rose for the flag salute.

The minutes of the August 14, 2025 meeting were reviewed by the Board.

MOTION 1

A motion to approve the minutes was made by L. Huebner seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

The Treasurer's Report was presented to the Board. The District was in the red for this period with only ten applications being received.

MOTION 2

A motion to receive and file the Treasurer's Report pending audit was made by L. Huebner, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

The Director's Report was given.

NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION PROGRAM

10 - APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
3 - PREREVIEW INSPECTIONS
23 - CHAPTER 251 REVIEWS
93 - CHAPTER 251 INSPECTIONS
0 - PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETINGS

34 - FINAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
5 - CONDITIONAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
0 - VIOLATION NOTICES
0 - STOP WORK ORDERS
0 - DENIALS
0 - CERTIFICATION DELEGATIONS
3 - 251 EXEMPTION DETERMINATIONS

CHAPTER 251

Field /site inspections will transition back to compliance inspections for Final Reports of Compliance and permanent site stabilization due to the beginning of the Fall seeding season. We will still conduct active construction site inspections as is done throughout the year. Fall seeding season lasts until the beginning of October and can be extended depending on forecasted weather conditions.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The district manager was contacted by the State Erosion Control Engineer, to provide some assistance to districts as needed due to an extended leave under the Family Leave Act. The district manager has provided assistance to the Somerset Union District and Ocean District. The assistance provided to the Somerset Union District involved a field meeting within their district and plan review. The assistance provided to the Ocean District was by phone call with district staff. The State Engineer is due back in late October.

ASSUNPINK ENVIRONMENTAL INSTITUTE (AEI)

District Council filed for the dissolution of Assunpink Environmental Institute. A Certificate of Dissolution was received from the State of New Jersey Department of Treasury.

FIVE YEAR FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The District Manager was copied on a Five Year Financial Overview of District Audits provided to the Chairman of the Board, by the State Soil Conservation Committee. Responses to any issues raised or flagged items were requested to be provided by September 5, 2025. Several items were noted mostly related to the decrease in revenues from FY23 to FY24. The district is aware of this issue. FY25 saw an increase in revenues over expenditures.

MOTION 3

A motion to approve the Director's Report was made by L. Huebner, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Conservation for Future Generations 1964 Yearbook-MCSCD
2. 1975 MCSCD Annual Report
3. Hamilton Post Newspaper
4. DEP letter to Paul Harris, Interim Director for the Dept. of Recreation, City of

- Trenton. Restoration proposal plan for Stacy Park Riparian Restoration.
5. Pipeline Training information
 6. Municipal Sewer & Water
 7. Auction Notice for a 50 acre farm for sale in Hampton Borough, Hunterdon County.

CHAPTER 251

2025-6825-T	2025-6824-EW	2022-6214-EW	2025-6821-EW
2020-5919-E(R)	2025-6830-E	2019-5762-H(R)	2019-5723-H(R)
2023-6430-H	2022-6208-HPB(R)	NJG0373702	NJG0297437
2025-6822-HT	2025-6815-L	2025-6818-L	2025-6823-P
2025-6820-P	2021-6132-P(R)	2025-6831-P	2025-6826-P
2021-6141-WW(R)	NJG0326941	2021-6178-WW(R)	2021-6180-WW(R)
NJG0331678	2018-5498-WW(R)	NJG0329967	2021-6171-WW(R)
	NJG0291731		NJG0339504

MOTION 4

A motion to approve plans recommended for certification by staff was made by T. Wang, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

USDA/NRCS UPDATE

NRCS will be hosting a Conservation Open House within New Jersey NRCS Field Offices. Topics include:

1. EQIP & CSP Program highlights
2. How to apply for funding before October 17, 2025
3. Local conservation success stories
4. One-one support from NRCS Staff

SADC UPDATE

The District received an email from Heidi Winzinger, NJ State Agriculture Development Committee, regarding NJ Farmland Preservation Update on the State wide formula.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

HUNT LAKE DAM

S. Ellis received an estimate to mow and cut down brush and small olive tree growth from the Hunt Lake Dam embankment, by Nature’s Way Farm and Trees, LLC.

MOTION 5

A motion to approve the Hunt Lake Dam estimate from By Nature’s Way Farm & Trees, LLC was made by D. Pace, seconded by T. Wang with S. Ellis abstaining, carried.

The District Manager was copied on an email from French and Parrello to Clint Oman from DEP Dam Safety. Clint Oman requested an electronic copy of the Hunt Lake Dam Inspection Report and EAP Report (Emergency Action Plan) which was sent.

New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts (NJACD) Annual Partnership Meeting

will be held this year at the Mercer County Community College Conference Center on November 24, 2025.

NEW BUSINESS

Next Meeting: October 9, 2025 at 12:30 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Schiariti, P.E.
Secretary to the Boards

**MINUTES OF MERCER COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING
590 HUGHES DRIVE
HAMILTON SQUARE, NJ 08690
AUGUST 14, 2025**

MCSCD SUPERVISORS

Scott Ellis
Theodora Wang
Lucia Huebner
Daniel Pace

STAFF

Linda Sandusky

OTHERS

Lewis Goldshore, Esq.
Diane Kottas, MC Planning
Morgan Devine, USDA, NRCS

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, S. Ellis at 12:37 pm. The Statement of Adequate Notice was read. The attendees rose for the flag salute.

The minutes of the July 10, 2025 meeting were reviewed by the Board.

MOTION 1

A motion to approve the minutes was made by D. Pace seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

The new District Conservationist, Morgan Devine from USDA, NRCS introduced herself to the Board. All meeting attendees also introduced themselves.

The Treasurer's Report was presented to the Board. The District was in the red for this period. Larger the normal expenses were paid and only 15 applications received.

MOTION 2

A motion to receive and file the Treasurer's Report pending audit was made by D. Pace, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

The Director's Report was given.

NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION PROGRAM

15 - APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
0 - PREREVIEW INSPECTIONS
27 - CHAPTER 251 REVIEWS
69 - CHAPTER 251 INSPECTIONS

0 - PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING
21 - FINAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
7 - CONDITIONAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
1 - VIOLATION NOTICE
0 - STOP WORK ORDER
0 - DENIALS
0 - CERTIFICATION DELEGATIONS
6 - 251 EXEMPTION DETERMINATIONS

CHAPTER 251

A Violation Notice was issued for a new warehouse project located on Route 130 in Robbinsville Township for out of sequence construction issues. Building construction commenced prior to the completion of the required stormwater management / temporary sediment basin. The district manager met multiple times with the developer to discuss the proper sequence related to the completion of the stormwater management basin. Subsequently the Violation Notice was issued after receiving authorization from the Chairman. All items noted on the Violation notice have been adequately completed. No further action is required.

OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Andrea Farparan from the Freehold Soil Conservation District was able to provide office administrative assistance during a two (2) week period when the district's office administrator was on vacation. Andrea did an excellent job filling in during that time period. The district is incredibly grateful and thankful for the assistance and cooperation provided by the Freehold SCD.

ANNUAL AUDIT

The Auditors from Nightlinger, Colavita and Volpa conducted their annual audit of the district's finances on Tuesday, July 29, 2025. The office administrator provided all the necessary financial documents as well as the requested Chapter 251 project files. Two (2) auditors spent the majority of the day in the district office, reviewing finances and district records. The auditors also conducted brief interviews with the district manager and the office administrator, as standard operating procedure. Upon completion, the Audit will be forwarded to the district as well as the NJ Department of Agriculture and posted on the district's web site.

ASSUNPINK ENVIRONMENTAL INSTITUTE (AEI)

District Council has been researching and preparing the required documentation to dissolve the AEI 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. The office administrator stopped by the bank to discuss the closing out of the account after the last check from the account has been cashed / withdrawn. The office administrator has also been gathering all necessary documentation, at the request of district council, required for the necessary filing.

MOTION 3

A motion to approve a Resolution to take the necessary actions to dissolve the Assunpink

Environmental Institute, Inc. (AEI) was made by T. Wang, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

MOTION 4

A motion to approve the Director’s Report was made by L. Huebner, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Mercer County Board of Agriculture notice to save the date for the Legislative Breakfast to be held at Needle Creek Brewery in Pennington, N.J. on September 8, 2025 starting at 7:30 am.
2. Hamilton Post Newspaper
3. NACD 2025 Northeast Region Meeting to be held September 21-25, 2025 at the Double Tree By Hilton Hotel Syracuse in East Syracuse, NY.

CHAPTER 251

2025-6799-T	2025-6774-T	2025-6786-E	2025-6814-E
2024-6684-E	2025-6811-E	2025-6812-H	2024-6708-H
2024-6702-H(R)	2020-5883-H(R)	2025-6809-H	2021-6019-HT(R)
2025-6804-HT	2024-6699-HT	2025-6808-HT	NJG0330914
2025-6791-HT	2025-6802-HT	2025-6795-HT	2025-6810-PB
2025-6801-P	2024-6673-P(R)	2024-6657-P(R)	2025-6817-P
2025-6788-R			

MOTION 5

A motion to approve plans recommended for certification by staff was made by L. Huebner, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

NORTH JERSEY RC&D STATUS

D. Kottas attended the North Jersey RC&D Meeting. North Jersey RC&D are still getting their Grants in order.

USDA/NRCS UPDATE

M. Devine gave a brief description of her previous work relationship and is now working for USDA/NRCS out of the Freehold Office servicing Mercer County and the State of New Jersey.

There are four Conservation Plans for approval today. These are for cover crops, wildlife habitat conservation stewardship program and operations management of the pasture, associated land and livestock.

MOTION 6

A motion to approve Conservation Plans by the District was made by L. Huebner, seconded by D. Pace, carried unanimously.

EXTENSION UPDATE

M. Melendez could not attend the meeting and sent an email summary of their current activities.

The Mercer County 4H fair was a success with a great turnout for both days. The Jersey Fresh wagon, supported by Chickadee Creek Farm and Terhune Orchards, raised several hundred dollars to support 4H youth programming in the county.

M. Melendez continues to work on the fact sheet focusing on produce safety for gleanng organizations and volunteers. These fact sheets will be supplemental to the training video created last year.

The FDA FSMA Traceability Rule has been postponed until 2028. They are seeing more wholesale buyers of produce require traceability of products sold since the FDA has not stepped in with the regulatory requirement. This means that some farms will need to comply with varying expectations from each of their produce buyers. The ability to trace back products should be reasonable for the farm.

M. Melendez continues to provide assistance to farmers who are new to the USDA Third Party Audit (food safety) process, and they are seeing increased activity from NJDA with FSMA Product Safety Rule inspections on small farms.

SSCC UPDATE/NJACD UPDATE

NACD 2025 Northeast Region Meeting to be held September 21-25, 2025 at the Double Tree By Hilton Hotel Syracuse in East Syracuse, NY. The meeting will have sessions covering conservation topics across the Northeast, and a lunch cruise along the Erie Canal. Participants have the opportunity to network with fellow conservation professionals and partners.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The next meeting will be held at 3:00 pm and the annual picnic to follow the meeting. The Board members added additional attendees to invite to the picnic.

NEW BUSINESS

Next Meeting: September 11, 2025 at 3:00 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 1:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Sandusky
Acting Secretary to the Board

**MINUTES OF MERCER COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING
590 HUGHES DRIVE
HAMILTON SQUARE, NJ 08690
JULY 10, 2025**

MCSCD SUPERVISORS

Scott Ellis
Theodora Wang
Gary Mount (virtual)

STAFF

Paul Schiariti, P.E.
Linda Sandusky

OTHERS

Lewis Goldshore, Esq.
Meredith Melendez
Tairi Melchiorre, USDA/NRCS
Diane Kottas, MC Planning

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, S. Ellis at 12:46 pm. The Statement of Adequate Notice was read. The attendees rose for the flag salute.

The minutes of the June 12, 2025 meeting were reviewed by the Board.

MOTION 1

A motion to approve the minutes was made by T. Wang seconded by G. Mount, carried unanimously.

The Treasurer's Report was presented to the Board. The District was in the black for Fiscal Year 2025.

MOTION 2

A motion to receive and file the Treasurer's Report pending audit was made by T. Wang, seconded by G. Mount, carried unanimously.

The Director's Report was given.

NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION PROGRAM

14 - APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
0 - PREREVIEW INSPECTIONS
28 - CHAPTER 251 REVIEWS
102 - CHAPTER 251 INSPECTIONS
0 - PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING

- 23 - FINAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
- 13- CONDITIONAL REPORTS OF COMPLIANCE
- 0 - VIOLATION NOTICE
- 1 - STOP WORK ORDER
- 0 - DENIALS
- 0 - CERTIFICATION DELEGATIONS
- 6 - 251 EXEMPTION DETERMINATIONS

CHAPTER 251

The district issued a Stop Construction Order for a project located on Sharon Road in Robbinsville Twp. The project was previously issued a Violation Notice for out of Sequence Construction related to the installation of the Bioretention Basins. The district had previously met with and discussed the proper sequence with the developer multiple times. Upon inspection at the due date of the Violation Notice, it was determined that the corrective actions were both incomplete and sub-standard. Therefore, a Stop Construction Order was issued after receiving approval from the District Chairman.

HUNT LAKE DAM

The district manager met with a representative /estimator from T. Dolci, Inc. to go over the maintenance work noted within the Annual Inspection Report. The entire embankment and auxiliary spillway areas were walked, and the various maintenance items were gone over. The district manager is awaiting a price to provide the services. The estimator noted the difficulty in reaching from the top of bank to remove the woody vegetation on the interior – lower embankment. Also, of concern was the removal of the woody vegetation, while minimizing damage to the embankment.

The district also received the Invoice from French and Parrello Associates for the Bi-annual Inspection Report and the update to the Emergency Action Plan. The total Invoice amount was for \$5,300.27. The original proposal was for \$5,400.00.

FEE SCHEDULE

The revised Fee Schedule was officially presented to the State Soil Conservation Committee during the June 16, 2025 virtual meeting. The District Manager, and Supervisor's: T. Wang, L. Huebner and D. Pace were in attendance. F. Minch presented the findings to the committee. One (1) question regarding diversification of services was presented to the district manager. F. Minch indicated that the district should continue to keep accurate records regarding expenditures associated with current and future Chapter 251 projects. The district received an official acknowledgement of the approval, from the SSCC. The district manager emailed engineers and developers, that consistently apply for Chapter 251 Plan Certifications, a copy of the new Fee Schedule, indicating that it was in effect on June 16, 2025. The office administrator emailed a copy to our web site consultant, to immediately post on the district's web site, as well.

SUPERVISOR RENOMINATIONS

Supervisor's T. Wang and D. Pace were officially renominated for three (3) year terms, during the State Soil Conservation Committee Meeting on June 16, 2025. Both re-

nominations were within the first tier of Supervisors who met or exceeded all of the mandatory requirements to continue to serve as Supervisors.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

The district manager contacted Princeton Tree Care regarding the White Pine Tree branches being intertwined within power lines and electric utility lines, between the utility pole and the building. Initially Mercer County was contacted. Due to trimming restrictions associated with the logistics of the power lines, they were unable to provide assistance. PSE & G, Inc. were also contacted. They did not believe there was the potential for an eminent power outage since no branches were broken off of the trees. However, they did note that the other electric utility lines were in fact entangled in the branches. They would not provide the tree trimming service if there was not a broken branch leaning on their (PSE & G's) power line.

Princeton Tree Care provided the tree trimming services for the cost of \$1,023.38. The work was completed on June 10, 2025.

MOTION 3

A motion to approve the Director's Report was made by G. Mount, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

CHAPTER 251

2025-6797-T	2025-6739-T	2024-6680-E(R)	2022-6379-H(R)
2024-6672-H	2024-6685-H(R)	NJG0367231	NJG0370541
2025-6794-H	2025-6775-HT	2025-6790-P	2024-6555-P(R)
2025-6805-P	2025-6806-P	2025-6798-P	2025-6777-R
2025-6785-R	2023-6537-R(R)		
	NJG0361151		

MOTION 4

A motion to approve plans recommended for certification by staff was made by T. Wang, seconded by G. Mount, carried unanimously.

NRCS UPDATE

T. Melchiorre informed the Board the Agency will start Phase 2 of filling 6 critical vacancies as follows; assistant engineer, 2 field engineers, 2 DC's, CET Woodstown, SC Frenchtown & ASTC-P at the State Office.

A notice was handed out with regard to USDA-NRCS Cape May Plant Materials Center 60th Anniversary Event on 9/25/25, hold at the Cape May Court House, NJ.

A press release announcing Fiscal Year 2026 programs will be out soon. Application deadline is October 17th.

Earth Team Volunteer program is up and running again. Volunteers are needed. Please contact T. Melchiorre at the Freehold office or K. Colon at the State Office.

Two Conservation Plans require approval by the District. One CSP Conservation Plan for cover crop and mulching for weed control and one CSP Conservation Plan for pollinator habitat and mulching for weed control.

MOTION 5

A motion to approve two Conservation Plans was made by G. Mount, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

EXTENSION UPDATE

M. Melendez gave an update that David Hlubic started July 1st as the Burlington County Ag Agent. Seo Woo Lee started as Rutgers Extension AG Viability Specialist. Working with farms on aspects of a business plan, enterprise budgets and policy related issues. Byron Chavez was hired as an Extension Specialist focusing on Food Safety. His start date is March 1, 2026.

The vegetable working group has been working on the Ag Convention. Which is now called North East Ag Expo & Education. The convention will be January 20-23, 2026. They are determining the details.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

L. Goldshore explained the need for additional billings due to extra-legal incidental work. For example, a delinquent notice was received for Assunpink Environmental Institute (AEI) from the Department of Treasury for non-submittal of a Charitable Registration that was cancelled years ago. Working to dissolve the non-profit company Assunpink Environmental Institute (AEI) to name a few.

District Manager found an email from 3 years ago retiring the Charity. Retiring the charity means that AEI receives under a certain threshold in donations each year (none for many years). L. Goldshore sent a letter stating the Charitable Institute is retired and sent a copy of their website showing AEI retired in 2022.

The District Manager stated that AEI should be dissolved and to send the balance of the account to a charity, Northeast Organic Farmers Association (NOFA) in memory of Charlie Huebner. The Board agreed to dissolved AEI and send the balance of the funds to NOFA.

MOTION 6

A motion to approve the balance of the funds for a donation from Assunpink Environmental Institute (AEI) to Northeast Organic Farmers Association (NOFA) was made by G. Mount, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

MOTION 7

A motion to dissolve Assunpink Environmental Institute (AEI) was made by G. Mount, seconded by T. Wang, carried unanimously.

An invoice was received for Directors & Officers annual insurance.

HUNT LAKE DAM

The District Manager received an email from T. Dolci, Inc. indicating that the scope of work was beyond their capabilities and subsequently recommended another contractor. The District Manager and Chairman met with the contractor to go over the scope of work. A quote of \$13,075.00 was received. The Board discussed the price and determined that additional prices should be obtained. The District Chairman indicated that he knows a contractor who may be interested in performing the services and would reach out to him.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. New Jersey Law Journal Article by Lewis Goldshore, Esq. regarding New Jersey courts addressing a broad range of issues that are of interest to environmental and real estate attorneys.
2. Municipal Sewer & Water
3. Farm Auction Notice Pilesgrove Twp., Salem County
4. USDA-NRCS Cape May Plant Materials Center 60th Anniversary Event 9/25/25
5. The National Association of Conservation Districts 2024 Annual Report
6. National Conservation Foundation 2024 Annual Report
7. Hamilton Post Newspaper

RC&D STATUS

A 2025 Annual Dues Appeal was received from RC&D South Jersey for \$300.00. The District Manager sent an email to C. Raabe at South Jersey RC&D to clarify if the District is under South Jersey RC&D or North Jersey RC&D since Mercer County Farms have been given grant funding from North Jersey RC&D. It has been clarified by L. Tessieri that Mercer County is within South Jersey RC&D and also received certain grant funding from North Jersey RC&D. South Jersey and North Jersey are separate 501(c)3 nonprofits.

The Board at this time did not approve funding for either nonprofit.

NEW BUSINESS

Next Meeting: August 14, 2025

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Schiariti, P.E.
Secretary to the Board