



SCCA Newsletter – Meeting at the SCCA SCCA Club House, 3673 St. Rte. 145 Cobleskill on December 19th 2024.

Greg Warner, President of Schoharie County Conservation Association called the meetings to order with the pledge of allegiance with 18 members in attendance. Clubs represented were NWTF, Schoharie Ridge Runners Snowmobile Riders, Middleburgh Rod & Gun Club, West Fulton Rod & Gun Club, Cave Country Riders, Summit Sno Riders, Long Path North Hiking Club, Richmondville Fish & Game Club, Schoharie County Whitetails Unlimited and several SCCA Associates along with Kate Collins from SUNY Cobleskill. The November minutes were read and approved with a motion from Liz Reinhart and second by Debroah Work. The December treasurer's report was read and approved with a motion from Dave Wood, second by Doug Handy. The members approved both reports. **The next SCCA meeting will be held on SUNY Cobleskill, Curtis Mott Bld. Rm 106 on January 23 @ 7PM.** The SCCA members voted to donate \$200 to the Youth Program for Archery held each Saturday morning at the Middleburgh Rod & Gun Club. SCCA received a donation from Bill & Kathy Slater in exchange of Christmas with for her brother Tom Livingston (They have done this for several years) Thank you Kathy. SCCA lost one of our long-time members, Carl Stefanik this past week. Carl was a member of our Board of Directors, he enjoyed helping out with the Wildlife Festivals in the Spring & Fall along with working the Cobleskill Sunshine Fair. He was a financial supporter and held many positions over the years. He will be missed by all. His funeral was this passed Monday. Turned 84 on Christmas Day.

SCCA members created a list of things they would like to do at the club house. Install an LED Light for our SCCA Sign down near the driveway entrance. Finish painting the gable end of the club house, and maybe install some plastic fencing around the club house base and around the bottom of the siding on the fair booth. Gutters on club house and fair booth, we need to repair the ramp leading up to the Cobleskill Fair Booth. Need to setup an open house to promote SCCA new building. SCCA is looking for donations of deer mounts and other animals for hanging in club.

SCCA is planning on having our Ice fishing derby again this coming winter if the ice cooperates. February 1 at Franklin Vly, south of Middleburgh on Route 145 from 8AM to 1PM. Dave Wood will be the POC. Trophies for the youth for largest fish of the day plus each 2-hour shifts

NYPA: New York Power Authority is scheduling a Wildlife Task Force meeting in February or March @ Visitor Center in Blenheim. There is usually 12 to 15 members of representatives from DEC, SCCA, NYPA, SUNY COBLESKILL, DEP, MINEKILL PARK, to mention a few. Last year the NYPA gave us a tour of the Power House.

The Schoharie County Trappers have been purchasing hides plus other items used in the fur business POC is Jeff Hatlee, from Off the Beaten Path. 518-257-2792. The Schoharie County Trappers Association has rejoined SCCA after about 4 years.

The Scouts from Fultonham and Cobleskill area (boys & girls) have asked permission to use the SCCA building for the club meetings twice a month. SCCA members approved this at the November meeting. Deborah Work is POC.

SCCA: All annual dues are due January 1st. A dues registration form will be included in your SCCA newsletter to fill out. Please send in your dues. I have received about three so far from clubs and about ten Individual members who are paid ahead. Association dues are \$30 annually. Each club officer and delegate receive a SCCA Newsletter monthly by mail or e-mail. Individual dues are \$10 annually. For 2024 we had 17 Associate clubs pay \$30 dues and 40 Individual members pay \$10 dues. If you forgot to pay the annual dues, please send them in. Normally we have around twenty clubs paying \$30 Annual Dues. Two years ago, we had close to 50 members, last year we only had about 40 paying members. Please send in your dues. SCCA P.O. Box 325 Central Bridge, N.Y. 12035.

Venison Donation Program: This past February 553 pounds of venison was delivered to eight different locations throughout the county. Schoharie County Whitetails Unlimited will donate another 50 Caliper CVA Black Powder Rifle to encourage Deer Hunters to donate a whole deer to the program this fall. This venison is ground into packages of 1 to 2 lbs. We will hold a drawing from all the names who donated a whole deer at the January 2025 SCCA meeting. Joseph Rack from Schoharie was the lucky winner last year. It cost SCCA \$1006.00 for the meat processing in 2024. SCCA has chosen to do pay the price so we can decide where the venison is given out and to whom receives it (food pantries). Marlow Meat processing in Howes Cave and Blues Meat Processing in Berne are again receiving deer this fall for the Schoharie County Venison Program. Eric Haslun is POC – 518-231-1744. So far, we have had 35 deer donated from this past season, 1020 pounds, The Regional bank is paying \$3.50 per pound but Amber Blu said she would cut our price to \$2.50 per pound. So SCCA will give Amber

\$2,270. She processed 908 pounds. We had 5 deer donated from DEC and 2 deer from USDA Saratoga airport. The two from the airport were funded by another source. Thank you – Amber.

Lifetime Hunting and Fishing License: SCCA had the drawing for the NYS Lifetime Hunting/Fishing license for the sixth year. **The winner was Rowan Hale, from Howes Cave who is Doug Handy's grandson.** He is only five years old so it only cost us \$535. The younger age the cheaper the license. This license also includes a Spring & Fall Turkey permit. The drawing is open to all members' children and grandchildren, great grandchildren below the age of seventeen as of December 31. It can be an Association Club member or an Individual Club member's relative. This year we had 58 applications to draw from. **The passed November 2023 winner was Talon Hotaling who is the grandson of Associates Member Mark Hotaling from Schoharie. He received a Lifetime license for Hunting and Fishing along with Spring & Fall Turkey permits.**

Region 4 - New York Fish & Wildlife Management Board: Here are the minutes from the October 23 meeting, Larry DiDonato- Board Chair introduced Board, went around the room and introduced themselves. Gary Muthig has been named interim president of NYS Conservation Council. Working on updating FWMB roster. Roster sheet was passed around, please help us fill out the information for each county. Deadline for Habitat and access grant is 12/8/24. Each county is expected to try and submit one proposal.

Chris VanMaaren – Regional Fisheries Manager reported - Etiquette guide for River users' article on shore fishing and policing angler etiquette in West Branch Delaware was passed around for comment from Destination Hancock. Canadarago Lake will get 2,000 fall fingerling walleyes from lake association. Fin clipped fish have been seen in our surveys. No tiger muskies will be stocked in Canadarago Lake this year, poor hatchery survival. 1,400 anglers were interviewed in region 4 section of Mohawk River during this year's creel survey. Most fish released including walleye. Most anglers below Lock 12. Contaminant analysis in the Mohawk conducted in Utica area. Mohawk River Locks 14 & 15 were surveyed, impounded year-round. Flood mitigation protocols being analyzed. Midseason dramatic drawdown with hurricanes coming during the summer. Potential to push fish out of system. Otsego lake reef built this week. 3 rock piles constructed by hand, working with Cobleskill and Oneonta. Hopeful to have Whitefish and lake trout spawning activity on the reef. Lake trout netting switched from Scott to Sam lead. We were able to collect younger lake trout age classes this year. Biannual Canadarago netting resulted in several large tiger muskie, walleye, large perch, and a missing net in July. Reduction of Rudd seen in spring trap netting. Represent a significant amount of biomass in Canadarago Lake. Tailwaters precursor to plan with PA, draft presented last week. Scheduling open to public zoom meeting before Christmas presenting plan with Q&A continue to maintain what we have. Robust fishery, continue current monitoring and add east branch habitat enhancement projects. QR code on angler surveys plus in person verification in 2025 then intensive creel on 5-year increment for Delaware River. Fish disease sampling was conducted on Basic Creek Reservoir. Was last surveyed in 2012. Fishing is shoreline access only. Very productive waterbody. Very weedy, shallow. Gilbert lake outreach event in June had a few attendees but most were kept away due to inclement weather. Steinmetz Park Family Fun Day in July had 60 anglers, many first-time anglers. Many tangles. Hudson river fish count had a record attendance of 160 visitors to learn about the 22 different fish from the Hudson-Mohawk on display. Annual Day in the Life on the Hudson River event reached over 700 students from the 16 schools in Region 4 that participated in the event. Access: Lock 10 Mohawk River rehab under way, won't be paved till 2025. Hale Eddy access site has been paved. Considering putting a boat launch at Fish Eddy on East Branch Delaware river. Onesquethaw CROTS survey was conducted with TU. Backpack shocked 6 sites, brown trout were collected at every site with the largest being 19.7in. Rusty crayfish also found. Last year of catch and release assessment on Bushkill, East branch, and West branch of Delaware River. Fred Henson is compiling a report on the Impacts of catch and release fishing on spawning grounds. Stocking totals for region 4 decreased by 4.2%. Detailed changes are in 2025 Stocking changes by county document attached to these minutes. These numbers will be revisited in the future as each county is evaluated in the Stream Access Verification plan. Glass lake will be stocked with walleye. No trout found in last surveys.

Mike Clark- Regional Wildlife Manager reported – Staffing: R4 Board is in the process of hiring an Environmental Program Specialist 1, to cover the regional Hunter Education Program as well as outreach for the wildlife unit. Hope to have someone in that role by end of Oct. Also, we're hiring a FW Tech 2 for the Schenectady office as Seth is back to work but has moved to Stamford to fill Josh Choquette's departure to fisheries. Bob Benson, our Stamford FW Tech 2 is retiring tomorrow and will leave another gap in our technical staff. We are still down a Wildlife Biologist to cover the Capital region, a couple of FW Tech 2s and a Forestry Tech 2. Regional Manager Mike Clark is still overseeing Albany/Schen/Rens/Col Counties. Big game - Gearing up for deer check season. If people are aware of any new deer processors, please let wildlife know. New paper tags this fall, make sure to pack a zip lock bag or the like to protect your tag. Again, no backtag required for this fall – statewide. DEC is looking into e-tags as soon as next year possibly. Once the animal leaves your possession (butcher, taxidermist, friend, etc.) it would need a paper tag on the carcass. Until we get a hard frost (which has not happened yet in the Hudson Valley), (EHD) Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease is still a possibility. Any suspect deer should be reported to wildlife and as always, we're still interested in looking at all clinical deer. Busy year again for nuisance bears, in R4 we had to euthanize 4 class 1 bears this year. Report any cases of many bears to wildlife, and we're interested in sampling these if any are killed. Drones are still

considered illegal for big game recovery, nothing new on that front. Modified crossbow permits are widespread now. This allows crossbows to be treated as regular compound/long bows and can be used in archery only areas (WMU 4J). Permanent disability permits are good for 10 years, temporary permits are good for one year. DEC is approaching 10K permits statewide since we started issuing these a few years ago. People should try to use the online application vs regular mail as it is a much faster turnaround time for issuance. Please report all moose sightings to wildlife. Small Game - Pheasants – We lost a site in Minden (Montgomery County) but gained a new one at Plainfield State Forest (Otsego County). Birds will be stocked 2 additional weeks this year, throughout the month of October. Last year in R4, we stocked a total of 3412 birds across the region and this year we will have stocked a total of 5218 birds. Stocking is going well but please remind hunters not to shoot while stocking is occurring and be mindful of shooting near houses or roads. We've had at least two incidents at this year where hunters were not being safe. No special furbearer permits/carcass collection needed this fall/winter – other than the usual pelt seals. Remember, all pelts/carcasses of otter, fisher, bobcat and marten need to be sealed within 10 days after the season ends in that area, and this can be done by your local ECOs or Wildlife staff. Land trapping season opens October 25th. Still working on changing the fisher trapping seasons but running out of time to make this happen for next fall. If not, then 2026-27 season. No changes currently anticipated for other land trapping seasons. The final year of the bobcat study concluded last month. We will continue to work with SUNY ESF to get better distribution and density estimates of bobcats statewide, which will inform future management. A slow summer duck banding season in R4, which is normal for us given our lack of bigger water bodies. However, we did band 222 resident geese back in June and our regional banding quota was met. Please report all mute swan sighting to wildlife. HEP - HEP classes, still going on, most of which are getting decent participation. We're looking forward to having a dedicated regional coordinator in that role again soon! Next step classes are now called Hunt Fish NY Classes and can be anything related to outdoor recreation. Reach out to Spring DeFranco (518-357-2355) for more details and see our website for more information.

Wildlife Health Team - Wildlife Health Team has developed a strategic plan for 2026-2031. The nine components included in the strategic plan are Program Management, Policy Development, Preparedness and Response, Training and Development, Surveillance and Monitoring, Communication, Information Management, Research and Veterinary Health Services. **Wildlife Diversity** - If anyone from the public sees what they believe to be a Threatened or Endangered species, please report to the Wildlife office. We also would like to see reports of any rare or species of special concern (ex. wood turtle, spotted turtle, box turtle). **Land Management:** Timber Sale at Partridge Run WMA – logger is skidding out and hauling away. Cutting of last three parcels starting this month. Sale is about half complete, extended until next year (August of 2025). Sale at Louise E Keir WMA is done, cutting is not complete. Operation is cleaning up what the contractor failed to finish. Albany County WMAs hunter access mowing is complete. Approximately 3 acres at Partridge Run WMA has been planted to clover and winter rye. We will mow said cover crops in the spring. Operations is preparing Louise E Keir for prescribed fire that we're hopeful to conduct in the spring of 2025. **Acquisitions** - Still working with Scenic Hudson to close on Binnenkill WMA (Albany County) which is 255 acres, getting closer. Continuing to work with Open Space Institute for expansion of Crumhorn WMA (Otsego County) which currently has no public access and will increase this WMA to 60 acres to 590 acres.

Sean Reynolds- Natural Resources Supervisor reported - Real property is fully staffed and will have an acquisition wing. Certified general appraiser hired. Primed for statewide initiative. Got out with region 4 fisheries for Biannual Canadarago Lake gill netting.

NYCDEP- Tom Davidock reported - Staffing changes have the permits office behind schedule. Aquaduct shutdown is underway. Drawdown of Pepacton and Cannonsville reservoirs was in beginning of October. Real time reservoir levels can be found on NYCDEP website. This project is expected to finish around May 2025. DMAP tags came early this year. Over 500 have been distributed so far. Have expanded sections for hunting. 50 tags remain for west settlement and Manorkill sections. Recreation boating season is wrapping up. Land acquisition program is being modified. Won't be purchasing as many sizeable properties. Focus is shifting towards streamside access for fishing. **Next FWMB meeting will be January 22nd @ Schenectady DEC Office @ 5:30. Minutes reported by Joshus Forst -recording Secretary NYS DEC Fisheries**

SCOPE: The next SCOPE meeting, January 21st @ 7PM, Carlisle Town Hall, 1 Crommie Rd. in Carlisle, NY. Our guest speaker will be SCOPE President John Elwood. Our meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend or neighbor. "S.C.O.P.E. Shooters Committee on Political Education" admin@scopeny2a.org.

Cave Country Riders Inc.: Meetings are held at Terri Bradt home, 178 Pine Hill Rd. Cobleskill, NY 12043 and the 2nd Tuesday of every month @ 7:00 pm. Meetings held from Oct.–Mar. POC: Terri Bradt 518-234-7331.

SUNY Cobleskill College: SCCA is still offering the \$400.00 Dorwin Hamm Scholarship to student in the Fisheries and Wildlife programs. POC is Roger Masse 518-255-5292 or Marc Cornwell 518-337-7044. SCCA handed out four applications for the scholarship at the Ducks Unlimited Banquet hoping to increase interest.

Clearwater Chapter of Trout Unlimited: The SUNY college club is meeting on the second Monday of each month in the new building, Center for Agricultural Resource, room 002. The Official Publication of the Clearwater Chapter of

Trout Unlimited - America's Leading Coldwater Fisheries Conservation Organization Promoting Habitat for Wild Trout and Salmon. Clearwater Chapter of TU PO Box 9686 Schenectady, NY 12309. Clearwater Chapter of Trout Unlimited mission is to conserve, protect and restore the Capital Region's trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds. Clearwater Chapter meetings held 3rd Monday. Joseph E. Zaloga American Legion Post #1520. 4 Everett Rd. Albany, N.Y. 12205 POC: Roy Lamberton 518-421-2500.

Long Path North Hiking Club: Next meeting will be held on March 19th @ 6 PM in the SCCA club house 3673 St. Rte. 145 Cobleskill, New York. The new Treasurer is Jean Mammato from Cobleskill, NY. Her e-mail address is Jean.lpnhc@gmail.com There are now 168 members with (2 new life members) 52 Life Members. List of Hikes coming up: Feb 15th – LP Section 33, High Point Rd. to Beaver Rd. or Tubbs Pond, 3-4 miles depending on snow, leader, Mark. The Winter/Spring Newsletter will be coming Soon. Hiking leaders are as followed: Carol & Mark Traver 518-944-7734, Clarence Putman 607-538-9569, Marilyn Miles 518-768-2870, Betsey Bouchard 518-410-3863, Steve Babbitt 518-295-8535, Harold Guest Jr. 518-827-5995, and Don Allard 518-577-7741. Membership info, contact Mark Traver at 518-944-7734, LPNHC P.O. Box 855 Schoharie, NY 12157.

NWTF Schoharie County Ridge Runners: NWTF had a fund raiser at the Cobleskill Golf Club on August 17th. POC - Dave Hendrick 518-657-1787 E-mail - hendrickrd@gmail.com.

Richmondville Fish & Game Club: Monthly meetings are the first Wednesday of each month at the club property located on 811 High View Rd. The youth's teams are shooting every Tuesday night at 5PM. 12- to 18-year-old. Richmondville Fish & Game has purchased a new trap machine with raffle proceeds which will be used for the club and Youth Trap shooting league. Contact Greg Warner, club President @ 518-265-8647. New targets to shoot at! The club has been sponsoring a Youth School Trap league this past fall. The Schoharie County Veterans Association held a trap event for disable Vets at Richmondville F&G. The club is running a special raffle to support the cost of ammo for the youth shooting team. The members are holding an Ice Fishing Derby on February 15th, 8AM to 1PM on Fancher Pond just off NYS Rt. 10. Questions – call Greg.

Summit Conservation Club: Next meeting will be February 10th @ 6PM - Club meetings held on the second Monday @ 6 PM of each month. POC is Stacey Betts - Phone 518-287-1710, 109 Club Dive Summit, N.Y. 12175. 2025 schedule for pizza and breakfast: Saturdays 12 noon to 7PM & Sundays Noon to 4PM; January 18th & 19th, February 15th & 16th, March 15th & 16th, April 26th & 27th. Also, Pancake Breakfast 8AM -11AM: Jan.5th, Feb. 2nd, March 2nd, April 6th.

Middleburgh Rod & Gun Club: Last meeting had close to 50 in attendance. Four applications were voted on, one was read. Check out the club's website. **Middleburgh r&g club.com**. College students are shooting archery again on Friday nights. Women Pistol league is looking closer (45 interested) to happening. Had 20 shooters on Sunday for Pistol Outdoor shoot. Fields of Grace will hold a Holiday Silent Auction on December 14th and will have our annual youth drive-thru Christmas Pary on December 21st from 1PM to 3PM. All children are invited. Officers' elections were held. Joe Kopacz stepped down as President. He was elected as one of the Board of Directors. Jennette Hall is our new President, Dave Gode will stay as Vice President, Rick Poquette as Treasurer and our new Secretary is Nicole Thompson from Howes Cave. The winners of the December Raffles were Dec.1-Anthony Pottinelli, Dec.2 – Earl Cromie, Dec 3 – Number 646, Dec 4 – Larry Hubard III, Dec 5 – Jerry Werner, Dec 6 – Wayne Mehard, Dec – 7 Kathy Hensel, Dec – 8 Steve Cassella, Dec 9 – Steven Noxon, Dec 10 – Dave Hendrick, Dec 11 – Steve Chaisson, Dec 12 – Marc Newsome, Dec 13 – Tony Oppelt, Dec 14 – Scott Clapper, Dec 15 – Willie Karlau, Dec 16 – Doug Handy, Dec 17 – Justin Kopacz, Dec 18 – Mike Bertram, Dec 19 – Rafael Perez, Dec 20 – Emmett Bush, Dec 21 – Chad Benjamin, Dec 22 – Denise Kopacz, - Dec 23 – Gary Cooper, Dec 24 – Evan Ceroalo, Dec 25 – Branden Scherer, Dec 26 – Mike Zeh, Dec 27 – Chris Bensen, Dec 28 – Jason Houck, Dec 29 – Sal Schiavo, Dec 30 – Tom D'Asaro, Dec 31 – Philip Nikolaus and on January 2 Andrew Smith won the two Henry Rifles which was drawn at the January Middleburgh Rod & Gun Club meeting. (Congratulation)

West Rod & Gun Club: The membership voted to donate \$1000 to the Youth Trap shooters, shooting at the Middleburgh Rod & Gun Club. Annual Dues of \$20 are due at the diner. The winners of the raffle where 1st prize was Joe Ravella. He chose the \$500 cash. 2nd Prize was Wayne Skowfoe from Middleburgh, 22 Caliber Henry Golden Boy Rifle, and 3rd prize was Colin Cusick who won the \$250 cash. We had another special raffle for a pair of Binoculars which was won by Gary Stoller who helped us out with our live auction during our diner event. Next meeting will be held on February 5th. The club does plan on having an ice fishing derby for our youth on February 8th from 8AM to 1PM. The club's address is PO Box 99, Fultonham, NY 12071. Club's E-mail address is westfultonrodandgunclub@gmail.com.

Schoharie County Veterans Service – Peer to Peer Advocate, Kristain Hofeller, POC 518-929-2832.Cobleskill's Equine program will start back up on Feb. 6 starting @ 2PM.

SCCA website address is <http://www.schoharie-conservation.org/> Anyone with information for the SCCA newsletter can send it to my e-mail address. mzeh4@nycap.rr.com. The next SCCA (Schoharie Co. Cons. Assoc.) meeting will be held on January 23 at 7 PM @ SUNY Cobleskill in the Curtis Mott Bld. Rm106.