

PACD South Central Regional Directors Meeting

March 31, 2011 – Hoss’s Restaurant, Bedford

<b>Director Attendance:</b>	<b>District Staff:</b>
Larry Wilkinson - Adams	Larry Martick - Adams
Jim Bence - Bedford	Donna Fisher – Blair
Blaine Smith – Blair	Jennifer Lentz Kovacs – Bedford
Samuel W. Worley - Franklin	Michael Hubler – Dauphin
Don Baker – Mifflin	Ernie Tarner – Franklin
Murray Laite - Mifflin	Seleen Shives - Fulton
Jeff Gossert - York	Andy Patterson - Huntingdon
	Chris Snyder – Juniata
<b>Agency Representatives:</b>	Dan Dunmire - Mifflin
MaryAnn Warren – PACD President	Mark Kimmel – York
Robert Maiden – PACD	
Karl Brown – SCC	
Bill Zett – DEP	
Chad Cherefko – NRCS, Cumberland County	

**Call to Order:** Regional Director Blaine Smith at 9:35 AM.

**Roll Call of Voting Members** – Quorum Present – 9 of 12 Districts in attendance.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**\*\*Motion\*\*** Motion was made by Sam Worley to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2010 Meeting as prepared, Second by Mark Kimmel. Motion Carried Unanimously.

**County Updates:**

Counties were asked to relate cost-saving/revenue generation ideas and public relations promotion ideas as part of their update.

**Bedford** – 1) Grant funds are down from previous years – still implementing the “Park the Plow” grant. 2) Fee Generation – Equipment rental continues to grow. Funds generated pays for 1 technician position. Currently operating a recycling center which does not pay for itself yet. 3) Hosted a staff meeting with the County Commissioners to show the benefit of the Conservation District.

**Franklin** – 1 ) Collecting the standard fees as are collected by most district. 2) Host a Golf Tournament to benefit their scholarship program. 3) Solicit sponsorship for their Newsletter

and Equipment Rental. 4) Implemented an Affiliate Membership Program at \$25 annually. Members receive a certificate. 5) Host an annual Farm Tour.

**Blair** – 1) Charging a fee for “out of county” Environmental Education Program participation. 2) Implemented a fee for Ag E&S plan review with their last fee schedule review and revision. \$75 base fee (includes 1 tract) and \$15 charge for each additional tract. 3) Ombudsman working with the SA RC&D in a “Know your Food – Know your Farmer” initiative to promote local food, organic production and NRCS Programs.

**Fulton** – 1) Administering a PennVEST Grant which was received for AG BMP installation on one farm - \$837,000. \$12,000 may be used by the district for administration. 2) Participating in the Countywide Act 167 process. 3) Considering PCSM review for a fee to generate funds for the district. 4) Hosting a Dirt & Gravel Road Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance Training on May 10-11, 2011. 5) Host a 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Ag Tour partnering with Farm Bureau.

**York** – 1) Existing Fee sheet circulated – E&S Fees; REAP Administration Fee; Environmental Education Fee (not utilized very much). 2) The annual District Clay Shoot nets \$2,500 - \$4,000 in profits for their Envirothon. 3) Some administrative funds have been received through the TreeVitalize Program. 4) Solicit newsletter sponsorship – newsletter is done in-house with a cost of \$3 – 4,000 per issue. 7,000 copies distributed. 5) The Wildlife Journal is completed with artistry from across the state. 6) A Bay Ombudsman, independent contractor, has been retained to work with the TMDL program – funded by several sources in York County.

**Huntingdon** – 1) Working through major funding issues as a result of County Funding cuts. Commissioners desire to eliminate any county activity not mandated by state government. In 2009 the district funding was reduced by 30%. In 2010, the district manager position was reduced to a part time position in an attempt to preserve funding for the Watershed Specialist position. 2) Funds have been generated through grant writing and administrative cost recovered through grants. All staff are involved in grant writing. Two Million dollars has been received for work by one Watershed Group. 3) Underwent strategic planning – changing focus from AMD to AG issues. 4) District supports the local chapter of Keep PA Beautiful Program (formally PA Cleanways). Some administrative funds received for the support. 5) Manager participates as Fund Raising Chair for the 2012 Canon Envirothon. Nearing the goal to raise \$350 – 400,000. 6) Stated that several streams in Huntingdon County have been upgraded by DEP.

**Dauphin** – 1) Fees are limited to the E&S program – recently raised fees by 20%. Funds are also received through Envirothon sponsorships and a seedling sale. The district still enjoys “tremendous County support”. 2) Conewaga Creek project continues to move forward in the ag area with strong interest and good funding. 3) The district is looking to amend their Watershed

Implementation Plan to include efforts on non-ag lands. 3) Hosting a Homeowner Conservation Plan Development Workshop.

**Adams** – 1) E&S fees are down dramatically (1/3 from 2008). They have instituted a \$75 fee for the review of Spoil/Borrow Area plans. 2) Working on Countywide Act 167 process. All funding from DEP has been lost. Applied for a NFWF grant to assist municipalities with ordinance adoption. 3) Ways to cut expenses – improve quality of plan submissions and encourage submission of NOT's. 4) As part of Act 220 – a Critical Area Resource Plan is under development for watersheds in Adams County – subcontract with the district to do Abandoned Well Water Monitoring. 5) Participating as host to one of the "Day Trips" for the Canon 2012 Envirothon.

**Juniata** – 1) In the "big picture" funding is ok with good county support. No E&S fee changes are planned – fees support a ½ time E&S technician. Several major E&S projects are in the works to include a PennDOT Bridge and a 250 lot residential subdivision. 2) Seeing an increased workload in Nutrient Management activities. 3) Increased activity in Environmental Education with the hiring of a new Watershed Specialist (holds a MS in Education). 4) Continue to host a Soil Testing/ Manure Testing/ Spreader Calibration project with 3,500 acres enrolled.

**Cumberland** – 1) E&S fees remain the same. 2) Operate a seeding sale – down 50% this spring. 3) Participating in a Contributory Agreement with NRCS for Conservation Plan Development and I&E completion.

**Mifflin** – 1) Rely heavily on grants for funding. 20% of their operating budget is funded through grant administration. Currently administering ½ million from the 319 Program and 1.4 million from GG/319 for work primarily on ag issues. 2) Mifflin participates in the Act 167 process and were funded. No Townships have adopted the ordinance as prescribed in the plan. 3) Outreach and Education – A good winter meeting was held discussing ag compliance issues. Planning a workshop to discuss plan development. 4) Participating in the Center for Dairy Excellence Program where the district receive \$500 per visit and the farmer receives \$250 per visit to discuss farm operations on-site. 5) Participate in an annual 7<sup>th</sup> grade Ag & Technology Tour for 500 students with 7 to 8 educational stations.

#### **PACD Update – MaryAnn Warren, President and Robert Maiden, Executive Director**

Handout provided. 1) President Warren introduced Robert Maiden as the newly hired Executive Director. She thanked the search committee members for their time and input. 2) Capital Day is scheduled for May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Districts are to make their own appointments for visits to the Legislature – followed by a PACD Executive Board Meeting. Conference call details will be

mailed prior to the event. 3) She stated that there are still openings on PACD Committees and encouraged district participation on committees. 4) Volunteers are still needed for the State Envirothon scheduled for May 24 and 25. 5) The PennVEST Liaison position is to be filled in April – administered by PACD and funded through DEP. 6) Joint Annual Conference is scheduled for July 11 and 12 at the Ramada in State College.

Robert Maiden introduced himself and provided some personal background. He was raised in a small town where “everyone knows your name”. He has a MS in Public Administration and has a strong desire to be a public servant and a strong appreciation for the environment. He is looking to work toward an open and transparent PACD and wishes to develop a unified voice on specific issues.

### **Leadership Development Topic –**

Karl Brown led the group through a game of “Ethics Jeopardy” as prepared by Karen Ely.

### **SCC Update – Karl Brown, Executive Director**

Handouts provided. 1) 2011-12 Funding Proposal – no cuts received (first time in 3 years). 2) Department Secretaries are busy with the confirmation process. 3) Highlights of the March SCC Meeting – Additional Administrative Assistance grants approved for all districts. The Conservation District Managers Summit was funded. Proposed change to the SCC definition of “Farmer Director” to be used this fall for the 2012 nomination cycle. 4) Stated that the Chapters 102/105 Workgroup has opened lines of communication between the districts and DEP. 5) Ag Compliance Workgroup - Thinking through needed items and timeframes for the implementation of the State Watershed Implementation Plan and the changes within Chapter 102 related to agriculture. There is a need for education and the group is looking at non-traditional sources, i. e. bankers, feed and fertilizer dealers, etc. There is a need to document unfunded/unreported BMP’s implemented after 2006. A collection process is to be developed with partners identified. The workgroup expressed that enforcement of the regulations needs to be considered and acted upon for the process to be effective. 6) Highlighted the Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

### **NRCS Update – Chad Cherefko, NRCS – Cumberland County**

1) Denise Coleman is a strong advocate for training. Good attendance is expected at PA Boot Camps, Wildlife Training, Pasture Training, etc. 2) PA NRCS continues to concentrate on getting

information to their customers, to include spending more time explaining conservation plans to the customers. 3) PA NRCS is working to make sure that NRCS staff understands what is required by state regulations and are working toward revisions to the Crop Rotation Practice Standards to reflect changes to Chapters 91 and 102. 4) Continue to work on the Bog Turtle and WRP programs to protect existing wetland areas. 5) Feed Management Program – NRCS was hoping for 40 applications statewide and received 49 – plans to be written by Technical Service Providers. 6) Now using data layer technology (Hydric/High Leaching Soils) in their ranking procedures. 7) Financial Assistance Programs remain strong in PA. 8) RC&D coordinator positions are in jeopardy.

**Next Meeting Date:** October 12, 2011 at Hoss's Bedford

**Action Items to Executive Council:**

Handout provided. Larry Martick presented information and background on a proposed resolution as acted upon by the Adams County Conservation District Board for presentation to the SC Regional Director Meeting. Prepared statement reads as follows:

*PACD Resolution for the March 31, 2011 Southcentral PACD Regional Directors' Meeting*

*Conservation districts are provided the opportunity to participate in a delegated agreement with the PA Department of Environmental Protection concerning the administration of the erosion and sedimentation pollution control program (E&S) and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting program. PACD recommends that DEP allow conservation district an opt-out provision in the current delegation agreement for level 2 and 3 delegated conservation district for E&S and NPDES activities related to PA Department of Transportation projects.*

*PACD further recommends that a new State Conservation Commission Statement of Policy (SOP) be implemented based on the level of work that each District is doing in order to maintain and equitable 102/NPDES CDFAP distribution of funds.*

**\*\*Motion\*\*** Motion was made by Larry Wilkinson to move the resolution, as written, forward to the Executive Board of PACD, Second by Mark Kimmel. Motion Carried with one opposing vote (Dauphin County).

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 PM.