

**PACD South West Region Meeting  
Westmoreland Conservation District, Greensburg, PA  
November 3, 2016**

**Welcome and Introductions**

Region Director Mike Price welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM.

*In attendance:* Joe Dietrick, Westmoreland; Jim Shaner, Beaver; Gary Stokum, Washington; Meade Meyers, Somerset; Mari Meyers, Somerset; Mike Price, Beaver; Fred Fiscus, DEP; Ron Rohall, Westmoreland; Jared Shippey, NRCS; Andy McAllister, WPCAMR; Lisa Snider, Greene; Chuck Kubasik, DEP; Kelly McLaughlin, Allegheny; Karl Brown, SCC; Phil Gardner, PACD; Dave Rupert, Armstrong; Greg Phillips, Westmoreland; Jan Lauer, Allegheny; Eric Robertson, PACD; Phil Wilson, PACD; Jeff Werner, NRCS; Brenda Shambaugh, PACD.

**Set Date for Next Meeting**

The next meeting will take place on March 16<sup>th</sup> at the Westmoreland Conservation District.

**Approval of Minutes from the Previous Meeting**

The minutes from the previous meeting on April 14, 2016 were provided to the members for review.

*It was moved by Joe Dietrick and seconded by Jim Shaner to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Motion carried.*

**PACD Business**

Brenda Shambaugh presented a five-minute video developed by PACD staff to the group for use within our districts. The video explains the origination, role and function of conservation districts.

**PACD Policy Process**

A copy of a proposed, updated, PACD policy process was provided for review. Brenda Shambaugh discussed the current PACD policy process and how that it is at a minimum one-year process to develop policy for the organization. PACD is trying to shorten this time so that critical legislation is not missed during the development procedure.

*It was moved by Joe Dietrick and seconded by Jim Shaner to support the updated PACD policy process as discussed. Motion carried.*

**Bylaws Amendments**



Copies of two proposed amendments to the PACD Bylaws were provided for review. One amendment, originating in the PACD North East Region, would allow associate directors to serve as region directors. The other removes the PACD Auxiliary from the bylaws, as the Auxiliary no longer has any members, and have ended the scholarship program.

*It was moved by Jim Shaner and seconded by Joe Dietrick to remove the PACD Auxiliary from the current bylaws. Motion carried.*

*It was moved by Dave Rupert and seconded by Jim Shaner to support the Bylaws amendment allowing associate directors eligible to be PACD Region Directors.*

*It was moved by Dave Rupert and seconded by Jim Shaner to amend the motion to state that, if an associate director is elected PACD Region Director, they should be officially re-appointed as an associate director by their district, on an annual basis, with a term of January 1 to December 31. Motion carried.*

*A vote was taken to approve the motion as amended. Motion carried.*

### **New PACD Engineering Assistance Program Staff**

Brenda Shambaugh introduced Phil Wilson, a new hire as a technician for the PACD Engineering Assistance Program. She noted that this gives the region three staff to work on priority district projects, as the districts requested.

### **PACD Water Resource Policy**

Brenda Shambaugh provided those present with HB 2114 PA Water Resource Act introduced by Representative P. Michael Sturia. She explained that, this bill, if passed, would allow for the charge of water usage within the Commonwealth. Municipal water usage and agriculture usage is exempt from the bill. Any other use of 10,000 gallons a day will be subject to a water withdrawal extraction fee. Fees associated with this bill are estimated to collect approximately \$375 million annually and would be used to support water restoration and ag projects. The region expressed concern that fees generated within the basins remain in the basins for funding. Brenda presented a proposed PACD policy supporting the general concept and reported that all five PACD regions have voted to support it.

*It was moved by Jim Shaner and seconded by Joe Dietrick to support the concept of water resources extraction fee that funds water quality improvements and includes exemptions for public and agriculture uses. Motion carried with one opposed.*

### **PACD Executive Director Report**

Brenda Shambaugh reported that Dana Aunkst, PA DEP Deputy Secretary for the Office of Water Programs, met with each region and was impressed by the positive responses. He would like to schedule another round of meetings before the end of the year. A meeting was set for December 15 at the Westmoreland Conservation District at 10 AM.

### **PACD Legal Advice Program**

Brenda Shambaugh reported that districts needing legal advice can now utilize a firm from Carlisle at a rate of \$125/hr. for an attorney and \$50/hr. for a paralegal. PACD interviewed firms that were familiar with conservation districts. A program was approved developed for districts to use a firm to work directly with districts for legal advice. The firm will bill districts directly with no retainer needed. If legal advice is needed for all districts the PACD Executive Board would work with the firm on behalf of all districts and pay for that service. Information will be sent to districts shortly to explain the process.

### **Regional Information Sharing**

*Armstrong* – The district is in contract with Carnegie Science Center to build the mobile miniature version of their H2O Zone that will be used for educational resources in the region. Roll out will be at the Armstrong Co. Fair next August. Colcom Foundation funded this project. The district just held their fall legislative tour on Oct 21<sup>st</sup> that had 24 in attendance. A Geo trail will be launched by the end of the year for low volume road projects and farmland preserved farms. On Oct 13<sup>th</sup> the Quality Assurance Board (QAB) met to approve \$1.3 million in projects totaling 23 Low Volume Road (LVR) projects and 5 Dirt and Gravel Road (DGR) projects. To date Armstrong has approved a total of 299 Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road (DGLVR) projects.

*Allegheny* – Recently took the DGLVR program back and they just finished their first few projects recently. New website up and is almost complete. Stormwater business plan is being undertaken to take over Twp. 167 and MS4 plan responsibilities.

*Westmoreland* – The district has a seat on the steering committee for the county comprehensive plan “Reimagining Westmoreland,” which is the second plan ever developed for the county. They are experiencing a loss in citizens. The district is embarking on a strategic plan with Bayer Center. District is also conducting stormwater monitoring of their new parking lots.

*Beaver* – The district is completing more streambank projects and the district offers small grants for homeowners to complete these types of projects. Their new hire for ag is getting back into soil health. Shell is still consuming the district with bridges, pipelines, the plant facility etc.

*Somerset* – The district is working on the Oven Run Project, where a passive treatment system will be renovated. A study by Hedin Environmental is being completed at Shaw Mines near Myersdale to find the sources of Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) and plans for remediation. The streambank project on Laurel Hill Creek is being completed. This project is being sponsored by PennDOT.

*Washington* – The district is in the process of renovating a site near the county fairgrounds to move its office. Drilling is still active. PA DEP is actively pursuing the district to monitor mosquitos. 2017 marks the districts 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

*Greene* – The district is preparing to approve the 2016-17 DGLVR with QAB members. The Secretary of Ag met with a few select farmers in Greene County to discuss farming and the future of farming in Greene and what needs they may have. Just helped sponsor a trip of area

teachers to introduce them to hydroponics and maybe bring that technology back to the schools to raise money and possibly feed students. Greene will host ESM training March 16 and 17.

### **SCC Report**

SCC Executive Secretary Karl Brown provided the following report:

- Director appointments are actively being undertaken with districts and county commissioners. Districts should be working with the commissioners and nominating organizations actively for new directors.
- State ethics books were given out and highlighted the importance of ethics with directors.
- Local Government Unit Debt Act Guidance was discussed.
- Nutrient management and manure management agreements updates given. The agreement expires in June and draft agreements will be sent out.
- PSU College of Agriculture in Balance Conference met on Oct 12.
- PSU Voluntary BMP Survey Project – 687 farms participated in the survey and PSU College of Ag is currently reviewing the data and verifying. There is a high level of confidence in the data received after some verification has taken place. Data will be positive in the end.
- Chesapeake Bay Program Update

### **DEP Report**

Fred Fiscus provided the following report:

- Patrick McDonnell is currently the Acting Secretary of DEP
- Watershed Specialist Workgroup met today to begin working on long term priorities for the watershed specialists. Watershed specialist grant has been extended to January 31.
- Growing Greener should be announced soon with a high priority being set on the Bay
- State Water Plan will be updated. It was originally developed in 2009.
- Drought task force was held and Armstrong and Indiana counties will be back to normal, along with the remainder of our region.
- PracticeKeeper tablet funding for BMP tracking is being looked into so that districts may use tablets for the program.

### **NRCS Report**

Jeff Werner provided the following report:

- Dam Rehab Program information was handed out and discussed.
- Conservation plan refresher was given to NRCS staff, districts, RC&D and others in September and was well attended. Focus was on planning and is a high priority for NRCS.
- 2016 funding priorities were discussed.

### **Western PA Center for Abandoned Mine Reclamation (WPCAMR)**

Andy McAllister provided the following report:

- WPCAMR meeting will be November 10 from 10 to 2 PM at the Cambria District Mining Office. Cost cutting measures and revenue generating measures for the organization will be discussed and districts are encouraged to send their voting delegates.
- The Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act will also be discussed, along with the Miners Protection Act of 2015 to support the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA).

**DEP Report**

DEP Field Representative Chuck Kubasik discussed the PA DEP South West regional roundtable meeting. Chuck invited the directors to attend this meeting to understand what programs the staff works on under their district's regulatory requirements.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:25 PM.