

**PACD North Central Region Meeting
Clinton County Conservation District, Mill Hall, PA
April 12, 2018**

Welcome and Introductions

Rob Shannon welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:10am.

In attendance: Karen Books, DEP; Marcus Kohl, DEP; Brenda Shambaugh, PACD; Karl Brown, SCC; Nancy DiFiore, NRCS; Pete Vanderstappen, NRCS; Andy Wodehouse, PACD; Nathan Brophy, PACD; Robert Shannon, CCCD; Bill Deitrick, UCCD, Mark Davidson, LCCD; Bill Kahler, LCCD; Cameron Koons, LCCD; Craig Bingman, SCCD; Cathy Yeakel, BCCD; Bob Sweitzer, CCCD; Mary Ann Bower, CCCD; Larry Butler, CCCD; Mike Hubler, NCCD; Judy Becker, NCCD; Holly Miller, SCCD; Joanne Day, SCCD; Edward Zinser, SCCD; Erica Tomlinson, TCCD; Jason Childs, PCCD; Todd Deluccia, CCCD

Set Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on October 11, 2018 at the Clinton County Conservation District. A meeting with Tim Schaeffer, Deputy Secretary for Water Programs, will take place on June 7th at the Clinton County Conservation District. The next North Central Managers meeting will be May 31st at Hoss's in Williamsport.

Approval of minutes from the Previous Meeting

It was moved by Bill Kahler and seconded by Erica Tomlinson to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Motion carried.

PACD Business and Report

Brenda provided the following report:

- The PACD Strategic Plan that was developed in January 2018 designates seven priorities for PACD activities. PACD will promote and advocate for conservation districts to elected officials, partners, and the general public; help districts with the recruitment, training, and development of directors, managers, and staff; help districts attain sustainable, diverse funding; strengthen relationships and agreements with state and federal agencies; work with the PA Growing Greener Coalition to promote a strong growing greener program to increase grant opportunities; strive to be adequately staffed and funded; and foster communication between conservation districts.
- Letters were sent out to districts to use when communicating the importance of our organizations to legislators.
- Inviting DEP Regional Directors for PACD regional meetings provides faster communication between organizations.



- Brenda mentioned that the PACD building in Harrisburg needs a lot of work. The roof will need replaced soon. She asked for opinions on selling the building and finding a place to rent or maintaining the old building. After a cost analysis, discussion about the building will continue.
- Brenda raised a question about the annual winter meetings. Should we continue these being that we have travel issues each year? General consensus was that we should continue these meetings to take advantage of the networking opportunities for directors and staff.
- During the Farm Show, Ag Progress Days, PSATs, etc., PACD has a booth that requires volunteer attendance. Without enough volunteers, Brenda proposed that PACD share a booth with NRCS or DEP.
- Three districts will be going to Harrisburg for Conservation District Week: McKean, Chester, and Sullivan. Letter templates were sent out to districts to send to legislators.
- We were flatlined in the budget proposal from the House. Brenda anticipates a timely budget this year with the election.
- \$1.1 million has been allocated to 8 recipients in PA, including PACD, as part of a project through DCNR to construct multi-functional buffers. Funding is provided by PENNVEST. PACD was awarded \$250,000 to support conservation districts in the construction of multi-functional buffers. PACD will begin a sub-grant program to districts as a result of this grant.
- PACD began advertising for 3 positions. A Leadership Development Coordinator, a Program Manager to replace Terry Fisher who retired in December, and a TAG engineer in the Somerset Office. The TAG engineer position has been filled and the new employee will begin April 24th. Interviewing for the Leadership Development Coordinator position will begin next week.
- The Legislative Budget and Finance Committee will begin a year-long study of permitting under the Chapter 102/105 programs. The study will focus on resources and workloads for permitting programs under DEP and the Conservation Districts.
- Brenda thanked everyone for helping oppose the Zimmerman Bill, a piece of legislature stating if a nutrient management plan is not approved in 90 days, it will automatically be approved.
- Andy Wodehouse and Nathan Brophy from PACD gave TAG updates. They discussed some of the Growing Greener and EQUIP projects they have been involved with.

Regional Information Sharing

Bradford – Cathy Yeakel said they are holding an Earth Day event on Saturday, April 21st that is open to the public. Many exhibits are involved including natural gas, solar energy, beekeepers, and local organizations. The day will also feature wetland walks and a zoo mobile. On April 18th, they will offer their local Mishmosh Tour to look at BMPs on Ag land. The high clearance Interseeder is being advertised and will be offered in 6 counties; Bradford, Susquehanna, Sullivan, Wyoming, Tioga, and Lycoming. Bradford is also receiving eels at the office soon that they will be using to develop a curriculum at the schools similar to Trout in the Classroom. They will trial this at the office a year before offering them at the schools.

Northumberland – Judy Becker reported on Northumberland’s annual Legislator’s Luncheon. She thanked Brenda Shambaugh and Marcus Kohl for being there. Commissioners who are not usually at district events attended and had good comments. Judy provides a monthly report to the commissioners that gives a summary of programs, events, and invitations. NCCD had their first tire collection event this year and collected over 2,400 tires. The boy scouts helped and the conservation district had a lot of media coverage. Next week is the tree sale which is a week-long event.

Snyder - Craig Bingman said Snyder County will be offering a kindergarten eco-day for conservation district week. The event involves 5 learning stations and is like a mini-Envirothon. Craig will be offering a presentation on owl pellets. 150 people attended Snyder’s annual banquet and 6 awards were given out. The speaker provided information on the mountain lion. They offered a spotted lanternfly training in the county in which 77 attended.

Sullivan – Holly Miller reported that Sullivan has had a lot of changes this year. She thanked Bradford and Northumberland counties for assistance with starting a new QuickBooks company. E&S technician, Tori Welliver, designed a new website for the district. Something new that was offered was a conservation movie night featuring Centralia: Pennsylvania’s Loat Town, a documentary purchased from EPCAMR. 44 attended the event. An Earth Day event will be held on April 21st to plant trees along Marsh Run in Dushore.

Lycoming – Mark Davidson said they will have a legislative breakfast next week and Brenda will be attending. He mentioned a fly problem from an operation in the county. The conservation district is funding a garage project at the facility and space will be shared with the county. County employees will provide labor for the project. With the Loyalsock winning River of the Year, Susquehanna Riverkeeper, Carol Parenzan, was the speaker at the annual banquet. Along with that, for earth day, the district will be participating in “Science on the Sock” activities for kids. He also discussed the seedling sale and Growing Greener projects.

Clinton - Mary Ann Bower reported that they are still having staff issues. Two new staff were hired recently and one started the end of February. With a new position approved for DGLVR, the watershed specialist would like to transfer to that position. The watershed specialist position is open. USGS and the county commissioners had a public meeting for baseline well water testing. Information is posted on the USGS website. This can help determine where efforts should be focused. CCCD will be participating in Lock Haven University’s earth day event. Tree sales are down this year. As far as Growing Greener, glad there is more funding, but they run into issues like prevailing wage.

Tioga – Erica Tomlinson mentioned their Legislative Luncheon will take place on May 18th. They had a Women in Ag event yesterday where more than 90 attended. She had some issues with political parties that came without registering. Erica went to Washington DC with Trout Unlimited to support the Farm Bill and the Chesapeake Bay Program and discuss the importance of partnerships. Tioga made the 3rd round of the NACD technical capacity grant along with 4 other districts. They also had their DGLVR QA/QC last week which went very well.

Potter - Jason Childs said they held a legislative luncheon in March and sent out letters to legislators using the templates Brenda sent. A new Communication & Outreach Advisor starts their position at the district on Monday. There hasn't been a tree sale for some time in Potter County, so they hope to start one with this new position being filled. A public meeting discussing the USGS baseline well water study will be held tonight. Potter is working on their rain barrel workshop, an on-going E&S project for windmills, and an Interseeder program with the Genesee Watershed Coalition. A large Dirt & Gravel Roads project will take place this year at close to \$150,000. The project is located on top of a cliff and will include soil nailing.

Cameron – Todd Deluccia reported that Cameron CD will have an earth day event at the school. In order to get more legislators involved in district programs, the district is partnering with Elk State Forest to offer a Legislative Tour in May. Nine Streambank/fish habitat projects and one AMD project are on-going. A timber company is purchasing roughly 50,000 acres with funding they received from PennVEST. They will be donating a 10,000 acre conservation easement to the county along with \$750,000 for passive treatment centers. Cameron CD is looking for a new office. People in the county would like to see a wildlife center and some are willing to donate wildlife mounts for education. The district met with the DCED for funding opportunities.

Union – Bill Deitrick said letters and highlights were sent out to legislators and the county commissioners made a proclamation for conservation district week. They had a bus tour on March 29th and will attend the Ag Legislative Breakfast in the spring. DCNR and Penn State are offering a wood lot meeting and the county GIS department sent out a mailing to 1,200 people who have between 5-15 acres. The tree sale flyer was included in this mailing and sales were up this year. A Mother Earth Day event will take place on River Road in Lewisburg on Mother's Day with the theme Protect, Preserve, Play.

Centre – Bob Sweitzer mentioned that he is reaching out to legislators for conservation district week and they will be having an Earth Day Birthday event with Center Region Parks and Recreation Authority. They had a highway litter cleanup recently. 100 letters were sent out to farmers regarding a manure management/Ag E&S workshop in February, about 50 people attended. Seedling sale numbers were down this year and Center CD has a lot of money to spend on DGLVR projects this summer. We have enough volunteers for the state Envirothon event. There are normally 10 judging rooms with 5 judges each. This year we will have 12 rooms so there was a need for more volunteers.

SCC Report

Executive Secretary Karl Brown provided the following highlights from his written report:

- Zimmerman Bill – In 2015/2016 we had 90% of plans approved within the 90 days which illustrates that there is nothing to fix.
- Governor Wolf released his proposed FY 2018-19 State Budget on February 6, 2018. A line for fees in the E&S program is missing and that value is about \$10-12 million.
- A workgroup of individuals from districts, DCNR, Foresters, PACD, the Game Commission, Hardwoods Groups, and Penn State Extension completed an update of the sample template for the E&S Control Plan for a Timber Harvesting operation.

- There have been many meetings in counties about the spotted lanternfly. The federal approach to control it from the perimeter and the state approach is at the hot spots. A lot of good material is coming out to spread awareness. Judy Becker stated that she has handouts to have at the seedling sale.
- All 2016 audits were on time. This was the first year that all districts had a separate audit from the county. 32 had some kind of finding. The most popular findings were on proper recording of accounts receivable and segregation of duties. Plans are to be more stringent on this.
- Financial Disclosure forms are due on May 1st. These must be on file for 3 years.
- The current DGLVR agreement ends on June 30th. All old money must be allocated at this time. The new 5 year agreement will be July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2023. In the new agreement, funds must be spent within 2 years. Changes in the Dirt and Gravel program will increase funding of 1/3 of districts, lower funding for another 1/3, and the last 1/3 will not see a change. The changes to the Low Volume program will not show much of a funding change to districts. Karl stated that districts are administering this program well and to keep up the great work.

DEP Report

Karen Books highlighted the following items:

- Scott Carney is the new Watershed Support Section Chief in the Planning and Conservation Division of DEP. He supervises Aaron Ward, Donna Wagner, and Derrick McDonald.
- Ann Devine will work with Aaron Ward, Donna Wagner, and Derrick McDonald as a Water Program Specialist for the Watershed Support Section.
- Nathan Crawford, P.E. joined the Bureau of Clean Water, Division of NPDES Permitting as the NPDES Construction and E&S Control Section Chief. He supervises Trish Attardo, Dean Auchenbach, Bill Himes, and Mark Lonergan.
- Kate Bresaw joined the Bureau of Clean Water, Division of Operations and Compliance, Non-Point Source Compliance Section as a Watershed Program Specialist. She is supervised by Jill Whitcomb and works with Megan Porta on agriculture compliance and enforcement issues.
- The current Watershed Specialist agreement ends June 30, 2018. A new 5 year agreement will begin on July 1, 2018. \$45,250 is the amount per year a district can apply for. Applications are due by June 1, 2018 and districts should have their Watershed Specialist positions under contract by July 15, 2018. The applications are to be submitted through the eGrants program.
- About \$181,000 is still available for the CBP Agricultural Planning Reimbursement Program
- With interviews for a Leadership Coordinator coming up, we will be looking at summer/fall for a management summit.

Marcus Kohl highlighted the following items:

- The North Central Regional Office will be hiring a Conservation District Field Rep in May. Andy Eldred, former compliance engineer, now has a new position in Drinking Water.
- Bay WIP – Feedback from the Communication & Education workgroup was that the Bay roll-out could have been done differently. DEP will take on the responsibility of county-

wide accounting and planning. Once WIP is in place, communication with boards is essential and DEP is willing to assist and partner.

- Growing Greener – Looking into a less complex process. The more efficient the process can be at getting money out the door, the quicker we can get projects on the ground and improve water quality.
- On April 23rd, The North Central Regional Office will be holding an Earth Day Open House.
- DEP will be launching a website for registration for roundtable meetings. This will help them cast a wider net and gain a larger audience.
- A new flood booklet was released and a copy was passed around. They are working toward a poster concept that can be placed in municipal buildings.
- He discussed permit approval and enforcement at the regional office. While permit approval is low, compliance and enforcement is high and vice versa.
- Regional trainings will be taking off in which districts will be invited. Developing ways to highlight our partnerships is important. The Story Map for Turtle Creek is a great example.

NRCS Report

Nancy DiFiore highlighted the following items:

- Nancy introduced Pete Vanderstappen, the new state engineer who has worked with Hosea Latshaw.
- The State Plan is available on the NRCS website. Information was gathered from partners with the help from consultants and workgroups.
- She thanked everyone for the support of the SWAT agreements in the bay watershed. The last agreement was to be 75% NRCS and 25% DEP and it turned out to be 66% NRCS and 34% DEP. Over 6,000 conservation practices were developed and more than 1,700 people were reached across the state.
- She highlighted CIG, CSP, and 2 new RCPP programs in the state. Conservation Districts should take advantage of some of the partnership programs available.
- Local workgroup meetings are underway. Timing is the biggest issue with these meetings. This year most are being done after board meetings. Mostly agency people show up to these and there is a need for more community involvement.
- EQUIP - \$7.5 million in contracts and \$3.5 million for local workgroups. Ranking priorities need to be evaluated. Many small communities that are not within a priority watershed still have resource concerns.
- Pete Vanderstappen added that from the engineering side, he can see the challenge producers face when they are trying to do the right thing for the environment. Sometimes projects are just over an acre and then require an NPDES permit or in some cases MS4s are a setback for producers. He is hoping that the NPDES program and other permitting is addressed to help in those cases.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 pm.

