

**PACD South Central Region Meeting
Cumberland County Conservation District
October 23, 2018**

Call to Order

South Central Region Director John Akers welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

In attendance: John Akers, Bedford; Fred Fiscus, DEP; Brenda Shambaugh, PACD; Molly Burns, PACD; Mark Kimmel, York; Jennifer Lentz-Kovacs, Bedford; Donna Fisher, Blair; Dan Dostie, NRCS; Johan Berger, SCC; Matt Miller, PACD; Sam Worley, Franklin; Dave Stoner, Franklin; Karl Brown, SCC; Carl Goshorn, Cumberland; Katie Doster, Lebanon; Chris Snyder, Juniata; Sally Tengeres, Perry; Shauna Weller, Perry; Charlie Hanner, NRCS; Luke Vanasdalan, PACD; Jeff Sholly, PACD; Adam McClain, Adams; Randy Leisure, Lebanon; Seleen Shives, Fulton; Wilbur Wolf, Cumberland.

Date of Next Meeting

The group determined that the next meeting will take place on March 19, 2019, at the Cumberland County Conservation District Office.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were provided for review.

It was moved by Wilbur Wolf and seconded by Mark Kimmel to approve the minutes of the previous meeting as presented. Motion carried.

PACD Report

Brenda provided highlights from her written report:

- PACD has commissioned Water Words that Work to develop a Marketing Toolkit to help conservation districts publicize the great work they do.
- The toolkit will be useful to reach out to legislators, particularly new legislators coming in after November. It is critical to get to know these legislators before the new budget cycle.
- Regional grant opportunities may be available for areas battling damage from recent storms.
- The PACD three-year budget cycle is coming to an end. Brenda asked if a) the districts would like to look at a new three-year budget, and b) if the districts would be open to a small dues increase of \$50 to \$100, should a dues increase be needed,. The group indicated they support another three-year budget cycle and a small dues increase, if needed.
- PACD is moving on November 9. The current PACD building at 25 North Front Street in Harrisburg is listed for sale.
- PACD is looking at combining the Legislative and Conservation Committees. They address similar issues and it is hard to obtain quorums. It was suggested that we try to increase



director participation, and consider changing the Conservation Committee agenda to reflect potential and upcoming conservation issues, rather than focusing on current legislation. The group agreed that we should see how a combined meeting in January might go.

- In July, the PACD Executive Council voted to create an ad hoc committee to provide input on the sale of the Harrisburg building and the purchase of the condo. The PACD Executive Board is asking the membership if they want them to move forward with an ad hoc committee, given where we are in the process. The group indicated that an ad hoc committee seems unnecessary at this point.
- Chapter 105 ePermitting is live. PACD submitted names to DEP to create an auxiliary committee to discuss Chapter 102 ePermitting, and is supporting the districts' requests to offer a paper option for plain sect applicants and applicants without computer access. DEP will provide a draft proposal to a small group of districts who volunteered to review it before it goes out to the larger group. Brenda took feedback and comments from those present.

Legislative Update

Brenda strongly suggested that districts touch base with their legislators between November and January. She stressed that, while especially important for districts with new legislators, this is important for all districts. For all intents and purposes, the legislative session is now over. Once legislators arrive back in Harrisburg, they will be busy with a new legislative session and a flurry of meeting requests. Brenda encouraged districts to take advantage of the opportunity to meet with them locally before they get back to Harrisburg and are overwhelmed with meeting requests and legislative activity.

Brenda highlighted a number of bills from her written report, including:

- HB297 - Legislation that will exempt DGLVR projects from prevailing wage will likely be reintroduced during the new session.
- HB1932 - Brenda gave kudos to DEP, NRCS, and the SCC for helping us to convince Rep. Zimmerman that this legislation, requiring a 90 day review process, would make the issue worse, not better.
- HB2647 - This legislation allows for an NPDES waiver process for construction sites that result in a land disturbance of more than one, but less than five, acres.
- HB1959 - This legislation allows for third-party permit reviewers. The South West Region passed a motion opposing third-party reviewers.

It was moved by Wilbur Wolf and seconded by Larry Butler to support the South West motion to oppose third-party permit reviewers. Motion carried.

Update from the PACD Engineering Assistance Program

Luke Vanasdalan and Jeff Sholly provided an update on projects they are working on and what kinds of projects they are available to help with, including Growing Greener projects.

Leadership Development Update

Leadership Development Coordinator Matt Miller provided a program update.

- The Management Summit took place September 5-6, 2018, with 69 attendees from 52 districts.



- Some of the topics from the Management Summit will continue during the 2019 Staff Conference, which will take place February 27-28 at the Genetti in Williamsport. Registration should open in mid-November. Maintaining a respectful workplace will be among the topics to be discussed.
- Matt is coordinating five training sessions for district directors in March 2018. There will be one each in the North West, the South West, South East, and North East, and one in a central location. Johan Berger stressed the importance of director development and asked the district managers and directors to provide Matt with recommendations and suggestions for useful director development topics.
- Funds are available for strategic planning grants. Please contact Matt if you are interested in taking advantage of these funds.
- Updating the program logo is underway.
- The program is hoping to offer a web-based platform in 2019 for online training.

District Information Sharing

Lebanon – Katie Doster reported that the district hired a new ag specialist two months ago, who is going through nutrient management training to be certified by the end of the year. The board approved taking over the West Nile Virus program and that staff-person will be starting January 1 of 2019, which will bring their total staff complement to nine. They are applying for a strategic plan grant, and she would welcome any suggestions and information from other districts.

York – Mark Kimmel reported that NPDES activity has exploded and they are hiring an E&S Technician. Some misinformation circulated regarding the proposed stormwater authority in York and they have been working to counter that. Supporting the Bay WIP is taking quite a bit of staff time. They received a right-to-know request about their permitting backlog, which is down to 85 requests. DGLVR projects have been severely impacted by flooding. Many of these folks were not considered to be in a floodplain and did not have flood insurance. One of their staff is going to be recognized by an award during their 79th anniversary celebration. They are updating their website. Last year, the district completed 260 agricultural E&S plans covering over 11,000 acres. Of these, 191 plans encompassing 8,200 acres were completed by district staff.

Juniata – Chris Snyder reported that they recently lost a relatively new technician to another district. They have a small staff and this has had a significant impact. They hope to have that position filled by January 1. Their liability carrier is no longer covering governmental units and they are trying to apply for insurance, which is difficult, as they don't fit into any of the regular categories. Lost Creek Golf Course project Phase I is complete. They have held a day-long winter meeting in March for the last fourteen years or so, partnering with a local bank, for spray credits. Now, more entities are offering credits, and they have seen significantly reduced attendance. They are changing the format to a breakfast meeting that will provide two hours of agricultural education with no credits. He is interested in suggestions for topics that might be interesting to farmers.

Fulton – Seleen Shives reported that they were recently awarded a \$640,000+ PENNVEST grant for an ag project in an ag impaired watershed. Their ag technician will be administering the



grant. Their environmental educator, who is very passionate about recycling, had built a recycling program, as the county-run program had been lackluster. The county has hired a new recycling program coordinator, so the district will no longer be in the recycling business. The district had a float during the Fulton Fall Festival, which is a huge event, and it was excellent.

Bedford – Jennifer Lentz-Kovacs reported that they are also involved in the recycling program in their county and are struggling with program costs, but are committed to keeping it up. She noted to Snyder that they have had success with a summer cover crop meeting. They are struggling with some human resources issues related to workers compensation, which are a big challenge. John Akers reported that over 200 people took part in their marathon walk on the old turnpike recently.

Blair – Donna Fisher reported that they are building their campus park. Construction has taken place during the wettest summer in recorded history, but is going well regardless! They are excited for the future of the facility, which features an amphitheater, pollinator garden in the shape of a butterfly, and pavilion. They developed logos and marketing materials, including a bookmark and a new website just for the park. Ten municipalities are still active with the stormwater initiative and are struggling to determine how to implement the necessary practices without a stormwater authority.

Perry – Sally Tengeres reported that they hired a new ag resource specialist in May and resumed the Chesapeake Bay program in June. They are struggling with a recycling collection. They sought sponsorships and charged a small, \$5 administrative fee per car. The contractor charged an additional fee per item. They collected 14 tons and a good portion of that was TVs and monitors. Their land judging contest is coming up in November 16. They do soil testing and recommend conservation practices based on the results and about 80 students participate..

Franklin – Dave Stoner reported that they filled vacancies for a Chapter 102 technician and an ag technician. They also hired a new resource technician who is working with ag E&S plan writing and BMP implementation. They now have nine staff. About 80 people attended their annual summer conservation farm tour. They had a Clean Water Farm Award winner this year, who is a grazer. They are busy with WIP III, as one of the pilot counties, and it's taking up a lot of time. Two of their staff are doing a logger workshop today, in conjunction with Fulton, partnering with SFI. They are holding a soil health and nutrient management workshop in November, targeting plain sect residents in the northern part of the county. It provides continuing ed credits, which are required for SFI's certification program.

Adams – Adam McClain reported that they completed a project for a hatchery using PUC Act 13 money. They are planning a public relations event with legislators in attendance and met with legislators for a DGLVR tour.

Cumberland – Carl Goshorn reported on progress on a four-year \$375,000 DGLVR project. The district found 110 pollution violations during 66 inspections for the Sunoco pipeline. A lot of these were due to inadvertent return from the horizontal directional drill that came up in a high quality wetland. That project is mainly completed. They received two other grants, one for



\$90,000 for their cover crop program and one for \$91,000 for ag projects on a Cumberland County farm. They have some ag BMPs to be installed this fall, including a chicken composter, heavy use area protection, and stacking pad. Carl thanked Luke Vanasdalan with the PACD Engineering Assistance Program, who completed a survey and I&E and will be doing some design work for them.

SCC Report

Executive Secretary Karl Brown provided highlights from his written report.

- MaryAnn Warren and Don Koontz were reappointed to the Commission.
- The 2018 DGLVR workshop held in September was a success.
- The SCC is migrating the DGLVR program to online GIS quarterly reporting.
- The SCC has performed 16 quality assurance and control visits and has six more to go.
- The conservation district director appointment process is on-going.
- REAP tax credits are available.
- Revised standard animal weights for the Nutrient and Odor Management Program are effective October 1, 2019.
- If emergency manure storage draw-down is needed due to the massive rains, please work with the SCC regional nutrient management coordinator.
- They are taking recommendations for the nutrient management manual update.
- PDA made grant funds available for districts in the spotted lanternfly quarantine zone. Completed agreements ranging from \$10,000 to \$150,000 are coming back to the SCC. The PDA website offers online training on identification and management. PDA has other grants available to reimburse landowners to cover contractor costs related to pest management.
- Will be undertaking a strategic planning/SWOT analysis and encourage input.

DEP Report

Fred Fiscus provided handouts, including a general report, a spreadsheet of District State Agency Program Allocations and Fees Collected for FY 2017-18, The Local Role in Developing a Countywide Action Plan, and Clean Water Academy Courses.

- District audits are due at the end of the year.
- He reviewed a spreadsheet showing the annual funding for conservation districts from various sources.
- DEP and SCC staff are asking districts for feedback on submitting an annual budget spreadsheet to the SCC before the fiscal or calendar year.
- The DEP Bureau of Clean Water will be providing online training through new online learning system software. They are hoping to have the online learning system, which they are calling the Pennsylvania Clean Water Academy, online this fall. The system is being demonstrated at the regional Chapter 102 meetings. District staff are encouraged to contact Diane Wilson to review courses and/or offer suggestions for new course development.
- Bay districts have the opportunity to help develop Pennsylvania's Phase 3 WIP. DEP wants to work with county-based stakeholders to develop and submit a county-based action plan to meet local reduction goals. Fred provided an fact sheet with additional information.
- In order to be reimbursed, Bay districts must input BMP data into PracticeKeeper prior to submitting invoices for that work.



- DEP is extending the Ag Planning Reimbursement Program, which reimburses ag operators and landowners for consultant fees for creating manure management plans, nutrient management plans, and ag E&S plans.

NRCS Report

Dan Dostie provided highlights from his written report.

- He pointed out an article highlighting Pennsylvania's accomplishments of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative and charts covering preliminary NRCS program data for 2018 and other information.
- NRCS is under a continuing resolution, and is moving forward without a Farm Bill. They will continue taking applications for AMA, EQIP, RCPP-CSP, and RCPP-EQIP.
- They are streamlining planning and program delivery and will be rolling out the Conservation Application Ranking Tool (CART) in February 2019.
- He touched on highlights for 2019 RCPP projects,
- Dan introduced Charlie Hanner, who replaced Lorin Boggs in August and has a strong technical background in soils and wetlands. Charlie reported that he has worked in Delaware, Maryland, and Ohio. He has family in the area and looks forward to meeting and working with everyone.
- The Soil and Water Conservation Society conference is coming to Pittsburgh in 2019 with a theme of Bridging the Divide: Uniting Rural and Urban Landscapes for Conservation.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:52 p.m.

