

**PACD Conservation Committee
Toftrees Golf Resort, State College, PA
January 30, 2019**

Welcome and Roll Call

Chairwoman Donna Fisher welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 11:15 a.m.

Committee members in attendance: John Akers, Bedford; Jack Dehoff, York; Sherry Dumire, McKean; Dan Dunmire, Mifflin; Carl Goshorn, Cumberland; Bill Kahler, Lycoming; Kelly McLaughlin, Allegheny; Daryl Miller, Bradford; Rob Shannon, Centre; Piper Sherburne, Berks; Dave Stoner, Franklin; Donna Fisher, Blair.

Guests in attendance: Edward Zinser, Sullivan; Jason Childs, Potter; John Dryzal, Cambria; Eric Nyerges, Union; Chris Strohmaier, Chester; Chuck Duritsa, Westmoreland/PACD; Jim Luce, Wyoming; Lance Bowes, Venango; Dorne White, Wyoming; Nancy DiFiore NRCS; Douglas Beri, Jr., Indiana; Cam Koonz, Lycoming; Celina Seftas, Huntingdon; Jenna St. Clair, Schuylkill; Linda Mackey, DEP; Chris Thompson, Lancaster; Dean Druckenmiller, Berks; Marek Kimmel, York; Bill Mihalco, Westmoreland; Adam Schellhammer, Monroe; Tom McClure, Erie; Jaci Kerstetter, DEP; Chuck Gould, Monroe; Robert Sweitzer, Centre; John Burgess, Allegheny; Adam McClain, Adams; David Hegemann, Cambria; Ed Wilkinson, Adams; JoAnn McCready, Lawrence; Mary Ann Bower, Clinton; Dennis Beck, Cambria; Murray Laite, Mifflin; Jim Shaner, Beaver; Kelly Stagen, Pike.

Conservation Committee Minutes

The July 17, 2018, conservation committee meeting minutes were provided to members for review.

It was moved by Rob Shannon and seconded by Kelly McLaughlin to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2019, meeting. Motion carried.

Discussion on Combining Conservation and Legislative Committees

The committee discussed combining the committees and decided to see how the joint meeting went before deciding. Suggestions included holding joint meetings when issues overlap.

PACD Legislative and Agency Update

Brenda Shambaugh provided the following update:

- *Governor's Budget Address* – PACD is pursuing an increase in funding for conservation districts in both the DEP and PDA line items. Brenda provided a copy of a letter PACD sent to key people in the budget process and noted that our best chance to obtain an increase is to have the increase included in the governor's initial budget proposal.



- *PACD Policy on Third Party Reviewers* – All six regions discussed a motion opposing legislation instituting third party reviewers. Four districts voted and two did not, so the legislation will be discussed during the next round of region meetings.
- *Potential Legislation on Moving Agriculture Permit Responsibilities from DEP to the SCC* – Brenda reported that we may see legislation on moving agricultural permit responsibilities from DEP to the SCC. It was noted that change will need to come with additional funding to create the capacity for the SCC to handle these duties.
- *Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LBFC) Report* – The LBFC initially planned to have their report out in February, but it will likely be out in the spring, with a formal hearing before the end of the fiscal year, probably in June.
- *2018 Conservation District Highlights Report* – PACD received 66 conservation district highlights pages. These pages were distributed to legislators, the Governor’s office, and other key decision-makers to highlight conservation district activities and contributions.
- *Ag E&S Manual Update* – Brenda has offered to collect and send comments from the districts. The deadline to get comments to PACD to submit on a collective basis is February 15. This will give PACD time to submit them by the March 1 deadline.
- *High Performance Farms Initiative* – During the PA Farm Show, the secretaries of DEP and Agriculture signed an MOU with several organizations, including NRCS, to create a program recognizing farms that have gone above and beyond to implement conservation. The goal of this effort is to convince more farms to implement conservation practices.
- *E&S e-Permitting* – Nathan Crawford with DEP will be presenting on ePermitting after the SCC Meeting.
- *Riparian Buffer Grant* – Brenda urged conservation districts to take advantage of the funding available through the DCNR Riparian Buffer Grant program administered by PACD.
- *CREP Update* – Brenda provided an update on the CREP program.

NACD Resolution on Spotted Lanternfly

Piper Sherburne reported that NACD will be considering a resolution to include the spotted lanternfly on their list of invasive species. In addition, several counties have applied for grants to address the issue.

Discussion on Combining Conservation and Legislative Committees (Continued)

The committee revisited the question and decided to keep the two committees separate but to hold the conservation committee first, so that the legislative committee can act on any suggestions/discussion from conservation.

Costs of Technology Upgrades for ePermitting

Concerns were raised about the cost of technology updates needed to facilitate ePermitting. One district has estimated \$12,000 for technology upgrades to implement ePermitting.

Adjournment

There was a motion and a second to adjourn the meeting at 12:15 p.m. Motion carried.