

**PACD South Central Region  
Web Meeting Minutes  
September 29, 2020**

**Welcome, Introductions, and Roll Call**

Region Director John Akers welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. with a quorum present.

*In attendance:* Brenda Shambaugh, PACD; Shannon Wehinger, PACD; Molly Burns, PACD; Sam Worley, Franklin; Anthony Tenaglia, Berks; Karl Brown, SCC; Charles Hanner, NRCS; Duff George, Cumberland; Carl Goshorn, Cumberland; Doug Goodlander, York; Barry Frantz, NRCS; Dan Dunmire, COUNTY; Dave Stoner, Franklin; Mark Kimmel, York; Sally Tengeres, Perry; Jennifer Kovacs, Bedford; Karen Books, DEP; John Akers, Bedford; Bruce Holbrook, York; Seleen Shives; Matt Miller, PACD; Elwood Blake, DEP; Katie Doster, Lebanon; Donna Fisher, Blair; Adam McClain, Adams; Chris Snyder, Juniata; Eric Naguski, Dauphin; Jason Rickards, Berks; Jill Whitcomb, DEP; Chris Thompson, Lancaster; Celina Seftas, Huntingdon; Randall Leisure, Lebanon; Jeff Sholly, PACD TAG; Glenn Kimmel, Cumberland.

**Set Date for Next Meeting**

The next meeting will take place on March 16, 2021, either virtually or at the Cumberland County Conservation District.

**Approval of Minutes from the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were provided.

*It was moved by Adam McClain and seconded by Donna Fisher to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Motion carried.*

**PACD Business and Report**

Executive Director Brenda Shambaugh provided verbal highlights from her written report:

- On October 14, 2020, we will have a Skype meeting with Aneca Atkinson (DEP). Please forward questions to Brenda.
- She provided a legislative update on the 2020-2021 Budget, Third Party Reviewer Legislation, Statewide Expedited Review Legislation, the Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program, and a bill that changes the definition of pollution (SB 619).
- She provided an update on work to create and fund regional areas to battle invasive species.
- She noted that Chapter 105 modules are in development for the Clean Water Academy (CWA) and provided information on additional CWA training opportunities.
- Brenda discussed the Riparian Buffer Sub-grants available from PACD.



- Fluvial Geomorphology Training is set to take place virtually November 9, 10, 12, and 13.
- Matt Miller provided a Leadership Development update and urged staff and directors to participate in these learning opportunities. Visit [www.paleadership.org](http://www.paleadership.org) for information.
- Agricultural Conservation Training (Boot Camp) took place in a modified format and is scheduled for April 12-16, 2021, for Basic and April 26-30, 2021, for Level II.
- Two Chapter 105 webinars were recently held. Other 102/105 Technical Training is in process and more information will be available soon.
- Conservation District Watershed Specialist Webinar Series will take place virtually from 8:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. daily October 6-8, 2020.
- PACD will be hiring a TAG program engineer to replace Ana Turosky.

### **Regional Information Sharing**

*Adams* – Adam McClain reported the district hired a clean water action plan coordinator in August to help with the countywide action plan (CAP). This position has had a positive impact. They are piloting the Phase II Bay inspections. They are working to implement their field ag BMPs. Chapter 105 permitting is still quite time-consuming. They recently met with the DEP central and regional offices. DEP has asked Adam to send out a survey to districts to see if this is a county-specific issue or a statewide issue. Adam will be sending that out soon.

*Bedford* – Jennifer Kovacs reported they contracted with LandStudies to work on their watershed implementation plan (WIP) and they and they are doing a remarkable job. The district has involved the community and meet monthly. They hope to continue with LandStudies in this role.

*Blair* – Donna Fisher reported they will be dredging Lakemont Lake as part of the pollution reduction plan for their MS4 townships, which will result in sediment savings. They are going to have a ribbon-cutting at Nature Works Park on October 8. They are planning quarterly *Webinar Wednesdays* with their municipalities. The first one will be specific to the DGLVR to coincide with their open application round.

*Cumberland* – Carl Goshorn reported they should be finishing up their CAP in the next month or two. They recently participated in a DEP meeting for Tier III and IV counties. They were able to secure some grant funding for ag projects, including four heavy use area protections, concreting of a barnyard, concrete walls for stacking manure, and roofing. They are finishing up a large four-year DGLVR project, which will make a big difference in water quality and safety.

*Dauphin* – Eric Naguski reported they are going to be working with the planning commission and other stakeholders on their CAP. They have a countywide stormwater group that is working to provide a program of services to MS4 and non-MS4 municipalities. Eric also highlighted some stormwater projects they have been working on.

*Franklin* – Dave Stoner reported they just finished a stream project. They were recently approved for a Conservation Excellence Grant and are expecting funding for ag BMPs and a barnyard project. They had to tweak their summer conservation farm tour but were able to gather under a pavilion and the farmer discussed photos of the project. They have one large solar

project completed, four underway, and more coming in. Staff are busy reviewing plans. They have two DGLVR projects underway.

*Fulton* – Seleen Shives reported they are planning a cover-crop field day in October at a local farm. Their DGLVR project recently received the Annual Bridge Award. This was a culvert replacement and streambank stabilization project with the township, Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads, Trout Unlimited, and the landowner.

*Juniata* – Chris Snyder reported they had a busy year. They are still rescheduling events that could not take place. They wrapped up the lost creek restoration project. DGLVR has been very busy and they just finished a large project. They have some additional projects in the works, and some may span multiple funding years. Half of their staff is working remotely every other day.

*Lancaster* – Chris Thompson reported they have funding for projects, but their biggest funding need is for staff. They currently have 36 employees and are close to signing a contract for a human resources manager. The board has approved a half-day off with pay so staff can go out to enjoy the environment they are trying to preserve.

*Huntingdon* – Celina Seftas reported that they held a virtual pasture walk series in partnership with Blair County. They held three sessions on adaptive grazing and USDA/PDA regulations on direct meat sales, which was recorded and placed on their YouTube channel. They are also working on several ag projects and riparian buffers.

*Lebanon* – Katie Doster reported that LandStudies is working on their CAP and doing an excellent job. They had to cancel their in-person legislative roundtable, so Randy Leisure is setting up individual meetings with legislators to share information. They are also developing quarterly newsletters to send to local partners and legislators. They were unable to hold their tire collection and Envirothon but were able to hold their other spring events.

*Mifflin* – Dan Dunmire reported they are working on very preliminary steps on their CAP. They are also working on a video project. They are working on an ag project in the Upper Kish using 319 funding and have \$80,000 in 319 money to do another ag project between now and June 30, 2021. They planted riparian buffer projects this fall. They have a DCNR buffer grant and a NFWF grant that are ending. Dan is retiring at the end of October and their current watershed specialist Trevor Weaver will be taking over as manager.

*Perry* – Sally Tengeres reported they had a no-till drill equipment demo in August where they demonstrated six pieces of no-till/minimum till equipment with 40 farmers viewing and discussing the level of disturbance. Farmland preservation completed a 93.78 acre purchase and is working on a 200+ acre purchase. They received a 200-acre donation of a beautiful farm between two other preserved farms. They also have five dirt and gravel projects in various states of completion along with one low volume road project. They collected 366 tires at their recent collection event. The district is beginning to work on their CAP.

*York* – Mark Kimmel reported that they were able to get all three county commissioners out to see one of the water quality monitoring station they installed with USGS. They have six stations

now and have added nutrient monitors to all six locations. They are hoping they can get better data on their local water quality for their CAP and WIP. They have had several retirements. Their long-time watershed specialist Gary Peacock retired at the end of May. They were able to hire him back as a part-time employee to help train their new watershed specialist and have hired a new watershed technician. They will be undertaking a cover crop initiative. They have sixteen active DGLVR contracts in various stages and are concerned about the new cutoff timeline.

### **PA State Conservation Commission Report**

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

- The district director appointment process is underway. Karl urged districts to speak to chief clerks and county commissioners about what vacancies they have and what they are looking for in directors to help with the selection.
- The new budgeting spreadsheet is due September 30. Contact Karen Books with questions.
- Audits are due to Karen Books December 31.
- SCC is working on policies on drone utilization and former district employees being appointed as directors or associate directors. Both policies are out for a 45-day public comment period.
- The SCC is working to consider distribution of CDFAP funds earlier. Brenda urged everyone to get their quarterly reports to the SCC as soon as possible, so they can get those funds out as quickly as possible.
- DGLVR advance funding is out to districts.
- The DGLVR program completed 19 quality assurance visits.
- Environmentally sensitive maintenance (ESM) training is available remotely and in-person.
- Nutrient management regulations may be updated.
- Districts should check that nutrient management specialist certifications are not expiring.
- Conservation Excellence Grants were expanded to Franklin and Cumberland Counties.
- He discussed REAP changes.
- Karl encouraged districts to have a remote connection available for fall and winter district meetings, so field representatives and others can participate.
- Karl will ensure the Conservation District Advisory Committee minutes are sent out if they were not already.
- He also answered questions about the purpose of the new budget spreadsheet, noting its purpose is to let program managers see how districts are allocating funds to cover positions.

### **PA Department of Environmental Protection**

Jill Whitcomb provided highlights from her written report:

- There was a reorganization in DEP. Jill now oversees the conservation district section, the watershed support section, and a new ag compliance and inspection section. The conservation district field representatives will continue to work out of the regions but will now report to Jill at central office. She will continue to work with the SCC on the nutrient management program. She is working to be as consistent as possible across the state.
- Last week districts should have received a FAQ document addressing CAP implementation grant funds.
- She appreciates the districts' work on the CAPs and WIPs.

- DEP is pushing through batches of financial amendments for the next fiscal year. All the Bay agreements should be complete or in the final phase of review.
- Jill shared her contact information: [jjwhitcomb@pa.gov](mailto:jjwhitcomb@pa.gov) | 717.783.5205
- A handout was included in the packet showing all the available training modules on the Clean Water Academy.
- Jill noted there is a Chapter 105 ePermitting update in the written report. Brenda suggested districts raise questions about Chapter 102 ePermitting during the upcoming South Central meeting with Aneca Atkinson.
- DEP is under a hiring freeze but requested an exception. Fred Fiscus's position will be priority to be filled before the conservation district field representative positions.

### **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service**

Charlie Hanner highlighted items from the written report, including:

- COVID-19 update: Offices are staffed on a limited basis but are closed to the public. Field work is on-going. FSA is following a slightly accelerated opening program.
- NRCS is targeting five watersheds through EQIP NWQI.
- He provided an update on the National Water Quality Initiative, Financial Assistance Programs, and Easement Programs for FY 2020.
- He provided information on program sign-up for FY 2021.
- He updated the group on the RCPP program.
- Charlie reported there is a planned opening process for NRCS offices. It was noted this can be challenging for co-located offices.

Barry Frantz provided the following report:

- They have almost finished their EQIP and RCPP contracting.
- This was an outstanding year for EQIP, especially given the challenges.
- He updated the group on timing for EQIP and other sign-ups.
- NRCS and FSA will be working in Philadelphia on one of five urban agriculture committees in the country.
- Setting up the new ranking tool has been a big project.
- They will not know their Farm Bill allocations until there is a federal budget.

### **Adjournment**

*It was moved by Donna Fisher and seconded by Carl Goshorn to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.*

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.