

**PACD Conservation Committee
Video Conference Minutes
July 8, 2021**

Welcome and Roll Call

Chairman Josh Longmore welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. with a quorum present.

Committee members in attendance: Josh Longmore, Luzerne; John Akers, Bedford; Bill Clouser, Clearfield; Doug Goodlander, York; Daryl Miller, Bradford; Piper Sherburne, Berks; Jim Coslo, Centre; Sherry Dumire, McKean; Carl Goshorn, Cumberland; Adam McClain, Adams; Dan Miloser, Chester

Guests in attendance: Brenda Shambaugh, PACD; Molly Burns, PACD; Holly Miller, PACD; Nancy DiFiore, NRCS; Danielle Kalp, PACD; Jennifer Ramey, Susquehanna; Ron Rohall, Westmoreland; Paul Grella, DEP; Sally Tengeres, Perry; Shirley Snyder, Northumberland; Tom Shervinskie, Clinton; Nick Yeagy, PACD; Lee Engel, DEP; Willie Null, Clearfield; Susan Marquart, NRCS; Christopher Thompson, Lancaster; Linda Mackey, DEP; Erica Tomlinson, Tioga; Nancy Corbin, Columbia

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the January 8, 2021, meeting were presented for review.

It was moved by Adam McClain and seconded by John Akers to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2021, meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Chapter 102 Updates

Paul Grella with the DEP Bureau of Clean Water introduced himself and discussed some items related to Chapter 102.

- Solar panel projects – These are becoming more and more common. Projects on large, flat, pre-vegetated areas are not generally an issue. However, areas where mass grading is needed can cause issues. Paul invited anyone who is dealing with these projects and encountering challenges to reach out Paul and his staff in addition to the regional engineers.
- Challenges to notice of terminations – Some specific situations seem to be arising regularly, such as partial NOTs and NOTs that are dependent upon corrective action plans. Paul encouraged everyone to refer to the available guidance.
- Common plan of development – People are pushing the limits of the regulations. DEP has a recently updated FAQ for this, and guidance is updated continuously.



- Please reach out to Mark Lonergan at [mlonergan@pa.gov](mailto:m(lonergan@pa.gov)) with suggestions and ideas for the fall regional training sessions. Josh Longmore recommended that Mark reach out to the districts directly via email, so people can respond to him directly with any suggestions.

PACD Software Specialist Nick Yeagy provided information on resources available on the DEP Clean Water Academy and how managers can use the academy to coordinate and track staff learning. Paul and Nick both encouraged everyone to take full advantage of the learning opportunities and promote the academy to district staff.

Lee Engel provided an update on ePermitting:

- He began by providing a link to the ePermitting user webpage: <https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Water/CleanWater/StormwaterMgmt/Stormwater%20Construction/Pages/Chapter-102-ePermit.aspx>
- Applicants will need to review the *Chapter 102 ePermit User Guide* to learn how to get a GreenPort account and submit ePermits.
- The guide walks you through the 15 modules associated with the NOI/application and the status of completion.
- So far, about 12 applications have been received and three approved. They are still taking paper applications for now.
- They are working on brief Clean Water Academy courses to cover each module. The courses will walk you through step-by-step, include suggestions, and note common errors to avoid.
- You can use the ePermit system to submit an application or an amendment to an application. However, applications need to stay in the same format from beginning to end. Paper permits cannot change to electronic and electronic permits cannot change to paper.
- Because training has already been provided for individual and PAG02 ePermitting, there is no real need for additional training. The processes are very similar.
- Lee encouraged everyone to reach out to him at lengel@pa.gov with any questions.

Paul Grella also reported they are looking for regional representation from the districts to serve on a Chapter 102 workgroup to discuss key topics. Those regional representatives would need to gather information, questions, and act as the voice for the region during workgroup meetings. Details, such as the timing and frequency of meetings, are still in development.

Solar Farms in PA

Bradford County Commissioner Daryl Miller opened discussion on solar farms in Pennsylvania.

- Commissioner Miller noted the interest in siting solar arrays in different parts of the state
- Legislation is being proposed in Harrisburg that will allow community-based solar, which are sites smaller than 100 acres designed to serve local communities.
- In some areas of the state, landowners have been approached to lease farmland for solar arrays. Districts need to be aware of land use implications and how that can affect stormwater runoff, installation, fencing, etc.

- Currently in the Commonwealth only about 5 percent of municipalities have anything in their ordinances that allow for solar energy. About 8 % have ordinances that speak to accessory use, which is predominantly homeowner or factory/warehouse/industrial use, where power would be predominantly used by the landowner, homeowner, or business owner.
- There are also implications for county property taxes. Currently, a solar installation will take that land out of Clean and Green.
- In addition, what are the long-term implications for farmland? The arrays last about 20 or 30 years. What happens to the below surface equipment and above-ground equipment after these arrays are decommissioned?
- He encouraged everyone to view the Penn State Extension webinar “Environmental Aspects of Solar Power” by Thomas Murphy and David Yoxtheimer:
<https://extension.psu.edu/environmental-aspects-of-solar-power>

Timber Harvest Manual

Forester and Westmoreland Conservation District Chairman Ron Rohall reported on the Timber Harvest Manual.

- DEP approved the Timber Harvest Manual, which was begun by SFI. The field guide also needed to be updated to reflect E&S and legal changes.
- The process took some time and SFI submitted their final comments in October 2019.
- The draft manual was recently presented to the Ag Advisory Board and is open for public comment.
- Ron feels several suggestions made during the public comment period should be incorporated.
- Sean Furjanic has asked any of the districts with informal comments they would like to submit to send them to his attention at sefurjanic@pa.gov.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:11 p.m.