

**PACD North Central Region Meeting
Clinton County Conservation District, Mill Hall, PA
October 18, 2022**

Welcome and Introductions

Region Director Rob Shannon welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

In attendance: Matt Long, Lycoming; Bill Kahler, Lycoming; Rob Shannon, Centre/PACD; Cathy Yeakel, Bradford; Carrie Richmond, Sullivan; Jason Childs, Potter; Larry Butler, Clinton; Amanda Coleman, NRCS; Jim Coslo, Centre; Daryl Miller Bradford; Erica Tomlinson, Tioga; Greg Bonsall, Union; Steve Putt, DEP; Karl Brown, SCC; Doug Wolfgang, SCC; Nathan Brophy, Northumberland; Mike Hubler, Northumberland; Sean Levan, Montour; Willie Null, Clearfield; Larry Crittenden, Clearfield; Mike Gill, Clearfield, Bill Clouser, Clearfield; Jason Winey, Snyder; Brenda Shambaugh, PACD.

Set Date for Next Meeting

The group discussed dates for the next region meeting. The next meeting will take place on Thursday, March 16, 2023, at the Clinton County Conservation District at 10:00 a.m.

Approval of Minutes from the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were provided to those in attendance.

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

PACD Report

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

- Cambria County Conservation District Motion – Brenda discussed the Cambria County Conservation District motion for PACD to hire a consultant to do a salary comparison study. The completion of the study would provide valuable data to present to legislators on why the increased funding is needed going forward.

It was moved by Bill Kahler and seconded by Jason Childs to support the Cambria County CD motion. Motion carried.

- Statewide PACD Meetings – The PACD Executive Board has decided to hold the 2023 Winter Meeting virtually. She mentioned the PACD Executive Council meeting is tentatively set to take place on January 26, 2023 with committees to take place virtually between January 1, and January 20, 2023. The PACD Executive Board has asked all regions to discuss the 2023 Joint Annual Conference format & location.



- Education & Outreach – In June 2021, PACD developed a shared messaging program that districts can use to supplement their social media posts (Facebook & Instagram) and have a shared message across the state.
- Ag Boot Camp – Basic Boot Camp was held April 4-8 2022 with 32 attendees, and Level II Boot Camp was held April 25-29 2022 with 27 attendees at the Keystone Conference Center at Fort Indiantown Gap in Annville, PA. Intro to Conservation Planning will be held November 1-3 2022.
- Nonpoint Source Pollution Prevention Mini-Grant Program – The 2021-2022 Nonpoint Source Pollution Mini-grant round concluded in May 2022. There were eighty-six projects completed by 49 conservation districts reaching over 13,530 adults. The mini-grants totaled \$146,863. The 2022-2023 mini-grant round opened in January and thirty-three projects from twenty-five districts were funded for \$60,000.
- Clean Water Academy – The Clean Water Academy has had approx. 26,000 course completions with conservation districts accounting for roughly half of this figure with around 14,000 completions collectively. Conservation districts also have 410 training program completions. PACD continues to work with DEP to develop eLearning courses for the Clean Water Academy focusing on Chapter 102 and 105 topics.
- PACD Ag Plan Reimbursement Program – PACD was awarded a \$500,000 Growing Greener grant from DEP to offer an Ag Plan Reimbursement Program to conservation districts from 2022-2024. A 20% match will be required from the landowner/operator or the conservation district. Eligible plans include Manure Management (Ch. 91), Nutrient Management (Ch. 83), and Ag E&S (Ch. 102).
- Riparian Buffer Sub-grants – PACD has two Riparian buffer programs available. The Multi-functional Riparian Buffer Sub-grant for Conservation Districts program still has approximately \$40,000 available with no match requirement. A total of 40 grants implementing over 126 acres of buffers have been funded through this program since 2018. PACD also offers the Riparian Buffer Sub-grant for Conservation Districts program, funded by a C2P2 grant from DCNR. Multi-functional buffers are preferred, but conventional buffers are also eligible. This program has \$95,000 available and a 50/50 match is required.
- Lawn Conversion Grant – Brenda announced PACD will be receiving a \$100,000 C2P2 grant from DCNR to offer a Lawn Conversion Sub-grant Program for Conservation Districts. The goal of the program is to offer lawn conversion training to conservation districts and distribute funding to lawn conversion projects across PA.
- Invasive Species – An iMapInvasives training was offered to conservation district staff on June 28 2022. There is a recording of the training available. Please contact Holly Miller if interested. PACD was also awarded a Landscape Scale Restoration Grant from the USDA Forest Service to offer a PRISM pilot program in northwestern PA.
- 102/105 Technical Training – Chapter 102/105 Basic Technical Training will take place in-person with a field component May 23-26 2023 at the Red Lion Harrisburg-Hershey in Harrisburg, PA.
- Section 319 Virtual Watershed Planning and Implementation Meeting – The Section 319 virtual Watershed Planning and Implementation Meeting took place via zoom May 18-19, 2022. Details for the 2023 session are in development.

- Conservation District Watershed Specialist Webinar Series – The Conservation District Watershed Specialist Webinar Series is underway October 5-7, 2022, at no cost to districts.
- Leadership Development – The 2022 Management Summit was held September 13-15 at the Wyndham State College with over 50 management staff from across the state in attendance. A Fall Leadership Webinar Series is scheduled for late October and early November and Letters of Intent for the 2022-2023 Strategic Planning Grants program are being accepted through December 2, 2022.
- Legislative Activity – In addition to the salary survey findings for the next state budget request, PACD is planning a change to the format for the highlights page. This year's highlights will focus on thanking legislators and sharing what districts have been able to accomplish with the additional state budget funding. PACD will also be developing and distributing a white paper explaining the conservation district history and mission, the programs administered by districts, and the need to partner with related agencies.
- PACD Engineering Assistance/TAG Program – Brenda asked if there is interest in expanding the TAG program. The general consensus from the district representatives attending the meeting was that there would be a benefit to expanding the TAG program.

Regional Information Sharing

Each district highlighted three items to share with the membership:

Bradford: Cathy reported they will soon hold their first Women in Ag Day. They held a Forestry Education Seminar. They have several EWP projects underway and CAP BMP verification.

Centre: Jim said there are several BMP projects under construction with multi-funding sources. They just started a cover crop incentive program. They want to apply for a 319 grant for a stream water project. Also, their Awards Banquet will take place soon.

Clearfield: Willie said there are ten CAP projects in the county and six of them are already completed. They have a 319 AMD treatment project started. One of the CD employees spoke at a national AMD convention. They also are working on a streambank crossing culvert project.

Lycoming: Matt discussed supply chain and cost issues for their CAP projects, but they have one big project underway. They have a cover crop program and have begun a multi-county 102 training program focusing on e-permitting. Their watershed specialist is increasing their education and outreach activities, and their district secretary is retiring after 31 years of service.

Montour: Sean reported on their CAP projects, a pastureland conversion project, a GG grant for a streambank stabilization project, and a stormwater project.

Northumberland: Nathan reported that they held a Twilight Meeting and 40 people attended. They have a CAP cover crop program. Two legislators toured a county stream project.

Potter: Jason reported that they received a NFWF grant with Tioga CD. It will encompass a shared watershed project including soil health, a stream culvert and BMPs. They have a manure injection practice project and are hoping to use ACAP money to fund it. They partnered with Elk CD on some building projects. They completed most of the work on CAP projects including farm lane projects, improvements at a local fish hatchery and a manure project.

Snyder: Jason reported that they have CAP projects under construction. They held an outdoor education program for fifth graders in the county. They now have a new Envirothon Executive Director housed at the district.

Sullivan: Carrie reported that they completed 3 stream crossing projects, held a rain barrel workshop and will be holding their annual Appreciation Banquet.

Tioga: Erica said they have a new DGR employee. They will be holding their Women in Ag seminar on December 8. They also have some conservation projects through EWP but have had weather complications because of a wet spring and dry summer.

Union: Greg said the CD has had a large staff turnover including losing a 19-year staff person. They are also anticipating some internal staff changes. There is significant gypsy moth, spongy moth and SLF damage in the county. They have a large CAP project on an Amish farm, which is three years in the making.

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Report

Steve Putt provided the following notes on his written report:

- Districts should begin using the new Chapter 102 inspection report by October 3, 2022.
- Districts are asked to comment on the NPDES PG 13 draft permit to go out October 1, 2022.
- The new field representative for the DEP Southeast region will be on board in a few weeks. Steve explained some ways field representatives can be of help to conservation districts.
- The Chesapeake Bay office has been re-organized and is now the Bureau of Watershed Restoration and Non-point Source Management.
- A new Field Rep, Todd Hillegas will be starting on October 24, 2022.
- A new Regional Roundtable meeting will be held in early 2023.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Report

Amanda Coleman provided the following report:

- Amanda mentioned that they had a successful and well attended Ag Progress Days for 2022.
- She gave information that USDA was investing nearly 18 million dollars in Partner-Driven, locally led Conservation in PA. The 17.8 million dollars was awarded through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).
- She discussed some of the FY 2022 Farm Bill money breakdown.
- She gave an update of some of the EWP/Watershed programs and projects going on.
- She mentioned some of the upcoming trainings and localized workshop meetings.
- She mentioned there was a Web Soil Survey update upcoming

State Conservation Commission (SCC) Report (Handout)

Karl Brown provided the following notes on his written report:

- New director appointments are currently underway.
- Karl reviewed some changes in SCC personnel and noted he will retire at the end of this year.
- Eric Cromer is working on how best to administer the ACAP funding. ACAP is part of the Clean Streams Fund and funds must be committed by December 31, 2024, and spent by December 31, 2026. ACAP money will be handled similar to that for DGLVR projects.

Adjournment

It was moved by Jason Childs and seconded by Erica Tomlinson to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at Noon.