

For Immediate Release

July 19, 2023

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Pennsylvania Conservationists Recognized

(Harrisburg, PA) – The Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD) annual conference was held in Harrisburg, PA. Several conservationists were recognized during the awards luncheon on July 19, 2023.

“Pennsylvania’s 66 conservation districts and their partners work tirelessly to ensure we have enough clean water and healthy soil for future generations. Today, we took time to recognize some of these outstanding individuals,” said Brenda Shambaugh, PACD Executive Director. “Congratulations to all on this well-deserved recognition.”

The 2023 PACD honorees are as follows:

Legislator Leadership Award

This award is presented to legislators recognized for their outstanding efforts to further the activities and accomplishments of the state's conservation districts or PACD on a statewide basis.

Senator Scott Martin

Senator Martin was nominated by the Lancaster County Conservation District. As Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator Martin is a strong advocate for conservation

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efforts across the state. Senator Martin worked to enact the legislation that created the new statewide Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program which represents a \$154 million investment to help improve water quality and soil health. Senator Martin was also instrumental in providing additional funding to conservation districts for their operational needs through the state budget process.

President's Award

Selected by PACD Executive Board President, this award is given, at the discretion of the President, to an individual, organization, or agency in recognition of their outstanding efforts that have resulted in furthering the accomplishments of PACD.

This year, President Kelly Stagen selected Tarara Peffer and Piper Sherburne to receive the award.

Tamara Peffer

Tammie is the Environment & Ecology Curriculum Advisor at PA Department of Education. President Stagen wanted to recognize Tammie for being a champion of science, especially as we navigated the changes to the Science Curriculum standards for our state. She has also been a great support person to conservation districts statewide for innovative information and resources, many which have been highlighted through our Education and Outreach Committee.

Piper Sherburne

Piper is PACD's South East Region Director and Chair of the Berks County Conservation District board. Piper is being recognized for her tireless and valiant efforts to eradicate the spotted lanternfly in Pennsylvania. She is known locally, statewide, and now nationally for her knowledge and input regarding this invasive pest. She is a formidable voice to stop invasives across the commonwealth.

Ann Rudd Saxman Conservation District Director Excellence Award

This award is given to a conservation district director or associate director for their outstanding volunteer efforts, which have furthered the activities and accomplishments of conservation districts on a statewide basis.

Thomas Boldin (Centre County)

Tom served on the Centre County Conservation District Board continuously since at least 1971. He entered farming at an early age, having grown up on a dairy farm and later making the transition to owning his own farm. In his 50+ years of service to the District, Tom has served as chairman, vice-chairman and has also served on various committees. In the early days, Tom even assisted with the daily operations of the District in the absence of a Manager.

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Conservation District Employee Excellence Award

This award is given to a conservation district employee for their outstanding efforts that have furthered the activities and accomplishments of conservation districts on a statewide basis.

Michele Long (Pike County)

Michele has been with the district for 20 years serving in multiple roles. She is a state leader, respected and listened to by her fellow managers and employees throughout the Commonwealth. She currently serves as chair for the North East Region Managers meetings and statewide breakfasts, and helps lead the PACD Managers Meetings that take place virtually each month. She is always ready to offer support and assistance to other managers, both old and new, and took a lead role in working with other managers to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conservation District Trash Champion

Conservation districts were challenged to compete to see who could collect the most trash during the months of April and May.

The Washington County Conservation District collected 15.6 tons of trash and 746 tires. Congratulations to the Washington County Conservation District for winning this award three years in a row!

Conservation District Employee Service Recognition Awards

The Conservation District Employee Service Recognition Awards recognize conservation district employees for their years of dedication to conserving Pennsylvania's natural resources.

30 Years of Service

- Russell Ryan, Resource Conservation Supervisor, Adams
- Bill Zavislak, Chesapeake Bay Engineering Assistant, Lackawanna

35 Years of Service

- Tim Matechak, Erosion and Sedimentation Technician (Retired), Lackawanna
- James Pillsbury, Hydraulic Engineer, Westmoreland

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45 Years of Service

- Barry Travelpiece, Engineer (Retired), Columbia

For more information about the work of the state's 66 conservation districts, visit www.pacd.org. You can also follow PACD on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/PAConservation>.

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The Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Inc. (PACD) is a non-profit organization whose guiding values include: Sustainable Resource Conservation; Integrity, Local; Education and Outreach; and Partnerships. PACD primarily serves as the collective voice for Pennsylvania's 66 county conservation districts. For more information about PACD, visit www.pacd.org.

