

**PACD South East Region Meeting Minutes
Henning's Market, Harleysville, PA
October 4, 2024**

Call to Order

South East Region Director Piper Sherburne called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

Set Date for Next Meeting

The next PACD South East Region Meeting will take place at Henning's Market on March 27, 2025.

Approval of Minutes from the Previous Meeting

It was moved by Gretchen Schatschneider and seconded by Chris Strohmaier to approve the minutes of the previous meeting on March 28, 2024. Motion carried.

PACD Business and Report

Executive Director Brenda Shambaugh presented PACD business and highlights from her written report.

PACD Business: Policies for Consideration

During their meeting on July 1, 2024, the PACD Legislative Committee proposed the following policy:

PACD recognizes the significant environmental benefit of protecting our Commonwealth's natural resources through Best Management Practices (BMPs). PACD supports education and incentives for voluntary installation of BMPs.

During their meeting on October 4, 2024, the PACD North East Region proposed the following alternative policy:

PACD recognizes the significant environmental benefit of protecting our Commonwealth's natural resources through Best Management Practices (BMPs). PACD supports programs of education and increased incentives and funding for voluntary installation of BMPs.

Region Director Sherburne encouraged discussion of both proposed policies.

It was moved by Chris Strohmaier and seconded by Jeffrey Keifer to support the following policy:



PACD recognizes the significant environmental benefit of protecting our Commonwealth's natural resources through Best Management Practices (BMPs). PACD supports education and incentives for voluntary installation of BMPs.

Motion carried.

Regional Information Sharing

Philadelphia Food Policy Advisory Council (FPAC): Representatives from the Philadelphia Food Policy Advisory Council (FPAC) were introduced. They expressed interest in learning how to protect soil and water resources as they battle expanding pressure from gentrification. They also strive to protect urban farming and the remaining open spaces. Five watersheds have been "lost" already. They expressed concern with an environmental hazard along Roosevelt Blvd. FPAC would like to provide expertise on urban challenges and present the reality of knowledgeable professional growers in urban settings. FPAC seeks support from regional districts to increase their knowledge base and abilities. They want to serve the needs of the humans in Philadelphia, not necessarily the government. FPAC plans to testify on November 15, 2024, to the city council. FPAC provided 50lbs of produce this season from a single garden but had to rely on new technologies for that harvest. They are dealing with water shortages, flooding, polluted soil, city hunger, garden area shortages, vandalism, etc. FPAC is committed to their goal of creating a Conservation District for Philadelphia.

Lehigh CCD - Kevin Frederick – Completed their second ACAP project, a heavy-use area (HUA) with rooftop. DGLVR program culverts and crossings can be quite complicated. LCCD advises everyone to be very diligent when working on similar projects. LCCD has completed their first 102 Pilot Program permit. It went very smoothly and cut the timeline for permit approval in half, even compared to their expedited permit program.

Chester CCD – Chris Strohmaier – PAG-02 renewals are underway. About 25% of permits were renewed and 6-7% terminated. ACAP is heading into round 2 of funding projects. CCCD is hiring an engineering position currently and 2025 will be a big hiring year with 2 retirements and 3 new positions, a new watershed specialist position is also being added with funding from the DEP/EPA for the Octoraro watershed. Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) projects and ARPA projects are being completed. They are using up a great deal of district staff time and resources.

Montgomery CCD – Jessica Buck – PAG-02 renewals are underway. MCCD is hiring their third district engineer. They are also hiring a new permit coordinator position, which will cover the administrative work with NPDES permits and function as liaison between applicants and the district. MCCD welcomes additional ACAP funding and has completed their first project. It was for a large livestock operation. MCCD is completing low volume road projects.

Berks CCD – Dean Druckenmiller – ACAP & NRCS Funding may be used to hire an Ag Engineer in Training (EIT) and Nutrient Management Technician to help with the workload. Soil/Water/Ag Bus is busy and getting booked up. It is extremely popular. Reading Urban Ag Garden is becoming established and had a successful harvest. The food was donated back to the community. USDA & NACD urban ag funds were used for that project. BCCD will host a legislative event at the garden in 2025. ACAP funding has been allocated, and projects are

underway. Trout in the classroom program is now in approximately 40 schools. It is extremely successful and found in every school district in the county.

Northampton CCD – Nate Pritchard – District independence process is moving along. A new property was purchased. It has 5 acres and a building. PAG-02 renewals are about 1/3 completed. Completed a low volume road project on Harvest Lane. There is an opening for Watershed Specialist, and an engineer will be hired soon. Spotted Lanternfly tree tape is available to any who want it.

Delaware CCD – Karen Wilwol – The district is fully staffed as of 2 weeks ago. New E&S Tech was hired, and the district is training their 102 team. DCCD has awarded their second ACAP project for about \$180,000. It includes roofed compost, grassed waterways, and several other BMPs. The project is located at the Garrett Williamson Farm in Newtown Square. It will become an educational farm facility. Thank you to Chester CCD for your help. Archiving and scanning is in the 2nd round of completion and the district is working towards electronic submission. DCCD is currently renovating their office space and hoping to grow their staff.

Bucks CCD – Gretchen Schatschneider – Staffing changes are taking place. Currently hiring an Environmental Protection Specialist. Also developing a Compliance & Enforcement position that will handle the administrative work during enforcements. PAG-02 renewals are coming in fast. Approximately 80 have been received so far out of an estimated 500 potential renewals. NOTs are also being submitted. Emergency Watershed Protection projects are being completed. 3 projects in Bucks. A 319 grant was awarded to BCCD for work in the Core Creek/Lake Luxembourg watershed. ACAP funding has been allocated, and projects are underway. Additional funding is welcome!

Partner Reports

DCNR – reported on various programs – Highlights from written report. Reported on increased staffing and technical assistance available.

DEP – Carl DeLuca – Personnel changes – Highlights from written report. PAG-02 renewal, MMP short form course, grant portal, SPEED Initiative should go live in July 2025. November 5th meeting and November 8 workgroup meeting. Shane Kleiner reported there is a Watershed Manager position available in the South East Region. Watershed Specialist position grants are being processed. Tech position open to provide oversight for grants. Growing Greener applications have been submitted totaling \$42M in requests. A \$15M announcement will be made in the new year. Shane mentioned that there were 15 319 grants awarded, and the \$5,000 mini grants attached to the Watershed Specialist position funding. Linda Mackey spoke about the South East Regions new compliance strategies being developed to meet the PCSM challenges observed lately. Pushing field orders to be issued in the moment and asking districts to try to document PCSM violations earlier in the construction process.

SCC – Doug Wolfgang – Doug gave a special mention to Dr. Green for their support, and Philadelphia FPAC for attending. Highlights from written report. Also, Nutrient and Odor Mgmt. advisory board has an opening, and a new DGLVR position is being posted.

NRCS – Charlie Hanner – Highlights from written report. Also, watersheds program in the south east is really ramping up. The Core Creek Dam Rehabilitation in Bucks County will begin soon. Many Emergency Watershed Protection projects have been completed or are underway. The south east is receiving lots of funding. Boot Camp Enrollment is available. Charlie introduced additional NRCS staff to the group. He discussed EQIP funding and program increases. CSP sign up round 1 begins in January. ACT NOW funding mechanism expansion – cover crop, forestry, poultry, pollinator habitat, etc. Expedited funding process available. Application date of November 1, 2024.

Adjournment

Dennis Beck gave thanks and appreciation to all partners and a special thank you to FPAC.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 p.m.