

**For Immediate Release**

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**Conservationists Recognized at 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Joint Annual Conference**

**(Harrisburg, PA)** – Conservation district staffs, state officials, and legislative partners convened in Harrisburg to honor conservationists during the PA Association of Conservation Districts, Inc. (PACD) and State Conservation Commission's 70<sup>th</sup> Joint Annual Conference. The awards luncheon took place July 12 at the Red Lion Hotel, Harrisburg, PA.

The 2017 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.*

**Representative Martin Causer (McKean County)**

As chairman of the House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, Representative Causer is a strong voice for rural Pennsylvania and recognizes the important role of conservation districts in their local communities. He has been a leader in the effort to ensure the state's farmers receive credit for implementing responsible practices to reduce pollutants entering the Commonwealth's waterways. He has both sponsored legislation that supports the state's Clean and Green program and legislation that helps municipalities and conservation districts to more easily implement the Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Roads Program. Representative Causer is a dedicated advocate for conservation districts and agriculture on both the statewide and local level.

**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.*

**Russell Redding, Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture**

Secretary Redding has served Pennsylvania in Harrisburg and Washington D.C. for more than 20 years. He has worked for 16 years in the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA), where he previously served as secretary from 2009 to 2011 under Governor Rendell. A Pennsylvania native, Redding has an innate understanding of agriculture, stemming from his youth on his family's dairy farm and his time as a dairy farm operator. Under Secretary



Redding's direction, PDA has taken the lead on combatting both plant and insect invasive species. His commitment to minimizing the negative effects of these harmful plants and insects is the reason he is receiving the PACD President's Award today. PACD thanks Secretary Redding for his dedication to assisting Pennsylvania's agricultural and conservation efforts.

### **Ann Rudd Saxman Conservation District Director Excellence Award**

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

#### **Samuel Worley (Franklin County)**

Sam Worley is a tireless advocate for conservation of Pennsylvania's natural resources. At age 96, he is still actively involved as both a Franklin County Conservation District board member and a member of PACD. At the local level, Sam has attended 255 board meetings in his 25 years with the district, and has been active with district committees and activities. On a broader level, he is a long-time and active participant in both regional and statewide PACD meetings. He served as Chairman of the PACD Endowment Committee for many years, and has served on the Ways and Means Committee for 17 years. Sam's warm, outgoing personality make him an excellent ambassador for the districts, and he actively builds relationships with legislators, encouraging their support of conservation districts. Sam is proud of his farm heritage and learned conservation practices from his father on the mountain farm in Spring Run, Pennsylvania. This early learning instilled his passion for conserving the soil and protecting the water.

### **Conservation District Employee Excellence Award**

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

#### **Robert Sweitzer (Centre County)**

In his 25 years as district manager for the Centre County Conservation District, Bob's expertise in environmental stewardship has allowed him to serve in many leadership roles at the local, regional, and state level. He served for four years as the secretary of the Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, and has served on the Headwaters Resource Conservation and Development Council for over 25 years. He is an active participant at PACD regional and statewide meetings, and a long-time member of PACD committees. Significantly, Bob has led Pennsylvania Envirothon efforts as an active member of the Pennsylvania Envirothon Committee and Board of Directors for nearly 30 years. In his current role as Pennsylvania Envirothon Board Secretary, he works with representatives of the international Envirothon organization to ensure the state's annual participation in the North American Envirothon. His many efforts have significantly furthered the activities and accomplishments of conservation districts at the local, state, and international level for over 30 years.

### **Conservation District Employee Service Recognition Program Awards**

*The Conservation District Employee Service Recognition Awards recognize conservation district*



*employees for their years of dedication to conserving Pennsylvania's natural resources.*

**40 Years of Service**

- Jacquelyn Rouse, Manager, Sullivan County

**35 Years of Service**

- Gerald Heistand, Business Manager, Lancaster County
- Bob McDonald, Conservation Technician, Mercer County

**30 Years of Service**

- Mark Flaharty, Senior Ag Resource Conservationist, York County
- Susan Moon, Assistant Manager, Somerset County
- Sandy Thompson, Manager, McKean County
- Deborah Wilson, Manager, Jefferson County

For more information about the work of the state's 66 conservation districts, visit [www.pacd.org](http://www.pacd.org). You can also follow PACD on Facebook at <http://on.fb.me/15aWrKi>.

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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](http://www.pacd.org).*

