

PACD Legislative Committee Minutes
DoubleTree Resort by Hilton Hotel, Lancaster, PA
July 17, 2018

Welcome and Roll Call

Chairwoman Donna Fisher welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 1:49 p.m. without a quorum.

Committee members in attendance: Kelly Stagen, Pike; Jim Shaner, Beaver; Donna Fisher, Blair.

Guests in attendance: Brenda Shambaugh, PACD; Molly Burns, PACD; Jessie Albright, Allegheny; Don Koontz, Mercer; Dave Mankamyer, Somerset; Edward Zinser, Sullivan; John Dryzal, Cambria; Chris Thompson, Lancaster; Cameron Koons, Lycoming; Jay Russell, Mercer; Larry Butler, Clinton; Eric Hansen, NACD; Chris Ingulli, Pike; Bill Kahler, Lycoming; Tim Ference, Luzerne; Kerry Fetter, McKean; Sean Wessell, Jefferson; Susan Kubo, NRCS; Paul Semmel, Lehigh; Adam McClain.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Due to the lack of a quorum, the committee will review and approve the January 17, 2018, minutes during their next meeting.

General Legislative Update

Brenda Shambaugh provided an update on a number of legislative items.

Pennsylvania State Budget

The state budget was passed and the Governor signed it. Funding for conservation districts was flat lined, meaning the same amount as the last fiscal year. It was reported that there will be a number of new legislators after the November election, and suggested that conservation districts make a strong effort to meet the new House/Senate members.

House Bill 2154

HB 2154, introduced by Rep. Marty Causer, would change regulations for small conventional wells. This legislation amends the Conventional Oil and Gas Act. Rep. Causer contends that the legislation removes the threat of unreasonable regulations, only affects conventional wells, and will reduce methane emissions by establishing a bounty program for plugging abandoned wells. In contrast, the Wolf administration and several other organizations contend the legislation weakens existing law by relaxing requirements. The bill passed the House and is in the Senate for consideration. PACD already has policy recognizing that water resources are critical to the future of Pennsylvania, and that surface and groundwater need to be quantitatively and qualitatively protected from human abuse.



House Bill 1959

HB 1959, introduced by Rep. Greg Rothman, requires all state agencies that administer permits to conduct an initial review of permit decisions and permit decision delays. It requires all state agencies to post, on their website, a complete list of all permits managed by the agency. The legislation also allows for third-party professionals to administer the program. It states that payments to a third-party professional shall consist of the remittance of any fees collected by the agency from applicants whose applications are subject to permit decision delay.

HB 1932 – Representative Zimmerman

Brenda reported that PACD and our partners were able to convince Rep. Zimmerman not to move forward with this legislation.

NACD Update

Eric Hansen, NE NACE region director and Policy Specialist provided the committee with a federal legislative update. He began with some general legislative information and moved on to discuss the work NACD is doing with regard to appropriations and NACD's recommendations for the 2018 Farm Bill, which are:

- Maintaining conservation program funding
- Keeping EQIP and CSP functionally separate
- Opposing some proposed reforms to the RCPP program
- Repealing SAM/DUNS requirements
- Supporting watershed programs
- Increase CRP acreage responsibility with flexibility for grazing
- Continue current conservation compliance requirements

Brenda Shambaugh reported that Kelly Stagen is working with PACD and NACD to help with legislative issues on the federal level. Kelly reported that she is learning and is interested in feedback from districts.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.