

**PACD South Central Region Meeting
Cumberland County Conservation District
March 19, 2019**

Call to Order

South Central Region Director John Akers welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

In attendance: Donna Fisher, Blair; Adam McClain, Adams; Johan Berger, SCC; Sonia Wasco, Lancaster; Bruce Holbrook, York; Mark Kimmel, York; Yuri Plowder, NRCS; Charlie Hanner, NRCS; Randall Leisure, Lebanon; Katie Doster, Lebanon; Sally Tengeres, Perry; Eric Naguski, Dauphin; Celina Seftas, Huntingdon; Dave Stoner, Franklin; Sam Worley, Franklin; Karl Brown, SCC; Jeffrey Sholly, PACD; Glenn Kimmel, Cumberland; Carl Goshorn, Cumberland; John Akers, Bedford; Brenda Shambaugh, PACD; Fred Fiscus, DEP; Seleen Shives, Fulton; Chris Snyder, Juniata.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held October 15, 2019 starting at 10 a.m. at the Cumberland County Conservation District Office.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were provided for review.

***Motion** by Bruce Holbrook and seconded by Sam Worley to approve the minutes of the October 23, 2018 meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.*

PACD Report - Brenda Shambaugh provided highlights from her written report.

State Budget – The governor presented his budget in February. House and Senate budget hearings have been occurring. Several significant changes related to the Conservation District line items:

- PACD had requested a 10% increase – that was not granted however there were no cuts proposed to the CD line items.
- The entire 2.506 Million Conservation District Transfer line item in the DEP budget was moved to the Environmental Stewardship Fund (ESF) Budget. Governor's office is suggesting that having District Line item removed from DEP budget may be good in that some of the focus may be removed from the funding. ESF is funded by a tipping fee and



not the general fund. For the proposed 2019 budget, funds were moved from the General Fund to the ESF to cover the entire District Line item transfer.

- The Nutrient Management Fund for District Use remained the same at \$869,000 however, the overall fund was increased from 2.714 Million to 6.2 Million with thought of increasing funds available to farmers and an expansion of the AgriLink Program.

The PACD Executive Board passed a motion related to the movement of District funding to the ESF. The PACD North Central Region passed a similar motion adding “State” agency administrative costs.

***Motion** by Randall Leisure and seconded by Bruce Holbook to support the Executive Board motion and to add “State” to the agency description to read, “PACD continues to support utilizing the Environmental Stewardship Fund (ESF) to fund the Growing Greener program and its success in assisting local communities with natural resource projects. We philosophically oppose using funding from the ESF to pay for state agency administrative costs.” Motion carried unanimously.*

***Motion** by Randall Leisure and seconded by Bruce Holbrook to support conservation district funding in the DEP general fund, continuing in the existing funding structure. Motion carried unanimously.*

Conservation District Week – May 5-11, 2019 with Capital Day to be held on May 8, 2019

- We need to have a huge educational effort and meet with the legislators.
- PACD website will have informational materials as well as a Media Relations Toolkit.
- A sample Proclamation for Conservation District Week will be distributed/posted.
- Everyone is encouraged to send a budget letter (template to be provided) and follow-up with a visit to the legislators.
-

Third Party Reviewer Legislation – Reintroduced as HB 509 by Representative Rothman (Cumberland) – no movement to date. SC Region has previously taken a position to oppose.

PACD Correspondence to DEP – Comments were solicited, and a letter provided to DEP regarding the E&S Manual for Agriculture; as well as, comments requested by Nathan Crawford regarding Section 6 of the NPDES Administrative Manual.

PACD Ways and Means Committee Motion regarding dues increase – Sonia Wasco described the motion passed unanimously by the Ways and Means Committee in January to move to the Region Meetings regarding a proposal for 3-year dues increase structure to cover cost of living and inflationary costs. Approximately 6% of the PACD operating budget is covered by dues.

***Motion** by Randall Leisure and seconded by Bruce Holbrook to support the dues increase as proposed by the Ways and Means Committee. Motion carried unanimously.*

Building Update – A new realtor has been retained to sell the PACD building and increased internet presence has been established. Asking price has been reduced from \$595,000 to \$550,000.

Directors Listserve – PACD is requesting email contact information for the District Directors. A request was made earlier with about half the districts responding. The weekly newsletter as well as pertinent and select information would be distributed through the listserve.

Regional District Information Sharing

Fulton County – Seleen Shives reported that they are finishing up a \$700,000 GG grant within an ag impaired watershed completing a manure storage, barnyard, walkways, etc. and that they received a new GG grant for another \$700,000 to complete streambank restoration and fencing as a “Phase 2” within the watershed. Also working with a \$640,000 PennVEST grant for an ag project. CD week activity – planning a field trip to a DGR/Stream Restoration project in conjunction with the District Board meeting on site May 9th. Legislators to be invited.

Juniata County – Chris Snyder reported that he is fully staffed! Many of the construction projects were at a standstill based on the weather last year but 2019 will be a good year. Finishing up on the last quarter mile section of the Lost Creek Stream Restoration project. Hosted a Famers Breakfast (without spray credits) two weeks ago with Secretary Redding as the keynote speaker – 85 in attendance to include newly elected Representative Hershey. CD week activity – request a proclamation from the Commissioners.

Blair County – Donna Fisher reported that the District is working with Senator Ward to host a Water Summit targeted to municipalities with topics to include Floodplain Management, Stormwater, MS4, NPDES permitting/E&S and Stream Permitting and activities. Summit is in a response to all the complaints from 2018. Both the Intergovernmental Stormwater Committee (ISC) and the ISC agreement with the Blair District for a Stormwater Coordinator were authorized for continuance through 2023. Municipalities are now also contributing project funds annually with a total cost for the Pollution Reduction Plan (PRP) listed at 6.2 Million. A GG and NFWF grant totally \$500,000 were received to complete green infrastructure projects relate to the PRP. CD week activity – meet with legislators individually.

Lancaster County – Sonia Wasco reported that the District will be celebrating 69 years of service at a banquet this month. Commented on the loss of Dick Shellenberger, who was a great example of leadership and public advocacy and a champion of their Youth Leadership School. Currently have 32 staff position filled. Working on an educational campaign related to Spotted Lanternfly and offering grants of \$5,500 for treatment to municipalities. WIP completed and submitted with the focus to continue their “Get the Red Out” through 6 major initiatives. Expressed that they will need to engage new audiences and partners to be effective. Looking to PracticeKeeper to track progress. Countywide Action Plan Snapshot distributed. CD week activity – planning a municipal and County Commissioner event.

York County – Mark Kimmel reported that they have gone live with a new website this past February - total cost of the project was about \$10,000. Currently have 5 vacancies, 4 of which are new positions supported by the County which will bring the complement to 23 staff. 9,000 acres of planning was completed by York staff in 2018. They have moved exclusively to PracticeKeeper for planning efforts. District is moving to a County Building in September 2019 with hopes to bring USDA to the building sometime in the future. Utilization of approximately 1 million in project funding is anticipated in 2019 and received a new GG grant. Likely will not meet the DGLVR fund expenditure deadline. Working with Planning Commission that received a NFWF grant to prepare options for Stormwater Management, Water Quality Monitoring and the proposal to add 2 Ag staff positions for the district. CD week activity – Invite elected officials to their 4 Envirothon Competitions to present awards; a County Proclamation; interact weekly with legislators. Suggested a meeting with Stan Saylor along with PACD and a Board Member.

Lebanon County – Katie Doster reported that they recently hosted a Regional E&S technician meeting with 30 in attendance to discuss administrative and field work. Mid-June they are planning a workshop for design professionals relate to the Managed Release Concept. They are attempting to allocate DGLVR funds. Busy with spring activities (Tree Sale, Envirothon and Public Outreach). CD week activities – Plan to hold a Legislative Open House.

Perry County – Sally Tengeres reported that they are fully staffed but had trouble filling the latest Ag Position for Nutrient Management/Drill Program. All funds are committed for DGLVR and are attempting to get project completed – they may fall short of money spent. Just hosted a manure management workshop to complete plans and cancelled an Ag E&S plan workshop due to lack of interest. CD week activity – plan to meet one on one with legislators and take a copy of their annual report and the PACD highlights pages. Also invite legislators to participate in award at the Envirothon.

Dauphin County – Eric Naguski reported that they just finished up the third round of County Wide Stream Assessments using DEP ICE Protocol. All streams are assessed on a 5-year rotation. Public meetings are scheduled to announce findings with most streams trending toward improvement. Finishing up a bay special project for a manure storage, walkway, fencing, gutters and are doing continuous water monitoring upstream and downstream in hopes to document sediment reductions. Working with the Planning Commission and others to develop a Stormwater “Group”. Meeting with Lancaster and York Counties and looking to Lancaster County as a model. Hoping to use the group to assist in writing Dauphin’s WIP. Participating in the Greater Harrisburg Litter Cleanup event (\$3,000 from Mosquito Fund used to sponsor the event last year). 500 volunteers cleaned up 30 ton of garbage and 600 tires in 2018. In 2019 the District will provide \$3,000 in funds and the County of Dauphin will contribute \$2,000 toward the event.

Huntingdon County – Celina Seftas reported that Huntingdon District was awarded 3 GG grants and 1 Mariner East grant totaling \$410,000. Finishing up 2 bay special projects and 2 existing

GG grants. Restarting their water quality monitoring program using ICE protocol and partnering with Juniata College. They are about three quarter of their way through a Strategic Planning process. Currently have a vacancy in the E&S position. On track to spend the DGLVR funds. It was helpful that the district moved to having a FT DGLVR position which previously was shared with E&S duties. To host the 7th annual Juniata River Cleanup where about 50 boaters are on the water to clean up a 3 mile section of the river. To date, over 15 miles of the river have been cleaned up. Last year 150 tires and 2 to 3 tons of trash was gathered. Working as a member of the Southern Alleghenies Conservancy (SAC) and recently signed an agreement of sale for the Turnpike Property with the Bedford Fulton Recreation Authority. CD week activities – planning a Proclamation, Earth Day Event, tree planting and participate in the Splash in a Storm Day associated with May Fest Activities planned by Huntingdon Borough.

Franklin County – Dave Stoner reported that they completed their WIP and it was presented to the state on March 8th. Hosted or hosting 2 manure management, a soil health and a Chapter 102 workshop. Recently received 2 E&S plans for solar farms on about 140 acres each with several more solar farms in the works. Received a GG grant for Ag E&S plan development. Just had a DGLVR Quality Assurance Quality Control Visit and it looks like they will get their money spent. CD week activity – may plan to visit Harrisburg during Capital Day.

Cumberland County – Carl Goshorn introduced Glenn Kimmel as a new public director for Cumberland County. An Open House is planned for the Allen Road office complex this coming Sunday – will update on the effectiveness. 2 manure management workshops held with 3 farmers each attending. A third workshop is scheduled in a township building within the plain sect community and 11 are registered. Paid tribute to Wilbur Wolfe, long time director that passed away unexpectedly from an accident on January 4, 2019. He served 29 years on the board and was the chairman for 23 consecutive years. They are looking to start a memorial scholarship and recognize with signage and a tree planting at the office. Expressed pleasure that Mr. Wolf's family wishes to stay involved in the district activities. CD week activities – requested a Proclamation from the Commissioners.

Bedford County – John Acker reported that the Recycling Center that is run in conjunction with Huntingdon and Fulton Counties is struggling as the market for materials is drying up. The equipment rental program is starting to pick up as the weather is breaking. The fall 2018 season was less active for the planting of cover crops with the weather. Bedford District looks to complete a couple of stream projects this spring. Stated that Brad Michaels from NRCS office is moving to MD. CD week activities – visits will be scheduled.

SCC Report - Karl Brown highlighted items from his written report.

Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road - PowerPoint handout was reviewed.

- There will not be another contract extension for the 2013 – 2018 contract which received an extension to June 30, 2019 previously.
- Still 12 to 13 million dollars outstanding under the old contract (about 12%)

- District will be in a “Red, Yellow Green” category for each program (DGR and LVR accounted separately). Red – district have until 5/24/19 to commit funds. If any funds are left uncommitted – the district will not receive a 2019-20 allocation. Yellow – All old money committed but some funds not spent by 6/30/2019 – those districts will have their 2019-20 allocation reduced by the amount of unspent funds. Green – All old money committed and spent – no deduction from 2019-20 allocation. Any money withheld from district will be reallocated to districts that have spent funds. Allocation scheduled for July so the district should see funds in September. Huntingdon County was commended on their planning efforts and scheduling to spend funds.

Manure Management for Youth Projects – project by Lancaster District, PS Extension and others related to environmental regulations/concepts for student animal projects. Copies are available online. Completed with a MWEE grant.

PA Farm Bill – Handout provided. Invest 24 million into the Ag Industry – 6 major components. May be the next generation of funding for BMP implementation. Calls for a workgroup to streamline Chapter 105 permitting.

Restore PA – Handout provided. 4.5 Billion spending proposal from the Governors office. Flood Control, Green Infrastructure, DGLVR projects may be considered. Concept plan – no legislation to date.

SCC Strategic Plan – Working draft distributed. Presentation made at the January Council meeting. One aspect is looking at developing a standardized Chart of Accounts.

PA Agriculture Conservation (PAC) Recognition Program – Handout provided. Thanks to Lancaster, Chester, Franklin and Adams for assisting as pilot counties. 3 producers from each county will be considered.

Chesapeake Bay WIP3 – To be published in early April 2019, stakeholder meetings in June and August 9, 2019 is proposed to publish as final.

Spotted Lanternfly – Handouts provided. Epicenter is in Berks County and it continues to spread.

PACD TAG Update

Jeff Sholly commented on the progress of 5 projects totally 5 million dollars from EQIP funds with another 0.5 million proposed for projects being planned for fall 2019.

DEP Report - Fred Fiscus highlighted items from his written report.

State Envirothon – Volunteers needed for May 21 and 22 at UPJ and Windber Recreation Park. Register online.

State Water Plan Committees – Update to be completed. 2 Conservation District Director members needed for the Lower Susquehanna Basin. Contact Jen Orr-Greene.

CDFAP Allocation Scenarios and Gas Well Trends – PowerPoint handout reviewed. 11 Counties showed a decrease of spudded wells in the last five years (2014-2018); 3 counties were steady; 11 showed an increase and 4 counties were dropped from the well counts. Drilling operations seem to be moving from the northern tier counties to the SW counties. Review of provided spreadsheets of an Armstrong County proposal for CDFAP allocation, a Lycoming County proposal and a combined proposal as compared with the existing criteria for distribution of funds. Armstrong proposes drawing monies for statewide projects after the 50/50 split in funds. Lycoming proposed using a 15-year average of spudded wells as opposed to the current 5-year average. PACD NC Region had a motion to support the Lycoming Proposal. Previous PACD Policy was to utilize a 3-year average of spudded wells.

Motion by Donna Fisher to support the Lycoming proposal, as it would increase funding for 3 districts in the SC Region and not negatively impact any district in the SC Region. Motion died for lack of second.

NRCS Report - Charlie Hanner and Yuri Plowder highlighted written reports provided.

Farm Bill Talking Points – not a lot of changes from 2014. Increased emphasis related to wildlife, organic and urban ag themes. EQIP funding levels are consistent with previous years. Field Teams are now working on planning and contracting. 2 million was contracted this past week with 1.5 million being livestock projects.

EWP – Working on 14 EWP sites in SC PA related to 2018 storms.

Envirothon – Continue to support Envirothon efforts at the state and county levels.

Soil Survey Efforts – soil data is refreshed every fall. Run through the Mill Hall Office and Frederick MD Office. Typically, changes are not needed but can be suggested to either office.

Soil Health Training – 3 -day certification training is scheduled for Conservation Planners.

Basic Wetland Training – in conjunction with ACOE scheduled in Bald Eagle Area (8/6-8/19) and Pymatuning Area.

Staff Announcement - Rob Knight is “re-retiring” today.

Adjourned at 12:42 p.m.