

**PACD Conservation Committee Minutes  
Wyndham State College, Boalsburg, PA  
January 22, 2020**

**Welcome and Roll Call**

Chairman Josh Longmore called the meeting to order at 11:18 a.m.

*Committee Members in Attendance:* John Akers, Bedford; Jack Dehoff, York; Sherry Dumire, McKean; Carl Goshorn, Cumberland; Bill Kahler, Lycoming; Josh Longmore, Luzerne; Sean Lukacs, Allegheny; Daryl Miller, Bradford; Rob Shannon, Centre; Piper Sherburne, Berks; Dave Stoner, Franklin.

*Guests in Attendance:* Cam Koons, Lycoming; Jim Bence, Bedford; Jennifer Kovacs, Bedford; Michele Long, Pike; Kerry Fetter, McKean; Donna Fisher, Blair; Jeff Werner, NRCS; Nancy DiFiore, NRCS; Charlie Hanner, NRCS; Nancy Corbin, Columbia; Larry Butler, Clinton; Jenna St. Clair, Schuylkill; Seleen Shives, Fulton; Michael Hubler, Northumberland; Robert Sweitzer, Centre; Eric Nyerges, Union; Jennifer Ramey, Susquehanna; Roger McFadden, Monroe; Chris Thompson, Lancaster; Mari Meyers, Susquehanna; Meade Meyers, Susquehanna; Lori Kerrigan, Monroe; Doug Beri, Indiana; Adam McClain, Adams; Erica Tomlinson, Tioga; Linda Mackey, DEP; Molly Burns, PACD; Brenda Shambaugh, PACD.

**Minutes of the July 17, 2019 Meeting**

The minutes of the July 17, 2019, meeting were provided for review.

*It was moved by Jack Dehoff and seconded by John Akers to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2019, meeting as presented. Motion carried.*

**PA One Stop for Manure Management Plan Development**

Jennifer Weld from Penn State provided handouts and information on the manure management module for PA One Stop. She reported that they have a basic demo version. They are currently in the evaluation stage and are looking to put together a focus group to evaluate the system prior to doing a pilot. They know enhancements are needed and need feedback from those who are actively involved in educating farmers and developing manure management plans.

They are looking for six to eight conservation district employees to participate in the focus group. There is funding available to help reimburse the district for their time, an estimated eight hours in total. No travel is involved. The process will begin with a conference call or zoom meeting and the employee can then access the demo via a secure website.

Jennifer will put together a brief summary and PACD will send it out to the conservation districts to seek volunteers for the focus group.



## **Discussion of PAG-01 and PAG-02**

The group discussed the new permit procedures. PAG-01 will go through the DEP Advisory Committee soon. PAG-02 and its accompanying SOPs are public. One positive for the PAG-02 is that it reduces the amount of time contractors, etc. have to get back to the districts if there are deficiencies.

Josh Longmore reported that implementing the new PAG-02 permit process is going well so far for the Luzerne Conservation District, and their E&S program staff is cautiously optimistic. Regional consistency is still important. It was asked if DEP plans to do training for the regulated community. Brenda responded that DEP plans to provide training by making specific modules in the Clean Water Academy available to the regulated community. Michele Long reported that Pike and Monroe are holding a training for the regulated community, as are Lehigh and Northampton.

## **Ad Hoc Permit Committee Report**

Brenda Shambaugh provided a report on the PACD Ad Hoc Permit Committee. The purpose of the committee is to find solutions to reduce the timeframes for permit approvals satisfying legislator concerns. The ad hoc committee was formed and met via conference call twice, once in December and once in January. They discussed both legislative and non-legislative solutions to permitting challenges.

Brenda has spoken with DEP in general terms about committee discussions and will send a letter to DEP outlining some specific items the committee feels can be addressed now. However, the committee wants to see how the recently approved permit regulation and SOP changes affect the process before moving forward with other suggestions.

Josh Longmore spoke to specific items the committee discussed and identified. He also noted that the committee feels DEP may be able to assuage some of the negative perception in the legislature by communicating what the department is doing to address permitting issues and ePermitting. For example, it would be helpful to share that many of the changes made in the new permits and SOPs—which may frustrate the regulated community—were made to facilitate ePermitting.

It was noted that the districts did not receive training on the new PAG-02 until after it came out, and there has not been training for the regulated community, so that remains an area for improvement in the future. It's heartening to see that the new permit and SOPs try to address some of the same issues that districts have noted. They also take a step towards consistency, though there is still opportunity to improve in this area, especially across different types of permits.

## **PA Invasive Species Council Report**

Piper Sherburne reported that the Invasive Species Council voted to investigate the feasibility of Pennsylvania's conservation districts setting up cooperative invasive species management areas, such as they did in New York. This would allow conservation districts to participate in the development of rapid response action plans at the local level. It will also allow districts to take advantage of federal and other funds to combat invasive species. For example, NRCS and DCNR

have grant money available for invasive species. The PACD Executive Board discussed the potential of the idea at their last meeting.

The committee held discussion. Piper encouraged everyone to please complete the survey distributed by PACD to gather information on what the districts are already doing to combat invasive species and what they are interested in doing. She also shared a motion from the PACD Executive Board, which will go to the districts for consideration at the next round of region meetings.

*It was moved by Sherry Dumire and seconded by Carl Goshorn to support the following motion from the PACD Executive Board:*

*PACD encourages the PA Department of Agriculture and related agencies to develop a delegated agreement with conservation districts to provide funding and authority to battle invasive species.*

*Motion carried.*

Sherry Dumire from McKean shared information on their invasive species program, which is funded through a variety of grants.

### **Watershed Boundary Road Signs**

PennDOT is apparently now enforcing an existing federal Highway Beautification Act requiring that many signs, including watershed boundary road signs, be taken down on certain corridors. The list of criteria to replace the signs is daunting. Brenda will investigate whether we can obtain an exclusion or make the requirements for sign placement less rigorous for educational signs.

### **Proposed Policy on Unreported Discharges**

Adam McClain explained that Adams is working to make 102/105 permitting easier for projects addressing conservation issues. Waterway outlets are considered discharges, and the district is currently able to request a waiver for outlets for conservation projects. They are concerned that including “or regulations” would place this policy in opposition to such a waiver. This point will likely come before PACD Executive Council tomorrow.

*It was moved by Carl Goshorn and seconded by Sean Lukacs to make the following recommendation to the PACD Executive Council during their meeting on January 23, 2020.*

*The PACD Legislative Committee recommends that the PACD Executive Council strike the words “or regulations” from the Policy on Unreported Discharges, so that it reads:*

*PACD opposes legislation allowing for unreported discharges, spills or releases into waters of the Commonwealth that are not authorized by a DEP permit.*

*Motion carried.*

### **Adjournment**

*It was moved by Daryl Miller and seconded by Jack Dehoff to adjourn the meeting at 12:22 p.m.  
Motion carried.*