

For Immediate Release
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Pennsylvania Conservationists Recognized

(Harrisburg, PA) – The Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD) annual conference was held at the PA Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg, PA. Several conservationists were recognized during the awards luncheon on August 6, 2026.

“The success of conservation in Pennsylvania is driven by dedicated individuals who work collaboratively to protect our natural resources,” said Amy Brown, PACD Executive Director.

“We are honored to celebrate this year’s award recipients for their outstanding contributions to conservation across the Commonwealth.”

The 2026 PACD honorees are as follows:

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.

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Barbara Peace, PACD 1st Vice President, Director, Indiana County Conservation District

Through her willingness to take on critical responsibilities and support PACD in countless ways, Barb Peace has consistently demonstrated exceptional service and dedication to the organization. During a period of organizational change, she provided invaluable support throughout the leadership transition, helping ensure continuity, stability, and thoughtful decision-making that advanced PACD's goals. Whether working behind the scenes or representing PACD publicly, Barb consistently goes above and beyond in service to the organization. Her professionalism, commitment to conservation, and dedication make her a truly deserved recipient of this recognition.

Conservation District Employee Excellence Award

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

Tom Ulrich, Agricultural and Erosion and Sedimentation Technician, Washington County Conservation District

Since joining the Washington County Conservation District in 2013, Tom Ulrich has become a respected leader in agricultural conservation whose expertise has benefited communities across Pennsylvania. He has provided leadership to regional and statewide conservation initiatives, helped shape Pennsylvania's Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP), mentored conservation district staff, and continually expanded his expertise through professional development. His technical excellence, collaborative spirit, and unwavering commitment to agriculture and conservation make him a deserving recipient of this recognition.

Conservation District Trash Champion

The conservation district trash challenge pits districts against each other to compete to see who could collect the most trash in the months of April and May. The award is sponsored by Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful.

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Washington County Conservation District collected 1,168 tires and 800 trash bags for a total of 30,000 pounds of trash! Westmoreland Conservation District won a runner-up prize for most volunteer hours, putting in 200 hours of hard work!

Conservation District Employee Service Recognition Awards

The Conservation District Employee Service Recognition Awards recognize conservation district employees for their years of dedication to conserving Pennsylvania's natural resources.

35 Years of Service

- Jim Coslo, Manager, Centre County Conservation District
- Debra Dressler, Administrative & Financial Assistant, Juniata County Conservation District

30 Years of Service

- Beth Futrick, Ombudsman/Grants Coordinator, Blair County Conservation District
- Jackie Ritko, Resource Conservation Supervisor, Cambria County Conservation District
- Tracey Crawford, Manager, Crawford County Conservation District

For more information about the work of the state's 66 conservation districts, visit www.pacd.org. You can also follow PACD on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/PAConservation>.

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The Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Inc. (PACD) is a nonprofit organization that serves as the collective voice for Pennsylvania's 66 county conservation districts. PACD supports, educates, and advocates for Pennsylvania's conservation districts. Learn more at www.pacd.org.

