

**PACD Legislative Committee  
Conference Call  
May 3, 2007**

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Chairman Larry Kehl welcomed everyone and called the roll.

**Committee Members in Attendance**

Don Baker, Mifflin Conservation District  
Donna Fisher, Blair Conservation District  
Carl Goshorn, Cumberland Conservation District  
Larry Kehl, Berks Conservation District  
Harold Kulp, Chester Conservation District  
Ron Rohall, Westmoreland Conservation District  
Paul Sell, Lehigh Conservation District  
Pat Sueck, York Conservation District  
Carl Urbanski, Luzerne Conservation District

**Others in Attendance:**

Victor Cappucci, PACD President, Wyoming  
Conservation District  
Irivil Kear, PACD Second Vice President, Schuylkill Conservation District  
Susan Marquart, PACD  
Brenda Shambaugh, PACD  
Molly Burns, PACD (Recorder)

**Goal # 7: By July 2007, PACD will expand the organization's role in government relations and policy; PACD will continue PACD Capitol Day with increased legislator and conservation district participation.**

Brenda Shambaugh reviewed the eight proposed action steps for the committee.

*1. Expand district involvement in legislative activities by providing districts with additional information, materials and education geared toward working with and relating to legislative leaders. Ask districts to contact legislators to introduce legislation, amendments, and other legislative actions to further district policies. Ask districts to invite legislators to regularly scheduled local conservation district activities.*

PACD's goal is to expand district involvement with their legislators regarding items that are not solely budget-related. The committee decided to add "talking points for personal visits."

*2. Increase Capitol Day event participation by increasing district contacts, both initial and follow-up, with legislators. Increase district participation through additional reminders from PACD to districts.*

This action step is designed to increase participation in all aspects of Capitol Day by increasing: district participation; legislator participation; contact between districts and legislators both before the event and after the event; and PACD's contact with districts prior to the event. (Victor Cappucci left the call.) (Ron Rohall joined the call.)

*3. Solicit local or regional donations from districts to support legislative efforts through mailings, e-mails, and information disseminated at PACD statewide meetings.*

How are we going to increase PACD unrestricted funds to cover staff time for legislative activities? This is one possible answer: to solicit donations from districts to support legislative activities. The committee suggested that the request for donations include detailed information about what contributions will be used for.

*4. Work with PA General Assembly to enact changes to Act 217.*

Senator Wonderling is planning to reintroduce the legislation. PACD is currently working with the Departments to come up with mutually acceptable language regarding the State Conservation Commission.

*5. Increase legislative activity through additional work hours for PACD Government Relations/Policy Staff.*

A number of districts expressed support for this during the strategic planning process.

*6. Increase district visibility with government leaders through additional contacts, public relations opportunities, and events at the local level.*

This action step is about public relations opportunities for districts and putting the districts in more of a public setting. PACD wants to encourage districts to share information on local legislative events, especially with legislators in attendance. This is also addressed as part of the PACD Annual Legislative Program. Brenda said that she would like to see at least one press release per month coming from PACD to local districts for them to use in their local papers. The committee decided to specify local legislative events and to add that PACD will ask districts to inform PACD office of local legislative events.

*7. Research other available association status opportunities such as 501(c)4.*

Our status as a 501(c)3 limits our lobbying efforts. If we want to expand our lobbying activities, we may need to examine creating a separate association as a 501(c)4.

*8. Update and increase legislative activities at all levels by writing and distributing the next edition of the PACD Legislative Connection and revising the Annual Legislative Program as needed.*

This action includes distributing the next edition of the PACD Legislative Connection and revising the Annual Legislative Program.

*It was moved by Harold Kulp and seconded by Don Baker to approve the Action Plan for Goal #7, relating to government relations and policy, as amended. Motion carried.*

**Goal #1: By December 2008, PACD will obtain dedicated funding for the Conservation District Fund Allocation Program (CDFAP) and the Chapter 105 program; PACD will obtain full reimbursement for districts for eligible district administrative assistance costs as identified by the CDFAP.**

Question: What is the Chapter 105 Program? We are assuming that everyone knows, but perhaps we should add a parenthetical statement to the Goal that specifies what Chapter 105 refers to. Susan Marquart said that she would add this in.

Brenda explained the action plan step-by-step:

*1. Establish a sub-committee of the PACD Legislative Committee to determine possible dedicated funding sources.*

The first step in the dedicated funding plan is to create the subcommittee to come up with ideas for possible sources of dedicated funding. The committee decided to change the Target Completion Date to July, 2007.

*2. Meet with legislative leaders and staff to determine feasibility of dedicated funding options.*

The next step in the dedicated funding plan is to take the ideas from the subcommittee to legislators and legislative staff so that we can determine feasibility and drum up support. The committee decided to add "conservation districts and PACD officers" to the Responsibilities column.

*3. Lobby for administrative and legislative changes to allow for dedicated funding.*

The final step in the dedicated funding plan as outlined here is to lobby for the administrative and legislative changes that are necessary to allow for the dedicated funding opportunities as determined in the first two steps.

*4. Seek funding for Chapter 105 by meeting with DEP, lobbying for additional funding specifically for Chapter 105 activities, investigating fees, and researching other funding options.*

Initially districts were allocated funding for this program, but for the last several years that funding has not been available. PACD will be meeting with DEP, lobbying for additional funding specifically for Chapter 105 activities, investigating fees, and

researching other funding options for this program. DEP may be looking at a permit fee for the program to help generate revenue.

*5. Seek funding for district administrative assistance by meeting with DEP, lobbying for additional funding specifically for administrative assistance, and researching other funding options.*

The committee decided to change the action step to read "...meeting with DEP and the Administration..."

Question to consider: Where is this additional funding going to come from? There are many programs and many people looking for a piece of an ever-shrinking pie.

*It was moved by Don Baker and seconded by Pat Sueck to accept the Action Plan for Goal #1, relating to funding for the CDFAP and Chapter 105 program, as amended. Motion carried.*

Brenda reported that the Dirt and Gravel Roads program has not had an appropriation increase since the program's inception, and Senator Donald White has been approached to champion a funding increase for the program.

The next meeting of the PACD Legislative Committee will take place on Tuesday, July 17, 2007 at 6:30 PM during the PACD/SCC Joint Annual Conference at the Hilton Scranton and Conference Center in Scranton, PA.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 am.