

**PACD Operations Committee
Ramada Inn, State College, PA
January 19, 2006**

Chair: Dr. Irvil Kear, Schuylkill Conservation District

Welcome and Introductions - Irvil Kear

Irvil welcomed everyone to the meeting and the committee members introduced themselves.

Listserve Subscription Form

Irvil Kear circulated the Operations Committee listserve subscription form.

July 2006 Meeting Planning Update - Molly Burns

Molly Burns presented the report on the July 2006 Meeting Planning.

Review and Update of Old PACD Policies Section III - Susan Marquart

Susan Marquart presented the Conservation District Management and Administration policies for review.

It was moved by Piper Sherburne and seconded by Phyllis Hoople to strike the following existing PACD policy: PACD encourages conservation district nominating organizations to consider minority and female candidates for vacant director positions. Motion carried.

It was moved by David Collura and seconded by Piper Sherburne to strike the following existing PACD policy: All sectors of society are encouraged to serve on district governing boards, because all people share in the responsibilities and benefits of resource conservation. Motion carried.

It was moved by Phyllis Hoople and seconded by Drew Gilchrist to change the PACD policy: "We support the creation of a conservation district in Philadelphia County." to read "We support the creation of a conservation district in Philadelphia." Motion carried.

It was moved by David Collura and seconded by Malcolm Crooks to strike the following existing PACD policy: "Be it resolved that the State Conservation Commission allow additional deadline extensions for conservation audits if the conservation district is part of the county's single audit and the audit will not be completed by December 31, and that in addition to the recent SCC audit requirements for a GAS audit by a CPA that the SCC accept a county's single audit as fulfilling the SCC audit requirements. (2000)" Motion carried.

It was moved by John Ravert and seconded by David Collura to adopt the following policy: PACD encourages districts and counties to submit the required annual audits by the established deadlines of the State Conservation Commission.

It was moved by Larry Martick and seconded by Sandy Thompson to add "and counties" to the motion, so that the policy reads: PACD encourages districts and counties to submit the required annual audits by the established deadlines of the State Conservation Commission.

The amended motion was put to the vote. Motion carried.

It was moved by Piper Sherburne and seconded by Larry Martick to adopt the following position statement: We support the continuation of an annual memorial service to honor deceased members of the Pennsylvania conservation district community. Motion carried.

It was moved by Sandy Thompson and seconded by Larry Martick to strike the following existing policy: Conservation districts are urged to participate annually in the Conservation Awards Program sponsored by the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. Motion carried.

Resolutions from PACD Executive Board - Victor Cappucci

- Resolution to amend the PACD Articles of Incorporation.

It was moved by Bob Ritchey and seconded by Malcolm Crooks to forward the membership resolution to amend the PACD Articles of Incorporation to the PACD Executive Council. Motion carried.

- Changes to PACD Awards Program

It was moved by David Collura and seconded by Phyllis Hoople to forward the proposed changes to the PACD Awards Program to the PACD Executive Council. Motion carried.

- Leadership Development Letter of Understanding

It was moved by David Collura and seconded by Jackie Rouse to forward the draft letter of understanding to PACD Executive Council, with the addition of the paragraph stating "The PACD Executive Board will appoint the PACD representative to the Building for Tomorrow Leadership Development Committee. PACD recommends that the State Conservation Commission be asked to appoint the other four conservation district representatives (two District Directors and two district staff). Motion carried.

Resolutions from District Employees Committee

- Competitive Wage and Benefits Policy Statement

It was moved by David Collura and seconded by Larry Martick to forward the following proposed policy statement to PACD Executive Council: PACD recommends

that Conservation Districts offer a competitive wage and benefits package in order to obtain and retain quality employees. Motion carried.

- National Conservation District Employees Association

It was moved by David Collura and seconded by John Ravert to forward the following motion to the PACD Executive Board: That PACD pay the current dues to the National Conservation District Employees Association (NCDEA), and to request that PACD include the NCDEA dues payment in the PACD budget for future years. Motion carried.

- Conservation Planning Certification

It was moved by Piper Sherburne and seconded by Drew Gilchrist to forward the following motion to the PACD Executive Council: The District Employees Committee supports the efforts of PACD to encourage a curriculum for conservation planning certification for district staff. Motion carried.

Resolutions from PACD Legislative Committee

- Act 217 Policy Statement

It was moved by Sandy Thompson and seconded by Malcolm Crooks to forward the following Act 217 Policy Statement to the PACD Executive Council. Motion carried.

PACD proposes amendments to Act 217 and will work with the PA General Assembly with the guidance of our Position Paper "Conservation District Law" to preserve and strengthen the conservation district system. The goal is to streamline the processes that districts use to develop and administer local, state and federal programs.

PACD recommends enhancing the existing structure of the SCC to include consistent leadership, expanded membership, and a more formal assignment of necessary staff from the associated state departments.

Finally, PACD supports a special non-lapsing fund for conservation district support. This fund should allow for future changes in funding and programs and provide a framework for utilization of any dedicated funding should that become available.

- Act 217 Position Paper

It was moved by Malcolm Crooks and seconded by Sandy Thompson to forward the Act 217 Position Paper to PACD Executive Council. Motion carried.

- Prevailing Wage Policy Statement

It was moved by David Collura and seconded by Malcolm Crooks to forward the following Prevailing Wage policy statement to PACD Executive Council. Motion carried.

PACD supports an increase in the threshold of the prevailing wage law. Because of the limited amount of funding available for conservation projects on farms, this increase will allow districts to work more effectively with the agricultural community. Motion carried.

Resolutions from the PACD Conservation Committee

- Preserving the Pennsylvania Farmer Package Policy

It was moved by David Collura and seconded by Larry Martick to forward the following Preserving the Pennsylvania Farmer Package policy statement to the PACD Executive Council. Motion carried.

PACD supports portions of the Preserving the Pennsylvania Farmer package that have a positive impact on programs relating to conservation districts. Specifically, we support a program that would take new revenue generated from the dedicated funding proposed from the realty transfer tax and direct that those funds be returned to the counties in which they originated to be used for farmland preservation and open space preservation. We believe that funds should be available for the administration of farmland protection programs, including conservation planning and inspections. We also support legislation that would permit private non-profit entities to join the Commonwealth in preserving agricultural lands, meaning new funding could be made available and a combination of public/private monies can be leveraged to preserve more farmland. Finally, we encourage the creation of a Board or Council whose mission is to review and evaluate advancing technologies for alternate manure uses.

- Manure Hauler Regulation Policy

It was moved by Sandy Thompson and seconded by David Collura to forward the Manure Hauler Regulation Policy statement to the PACD Executive Council. Motion carried.

PACD supports the Manure Hauler and Broker Certification process. While we support the testing procedures, we are concerned about the costs involved in administering the program. Districts need to be adequately compensated for their responsibilities in this endeavor.

- Nutrient and Sediment Trading Policy Statement

It was moved by Drew Gilchrist and seconded by Sandy Thompson to forward the following Nutrient and Sediment Trading Policy Statement to the PACD Executive Council. Motion carried.

PACD supports the general concept of nutrient and sediment trading to achieve environmental benefits. Conservation Districts are interested in assisting DEP and other interested parties to determine the criteria and regulations governing the trading program with the understanding that conservation districts will be compensated for their time and efforts throughout the process.

Because of the complexity of this new idea to improve the environment, we suggest that DEP consider conducting a pilot program with PACD assistance to demonstrate the positive benefits of nutrient and sediment trading. A pilot approach will help to identify strengths and weaknesses of the program and address specific issues that may arise as the pilot is conducted. In addition, a pilot project will help to identify the role that conservation districts can play in the nutrient and sediment trading process.

- No-Till

It was moved by David Collura and seconded by Bob Robinson to forward the following motion to the PACD Executive Council: That PACD write a letter to the No-Till Alliance indicating support for No-Till practices. Motion carried.

Resolutions from the Education and Outreach Committee

It was moved by Drew Gilchrist and seconded by Piper Sherburne to forward the proposed Education and Outreach policy positions to PACD Executive Council. Motion carried.

Funding

1. PACD seeks funding for educational grant programs to support conservation districts;
2. PACD supports increased funding for the conservation district track of the DEP EE Grants Program;
3. PACD supports dedicated funding for Watershed Specialists and Environmental Education Coordinators.

Education and Training

4. PACD supports the use of conservation education tools and the development of Pennsylvania-specific materials that target both youth and adult audiences;
5. PACD supports educational workshops and other training opportunities for conservation districts.

Marketing and Communications

6. PACD supports activities that expand the public's understanding of local conservation districts;

7. PACD maintains an educational website for conservation districts;
8. PACD supports conservation district networking through listserves;
9. PACD recognizes conservation district directors, associate directors and/or staff whose efforts have furthered the activities and accomplishments of conservation districts on a statewide basis.

Relationships

10. PACD maintains a current MOU with the PA Department of Education;
11. PACD maintains a current MOU with the PA State Envirothon;
12. PACD remains active on the Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education's Executive Board; and
13. PACD remains active on the Pennsylvania Environmental Education Advisory Board;
14. PACD supports fostering partnerships to achieve common goals.

The meeting was adjourned.