

MEETING MINUTES

North East Region Meeting 9:00 am - 1:45pm, September 27, 2005 Pike County Conservation District, Hawley, PA

ATTENDANCE: Risa Andrews, Rob Andrews, Susan Beecher, Roy Borgfeld, Karl Brown, Victor Cappucci, Gene Castrogiovanni, Karl Dymond, Joe Filanowski, Jim Garner, Harold Grow, Curt Hepler, Robert Hughes, Irvil Kear, Ernest Keller, Josh Longmore, Mike Lovegreen, James Luce, Bill Manner, Susan Marquart, Steve Marquart, Bill Ord, Bob Robinson, Scott Savini, John Senio, Charlotte Severcool, Lee Smith, Pete Snyder, Craig Todd, Carl Urbanski, MaryAnn Warren, Ron Williams

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Bob Robinson called meeting to order and welcomed all present. Irvil Kear moved to accept the February 15, 2005 minutes as presented, Josh Longmore seconded, motion carried.

PACD PRESIDENT REMARKS - Vic Cappucci thanked all for attending; took roll call of PACD North East Region voting delegates present: Curt Hepler (Susquehanna County), Irvil Kear (Schuylkill County), Robert Hughes (Luzerne County), Josh Longmore (Luzerne County), Mike Lovegreen (Bradford County), James Luce (Wyoming County), Scott Savini (Pike County), John Senio (Lackawanna County), Pete Snyder (Wayne County), Craig Todd (Monroe County) (Carbon County not represented); reviewed Chairs for the 7 PACD Committees, the need for 7 directors and 7 staff on each committee, emphasizing need for directors in all districts to become involved in the committee work to accomplish PACD goals.

PIKE COUNTY CD PRESENTATION - Pike County Conservation District Manager Susan Beecher presented: overview of changes in the county population demographics that impact the type and amount of district workload; positive aspects in the recent relocation the County Planning Office with the Conservation District; \$10 million Open Space Bond Referendum (which includes increased county planning efforts) on the November ballot; Pike Conservation Partnership formed within the last year, composed of public and private organizations, to address land use planning; work with Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture for farmland preservation.

REGIONAL DIRECTOR ELECTIONS - Susan Marquart explained new responsibilities for the PACD Region Director which were approved in the recent By-Laws changes. Ernest Keller commended North East Region Director Bob Robinson for his visibility at Conservation District meetings. Irvil Kear moved to renominate Bob Robinson as PACD NE Region Director, Risa Andrews seconded, Vic Cappucci moved to close nominations, Curt Hepler seconded; motion carried.

NOMINATION OF STAFF & DIRECTORS FOR PACD COMMITTEES - Susan Marquart reviewed the new rules as approved in the recent By-laws changes for

committee composition, duties and responsibilities of the PACD Committee and accepted nominations from the North East Region for the following PACD committees:

Legislative -

Directors/Associate Directors - Carl Urbanski, Luzerne County

Education and Outreach

Directors/Associate Directors - Kathy Shelly, Susquehanna County

District Staff - Josh Longmore, Luzerne County, Charlotte Severcool (Wyoming County)

Ways and Means - None

District Employees - None

Conservation

Directors/Associate Directors - Robert Hughes (Luzerne County), Jim Luce (Wyoming County)

District Staff - Craig Todd (Monroe County)

Operations

Directors/Associate Directors - Bob Robinson (Wyoming County)

Nominations for committees will be accepted until October 31.

DEP REORGANIZATION DISCUSSION - Acting Watershed Management Program Manager Bill Manner discussed: recent reorganization changes at DEP Northeast Region Office which occurred in June, resulting in the creation of the Watershed Management Program; \$19 million budget cut and no overtime authorized except for emergencies which impact the staff workload; additional 3 engineer positions approved for the DEP Northeast Region Office.

CD INFORMATION EXCHANGE - Susquehanna County Director Curt Hepler discussed 2 amendments to PACD By Laws Article V-Voting, Sections 1 and 2. Vic Cappucci recommended forwarding the proposed changes to the PACD Operations Committee, By Laws Subcommittee for review along with any other proposed changes after one year. Susquehanna County Manager Jim Garner requested clarification about the Growing Greener II program. Bill Manner responded the Governor's Office has not yet provided guidance and details are still being worked out. Lackawanna County District Manager Ernest Keller discussed the DEP Chesapeake Bay program engineer positions, whose funds expire June 2006. Susan Marquart noted the State House and Senate held hearings on this program last week where she testified about the need for these positions.

ACID MINE LEGISLATION - Bob Hughes, Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition of Abandoned Mine Reclamation (EPCAMR), gave a briefing and handout on U.S. Senate hearings currently being held on abandoned mine reclamation.

PACD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Susan Marquart discussed: 2006-2007 appropriations request which is being currently being reviewed by DEP and PDA for their department submissions to the Governor, focusing on recommendations of the Legislative and Finance Committee; public relations efforts to keep Conservation District information in the media; efforts to fund the Chesapeake Bay program positions; PACD, Pennsylvania Environmental Council and Penn State University formed a new

organization Pennsylvania Agricultural Conservation Certification of Excellence (PEACCE) to promote agricultural practices that enhance environmental stewardship and financial assistance to farms that meet certain criteria; Executive Board reappointed Act 217 Committee and encouraged districts to initiate communication with County Commissioners; requested feedback concerning a proposal to solicit advertisements in a state wide magazine as a fund raiser; PACD Workload Advisory Team looking for new members for 2-3 meetings per year; changes to CREP by DEP and questions should be referred to the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) Office; upcoming meetings: Watershed Specialist meeting next week; January 18-20, 2006 PACD meeting; July 23-27, 2006 NACD North East meeting will be held in conjunction with SCC/PACD meeting; Secretary McGinty stated watershed Specialist positions are still a priority for funding; actions PACD and some districts were taking to address the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee recommendations. Risa Andrews reminded districts to ensure district phone numbers are in the blue pages of local telephone book.

SCC REPORT - Karl Brown, SCC Executive Secretary, discussed: SCC activities with regard to the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee recommendations; DEP/CCD Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy meeting; Nutrient Management Rules and Regulations changes and Act 38 update (ACRE provisions) - the review of local ordinances is already starting; buffer setback provisions - January 6, 2006 will start the new requirements; odor management rules; "Seeds of Change" - potential changes to the farm bill; SCC forwarding letters to county commissioners requesting director nominations from nominating organizations; ombudsmen activities for conservation district outreach to municipal officials; Dirt and Gravel Road program money being forwarded to districts; SCC meeting October 21; SCC looking at ways to reduce conservation planning backlogs for agricultural farmland preservation program; Team Visit "White Papers" to aid in decision making by districts on PACD website; upcoming PSU Cooperative Extension pilot program this fall "Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow".

NRCS UPDATE - Joe Filanowski, Assistant State Conservationist for the North East, discussed: the farm bill allocation to the state is in excess of \$20 million; FSA CREP accepting applications; Conservation Security Program; looking to increase no till acres; advertising for conservation support assistance position.

PDA REGION 3 UPDATE - Ron Williams, Pennsylvania Department of Agricultural, discussed: working with Pike Conservation District on farmland preservation; tracking Chronic Waste Disease in deer population; small farm animal expo.

REMINDERS: Mike Lovegreen reminded districts that there are some openings for team visits this year. Next North East Regional Director meeting is April 2006.