

MEETING MINUTES

Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts Southeast Region Meeting Franconia Heritage Restaurant Franconia, Pennsylvania

March 3, 2006

Presiding: Harold Kulp, Regional Director, Chester County Conservation District

9:00AM

Registration

9:20 AM

Welcome/Introduction

9:25 AM

Larry Kehl had a correction to the minutes under Committee Nominations in that he should be listed in Legislative as well as the Employee Committee. Harold Kulp also noted that his term as Regional Director is a continuation. Motion to approve the September 23, 2005 Minutes, as corrected, was made by Gerald Breininger and seconded by Margaret Bradbury. Minutes were approved on duly passed motion.

Programs Topics - Issues/Actions/Policies

1. PACD Update

Susan Marquart, PACD Executive Director, reviewed the proposed state budget and that PACD is working to reestablish the previous amounts to the PADEP and PDA line items. She also gave updates on Act 217, emphasizing that now is the time to make changes, and the upcoming Capitol Day on March 13, 2006 and started a lengthy discussion of Nutrient Trading. She also provided information on PACD Objectives. PACD is looking for ideas to update the strategic plan; they are hoping to use the website and Internet to distribute information and develop a process by July of this year. PACD is also applying for four Growing Greener grants. Susan also spoke on the PACD Front Page, office staff update and the upcoming joint NACD Northeast Region Meeting & PACD/SCC Joint Annual Conference in State College, July 23-27, 2006.

2. State Conservation Commission Update

Karl Brown, SCC Executive Secretary provided an update on staff changes. He also gave updates on the revised Nutrient Management Regulations with a proposed effective date of October 1, 2006 and Odor Management Program (Act 38), which deals with new buildings and manure pits and not field application. By

July 2007, regulations must be promulgated and practices, technologies, standards, strategies, etc. for odor management plans must be established. He also discussed the agenda for the upcoming March 15, 2006 SCC Meeting to be held in Dauphin County, and the upcoming Ombudsman Program Training Sessions on municipal ordinances, agricultural odor management and agricultural air quality.

3. PADEP Update

Steve Taglang, PADEP, Conservation District Support Section, gave an overview of the Nutrient and Sediment Trading program. This is currently a market driven approach to reduce pollution. Currently, the purpose of the program is to control nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment, first in the Chesapeake Bay, then statewide. Almost daily meetings are occurring with Pennsylvania being the first in the nation to attempt this on a statewide basis. The discussion involved what is traded, who may trade, where, credits and documentation. Further information is available on the DEP website www.dep.state.pa.us/river/river_trading.htm.

4. Act 217 Amendments

Susan Marquart, PACD Executive Director, reviewed proposed amendments to Act 217, the Conservation District Law. Proposed changes include: correcting dated information within the Act; broadening some of the policies; including legislation not originally addressed; changing the makeup of the State Conservation Commission to include the president of PACD as a non-voting member; increases in per diem; wording changes; changes to Board composition in urban areas; creation of a Conservation District Fund that would not lapse at the end of the fiscal year, and so on.

5. Leadership Development Rich Media CD

Rick Mader, PADEP gave a demonstration of the Leadership Development Rich Media CD, which will be distributed to each Conservation District office and director. The CD is a basic overview of Conservation Districts, which will be updated regularly.

6. PDA Update

William Zollers, PDA Regional Director, provided information on the Commercial Manure Hauler & Broker Certification Program. The extended public comment period ended on February 16, 2006 and meetings are being held for certification. Three certification levels are available with associated training and responsibilities; 500 people are currently certified. Certification is not needed for spreading own manure on own land with own equipment. The certification follows the format of the pesticide licensing program and the Dept. of Ag. is working on how enforcement will be instituted.

7. NRCS Update

William Bowers, USDA, NRCS, gave an update on the State Conservationist and an overview of NRCS programs in Pennsylvania including CREP, CRP, WRP, AMA, etc. Information on upcoming training opportunities was also provided. An update of the Federal budget and NRCS office county realignment was discussed.

8. Conservation District Updates

- A. Berks County Conservation District - Directors are supportive of the development of a stormwater demonstration area, Energy Harvest project, etc.
- B. Bucks County Conservation District - Have been conducting training sessions with contractors' field superintendents on erosion and sedimentation. Had construction estimators train District staff on cost associated with implementing E & S controls. The District is working on a stormwater management seminar for municipal officials.
- C. Chester County Conservation District - Providing Conservation Plans for Farmland Preservation program. Recent changes allow Farmland Preservation Boards to contract out plan development.
- D. Delaware County Conservation District - RC & D Annual meeting is March 28, 2006. A guest speaker will discuss the MS4 program, which is a very costly program to municipalities.
- E. Lehigh County Conservation District - Ag. Technician doing Farmland Preservation plans and are contracting some. The District is working on a strategic plan. They are working with Northampton County and other organizations on a Saucon Creek watershed assessment.
- F. Montgomery County Conservation District - Hired new employee to work on the Coastal Zone Management Program. They are also working with municipal parks located near streams on innovative approaches to dealing with non-point source pollution. An engineers' workshop, with Bucks, Chester and Delaware Districts will be held March 10, 2006. The rain barrel project is continuing. The District has had drainage issues with where basins are discharging.
- G. Northampton County Conservation District - There has been no downturn in development. The District will be interviewing for new technician position.

Next meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 13, 2006 tentatively at Franconia Heritage Restaurant, Franconia.

Bruce Pysher, Northampton County Conservation District