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Contact:
Brenda Shambaugh
Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts
717.238.7223
brenda-shambaugh@pacd.org

Annual Winter Conference Launches New Policy Initiatives for Pennsylvania's Conservation Districts

(State College, PA) – The conservation district community and its partners met in State College, PA from January 20-21, 2010 for the annual Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Inc. winter meeting.

Several policy issues were discussed at the meeting. In order to achieve preservation and **protection of Pennsylvania's natural resources, PACD supports conservation districts** as the local agency for oversight, plan review, permitting and inspection of all earth disturbance and stormwater management activities associated with oil and gas drilling consistent with their level of delegation. Policy was also passed requiring any party responsible for the degradation of natural resources to be fully responsible for restoration.

PACD will be requesting the formation of an erosion and sedimentation advisory committee to the State Conservation Commission and the PA Department of Environmental Protection. The association is recommending an advisory committee to review and discuss erosion and sediment concerns to find solutions geared toward controlling nutrient run-off issues in Pennsylvania.

On the federal level, newly created PACD policy supports a National Environmental Good Samaritan Act, including abandoned coal mines and abandoned hardrock mines. Finally, PACD supports federal legislation requiring a fully funded plan to reduce pollution from all sectors within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, including a nutrient trading program. PACD firmly believes that conservation districts should be an integral part of improving water quality within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

In other matters, PACD elected a new second vice-president Jack Tressler from Somerset County. **"We're pleased to have Jack on the PACD Executive Board as second vice-president,"** stated Susan Marquart, PACD Executive Director. **"His years of experience as a Somerset County district director will greatly benefit the organization."**

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PACD, Inc. is a private, non-profit organization representing Pennsylvania's 66 conservation districts. For more information on the PACD visit www.pacd.org.

