

September 3, 2009

Dear Conservation District Chairperson:

As the recently elected president of your Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD), I wanted to share with you some of the items we identified at our Strategic Planning Work Session held in State College on August 10th and 11th. As part of the planning process, I participated in a workgroup on “District Ownership, Information Exchange, Association Governance, and Operations,” along with Harold Kulp, Michele Ulmer, Molly Burns, Don Bashore, Bob Robinson, and Jim Resh. In reviewing some of the comments and concerns that were voiced in the pre-interviews that were completed prior to the Strategic Planning Session and those at the Session itself, we said it was vital for PACD’s leadership to keep districts informed. This letter of introduction is the first step in providing you with a few discussion points that our committee believed were important:

- PACD Executive Board and PACD staff will pledge to be more responsive to districts’ needs and concerns;
- PACD leadership will develop a PACD monthly report that we request be part of the District monthly Board packets to better inform the membership on PACD activities (similar to the monthly report that is received from your DEP field representative and NRCS);
- PACD leadership will research and create an online forum, complete with a purpose statement and guidelines, for members to use for quick responses to concerns and needs;
- PACD will continue to provide concise, transparent financial information to our membership as the Association moves to implement and expand its use of QuickBooks; and
- The Association will continue to have successful annual audits with “no findings.”

The time frame for these activities and “benchmarks” will begin September 2009 and will continue into 2010. It is our goal to keep you informed on what the Executive Board, PACD Staff, and membership are working on and how these activities benefit Districts. In the next three months we will be asking for your guidance as to what information you want so your District is informed and involved in active discussions regarding your PACD organization, whether someone has access to the Internet, e-mail, Facebook, or U.S. Mail. PACD Board Members are elected to serve our membership, and we have pledged to serve you in order to strengthen Pennsylvania’s conservation districts and the services our districts provide to the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Please share this letter with your conservation district staff and fellow board members. We look forward to your comments and suggestions in moving forward with a stronger more unified organization. For more information on the Strategic Planning process see attached or visit the PACD website at www.pacd.org.

Thank you for working with us for stronger districts and PACD.

Sincerely,

M. Irvil Kear
President

