

BRADFORD COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

THE MISSION of the Bradford County Conservation District is to lead, educate, and empower people to manage resources wisely.

February Board Meeting

WHEN: Monday, February 5, 2024, at 12:30 PM

WHERE: Zoom Meeting: Meeting ID: 889 3954 0103; Passcode: 274639

CALL IN: 1-929-205-6099; PASS CODE: 274639

LINK: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88939540103?pwd=dXlGejNYYYVhQTklXc0MlZzQrRC9sQT09>

AGENDA:

- 12:30 - 12:35 Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance
- 12:35 - 12:40 Introduction of Guests & Action on Minutes
- 12:40 - 12:50 Reports from Cooperating Agencies and Guests

Old Business – none

Committees

- 12:50 - 12:55 Building and Grounds (D)

New Business

- 12:55 - 1:00 Buffer Stewardship Contract (D/A)

Program Updates

- 1:00 - 1:05 ACAP update (D/A)
- 1:05 - 1:10 Nutrient Management Plans (D/A)
- 1:10 - 1:15 Dirt and Gravel Contracts (D/A)
- 1:15 - 1:20 Stream Crossing Projects – (Video)
- 1:20 - 1:25 Commission Report - Field Representative (D)
- 1:25 - 1:30 Treasurer's Report & Payment of Bills (D/A)
- 1:30 - 1:35 Correspondence (D)

Adjournment

Next Meeting: Monday, March 4, 2024, at 12:30 PM at Stoll Natural Resource Center & Via Zoom

A) Action D) Discussion

AGENDA BRIEFS

Old Business:

Committees:

- Building and Grounds – update on discussion

New Business:

- Buffer Stewardship Contract – Discussion and consideration of signing an agreement with the USC to hire two interns between April and October to evaluate and establish buffers.

Program Updates:

- ACAP update
- DGLVR updates/contracts



Clean Water Gathering Outcomes

The meeting gave attendees the chance to celebrate partnership-facilitated clean water successes. Each partner reaffirmed that the foundations of success are: commitment, communication, and collaboration. The partners agree that by working together they can overcome the clean water challenges that still exist.

Together the partners:

- Agreed to a common list of five challenges that keeps PA from leveraging all available resources for implementation of the Phase 3 WIP and CAPs.
- Expressed interest and need to work together collaboratively to resolve these challenges and be able to continue expanding on PA's progress.
- Began conversations to identify strategies to overcome these challenges.

Progress Teams

The five agreed-upon challenges discussed at the Clean Water Gathering were condensed into three focused challenge areas that hinder or prevent Pennsylvania from being more successful. Three Progress Teams, composed of state and county partners, were created to develop "Strategies for Success" focused on addressing these issues that will lead to positive change and progress on these challenge areas. The three key challenge areas identified are:

1. **Technical & Administrative Assistance**
2. **Staff Building / Staff Retention**
3. **Funding / Multi-Grant Coordination**



*"Improving water quality and creating partnerships benefits our communities."
- Franklin County*

Next Steps

1. County, state and federal partners will continue the conversation in 2024, ensuring ongoing progress by:
 - Engaging, collaborating and building on the foundation of success
 - Participating with and/or supporting Progress Teams in developing "Strategies for Success" for positive, effective change and progress in challenge areas.
2. Three Progress Teams collaborate to address ongoing challenges:
 - What can be proposed to ensure effective change?
 - Who is needed to make change happen?
 - How do we go about getting the change that we want?
 - When is the best time to engage additional partners, propose change, etc.?
3. DEP's BWRNSM Chesapeake Bay Watershed Restoration Division staff will coordinate and facilitate Progress Team meetings, in support of county and state leader efforts.

*"We have more projects than funding and will do what it takes to finish these projects."
- Snyder County*

February 2024 DEP Conservation District Field Rep Talking Points

Growing Greener Grant Awards Announced - On January 5, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced more than \$12 million in Growing Greener Plus Grants to support local watershed restoration projects, reclaim abandoned mines, reduce flooding, nutrient and sediment pollution. A total of sixty-two (62) Growing Greener Grants were awarded in the 2023 round. Of those, twenty-two (22) grants totaling \$4,250,000 were awarded to conservation districts. The 2024 Growing Greener Grant Round is expected to open in Spring 2024. We recommend anyone interested in applying begin planning projects.

Chapter 102 Individual NPDES Permit Pilot Program - The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is introducing a Pilot program to evaluate new procedures for streamlining the review of Chapter 102 Individual NPDES Permit applications and improving the quality of applications received. An initial group of 12 Conservation Districts were approached for possible participation in the Pilot program. These Districts were approached because they represent areas with moderate to high numbers of land development projects needing individual permits and include both PCSM-delegated and non-PCSM delegated Districts. Additional Conservation Districts can request to participate in the Pilot; acceptance of a Conservation District into the Pilot will be subject to District and regional staff availability and at the discretion of DEP. Participation of a conservation district in the Pilot Program is optional.

The general intention of the Pilot program is to accept a diverse range of projects so that a broad evaluation of the Pilot can be made upon conclusion. Projects which propose green infrastructure and/or riparian buffers should receive acceptance priority. DEP has the discretion to determine which projects are accepted into the Pilot Program, recognizing that highly complex projects may be ineligible.

Prior to submission of the application, the owner/developer/applicant and the licensed professional that will prepare the PCSM Plan must schedule and attend two pre-application meetings (virtual or in-person based on availability and at DEP/District's discretion). These meetings cannot be waived. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure a better and more complete application is submitted. This will allow the District to perform the completeness and the technical review simultaneously and in turn shorten the review timeframes.

The Chapter 102 Program presented information about the pilot program to the State Conservation Commission at its January 23, 2024 meeting. The SCC approved the Delegation Agreement Amendment at this meeting, which allows DEP to continue to move forward with the pilot program.

PAG-02 Authorization Letter Updated - The Bureau of Clean Water has updated the PAG-02 Authorization Letter template to prepare new permittees this year of the upcoming need to submit renewal NOIs by December 7, 2024. All permittees with PAG-02 coverage prior to December 7, 2024, will need to submit the renewal NOI, even if they've only had coverage for a short while. The revised PAG-02 Authorization Letter can be found in the Chapter 102 Resource Center of Clean Water Academy. The Bureau of Clean Water asks everyone to download the latest template ([Letter Templates](#))(Number 28) and immediately begin using it.

PennDOT 102 Review to use KEES - DEP executive staff have agreed to move forward with the review and processing of Chapter 102 applications/registrations for PennDOT in KEES. Requirements gathering have begun and it is anticipated to be complete by summer of 2024. PennDOT will provide training prior to the system going live and DEP plans to make the process as intuitive as possible. For instance, CCDS will utilize the same login as they use for the Chapter 102 e-permit system. Feel free to contact Krystal Bloom or Tiffany Landis with any questions.

PA Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP)

The State Conservation Commission (SCC) has developed a webpage on the PDA website where they plan to post ACAP information and webinar recordings. The webpage currently has the ACAP Guidelines, SCC BMP List and a draft ACAP Application. Also posted are past recorded webinars. All ACAP information can be found at: https://www.agriculture.pa.gov/Plants_Land_Water/StateConservationCommission/Pages/default.aspx and [The Center for Agricultural Conservation Assistance Training | Penn State Extension \(psu.edu\)](#). All ACAP documents are downloadable from the Penn State Extension website.

Assignment of Pay Form - At its January 23, 2024 meeting, the SCC approved the use of an “assignment of pay form” for districts and farmers in the ACAP program. This assignment of pay form allows an ACAP project participant (farmer) to sign the payment of ACAP grant funds over to the hired contractor who is completing the project. It is important to note it is the Farmer or grant recipient’s choice to enter into this assignment of pay agreement, not the District or the Contractors, and the Farmer has the right to revoke it at any time. Numerous Districts asked the SCC to pursue this form as they were getting requests from farmers to have the ability to have funds paid directly to the contractor and not to the farmer.

ACAP Bidding Policy – Staff had planned on having the SCC act on the ACAP bidding policy at its January meeting. Staff determined it needs to work out some additional details with legal regarding the responsibilities of farmers when they are completing a project themselves and not contracting it out to a 3rd party. Once these details are worked out this item will be revisited by the SCC.

Statement of Financial Interests

All Conservation District Directors are considered Public Officials and most District Employees are considered Public Employees. Any Conservation district employee that meets one or more of the criteria in the definition below **MUST** fill out a Statement of Financial Interest. Completing a statement is not optional. It is required by law. Statements are to be completed and filed with the Conservation District no later than May 1st. The general rule with this form is “when in doubt, fill it out”.

“Public Official” includes any person (*such as a conservation district director*) appointed by a governmental body (such as the board of county commissioners or the county council)

“Public Employee” includes any individual employed by the Commonwealth or a political subdivision (*like a conservation district*) who is responsible for taking or recommending official action of a non-ministerial nature with regard to: Contracting or procurement; Administering or monitoring grants or subsidies; Planning or zoning; Inspecting, licensing, regulating, or auditing any person; or Any other activity where the official action has an economic impact of greater than a de minimis nature on the interests of any person.

Please refer to the Director Handbook (pp. 4-6) or the Red Ethics Pamphlet (p. 12-15 & 31-36) for additional information. If you require additional forms go to www.ethics.state.pa.us and click on "forms" on the left side of the page.

Clean Water Academy

102 and 105 Attachment B on the Clean Water Academy – It is essential that Districts update the Attachment B on the Clean Water Academy for the Chapter 102 and 105 Programs anytime there are staff changes at the district. **The 102 and 105 Programs use the Attachment B online forms to enable e-permitting permissions for new staff** and to disable them for former staff. The Attachment B can be found under the Data Portal tile in CWA. To update Attachment B, you need to search for your county and then select the Gear icon to edit. You can then change employment status to Former and choose an Employment End Date. This helps DEP to maintain all the data systems we need to maintain and enable. [Course: Data Portal \(remote-learner.net\)](#)

Conservation District Team Sheets

Conservation Districts are required to update their Team Sheets in Greenport with new Directors and terms by January 31 of each year. If you have not yet updated director terms and new directors in the Team Sheets, please do so as soon as possible. In addition, districts should update information in the Team Sheets throughout the year whenever there are other changes including, staff, Directors, district address, phone, fax or email addresses.

Effective Management of CD Business: The Importance of Monthly Board Meetings

Conservation Districts face an increasing amount of diverse business matters. Consequently, it is important a district board meet at least monthly to provide proper guidance and stay well informed of the district's activities. A monthly meeting schedule is vital as board of director's vote on district actions and policies that execute established goals and fulfill the obligations of Conservation District Law (Act 217). Important agenda items that need to be acted upon or discussed include, but are not limited to:

Treasurer reports	Nutrient Management Plans	District policies
Legal issues	Program updates	Grant applications
Fee schedules	Job descriptions	Committee recommendations
Education/Outreach plans	Training needs	Staff reports/updates
Hiring process	Annual budget	Annual audit
Program delegation agreements	Grant contracts	

Meetings should start on time and be conducted in an orderly, business-like manner by the chairperson or acting chairperson. A quorum (majority of voting members) must be present in order to conduct any official district business. Conservation Districts are obligated to follow all Sunshine Act requirements.

A 12-month meeting schedule should be planned at the beginning of each year. If a quorum is not available, or there is no need to act/vote on any agenda items, a meeting can easily be cancelled. There are no requirements to advertise the cancellation of a meeting; however, it is recommended to post the cancellation at the meeting site. It is easier to cancel a meeting than to schedule an additional meeting that has not been previously planned and advertised.

The increasing amount of business coming before district boards requires regular, well-planned, orderly meetings. Discussion should be limited to agenda items and not involve trivial matters. If a topic requires significant research and discussion, it should be referred to a committee for consideration and ultimately a recommendation at a future board meeting. The success of any district operation depends on its members functioning as a team. Attending monthly board meetings will ensure your team is operating efficiently and effectively while implementing critical conservation strategies.

Chesapeake Bay Program

DEP Waterways Accountability and Administration Section staff members are coordinating Clean Water Progress Teams, which are a place for volunteer state, federal, local, and private sector members to share ideas, creativity and firsthand knowledge to develop Strategies for Success that will lead to positive change and progress on the collectively agreed upon clean water challenge areas. The identified challenge areas are a starting point and it is important to know that this is a long term effort with the ultimate goal of achieving clean water in Pennsylvania. See the attached handout for additional information, as well as the attached list of Progress Team members.

Dates to Remember

SCC Meetings – 1:00 PM

Hybrid Meeting
Hybrid Meeting

March 12
May 14

SCC Conference Calls – 8:30 – 10:00 AM

Conference Call
Conference Call

Feb 20
Apr 9

Chapter 102 Small Group Training Series (Virtual)

Sediment Traps and Basins

- April 2, 2024: 9 AM - 12 PM
- July 9, 2024: 9 AM - 12 PM
- September 24, 2024: 9 AM - 12 PM

Channels

- February 13, 2024: 9 AM - 12 PM
- June 11, 2024: 9 AM - 12 PM
- August 27, 2024: 9 AM - 12 PM
- December 10, 2024: 9 AM - 12 PM

Fall Virtual Basic Training

Two days: November 13-14, 2024: 9 AM – 12 PM both days

To register, log into Clean Water Academy and visit:

<https://pacleanwateracademy.remote-learner.net/course/view.php?id=922>

Leadership Development Strategic Board Development Sessions in-person 10:00 – 2:00

Northcentral	Feb 21	Clinton CD
Southwest	Feb 28	Westmoreland CD
Southeast	Mar 5	Berks CD
Southcentral	Mar 13	Cumberland
Northeast	Mar 19	Monroe
Northwest	Mar 26	Warren

State Water Plan Committee Meetings

Conservation Districts are *very* welcome to attend State Water Plan committee meetings. There are always times available for public comment and the committee members are always excited for lively discussion.

Here is the website which the program keeps up to do date with upcoming meetings and committee vacancies: [State Water Plan \(pa.gov\)](https://www.pacleanwateracademy.remote-learner.net/course/view.php?id=922) or contact James Horton at jahorton@pa.gov.

Upcoming State Water Plan Committee Meeting dates:

Delaware	04/09/2024	9:00 am	Click here to join the meeting
Lower Susquehanna	04/10/2024	9:00 am	Click here to join the meeting
Potomac	04/11/2024	1:00 pm	Click here to join the meeting
Statewide	04/16/2024	9:00 am	Click here to join the meeting
Ohio	04/23/2024	1:00 pm	Click here to join the meeting
Great Lakes	04/24/2024	9:00 am	Click here to join the meeting
Upper/Middle Susquehanna	04/25/2024	9:00 am	Click here to join the meeting

Also, check the Conservation District Training/Special Events Calendar at, www.PACD.org Select the "Events" tab and then the "Training Calendar" tab.

Clean Water Progress Team Membership

1/30/2024

Tech & Admin Assistance Team Sign-up
<i>Coordinator: Todd Deroba</i>
Jay Patel (DEP Bureau of Clean Water)
Andy Gavin (SRBC)
Alexa Bixel (Lycoming Co. PC)
Harry Campbell (CBF)
Kate Bresaw (DEP)
Matt Kofroth (Lancaster Co. CD)
Josh Longmore (Luzerne Co. CD)
Mike LaSala (LandStudies/WQGIT/CAP Coord.)
Jenn Fetter (CACAT)
Chris Canfield (CACAT back up to Jenn Fetter)
Tyler Neimond, (PFBC)

Staff Building/Retention Team Sign-up
<i>Coordinator: Erin Penzelik</i>
Kristen Wolf (DEP)
Teddi Stark (DCNR)
Karen Books (DEP)
Josh Glace (Larson/CAP Coord.)
Erica Tomlinson (Tioga Co CD)
Willie Null (Clearfield Co. CD)
Doug Wolfgang (SCC)
Erin Letavic (HRG/STAC/CAP Coord.)
Erin Trouba (CACAT)
Elizabeth Grant (Cumberland Co. PC)

Funding and Multi Grant Coordination Team Sign-up
<i>Coordinator: Jim Spatz</i>
Natahnee Miller (DEP)
Greg Welker (DCED)
Carl DeLuca/Shane Kleiner (DEP)
Rob Boos (PENNVEST)
Justin Challenger (SCC)
Teah Gray (Larson/CAP Coord.)
Megan Blackmon (LCWP)
Emily Young (Franklin CD)
Marel King (CBC)
Adrienne Hobbins (Ches Conservancy)
Rachel Stahlman (York Co. PC/CAP Coord.)
Josh Yetter Clark (HRG/CAP Coord.)
Lane (Gary) Whigham (DCNR)
Matt Royer (PSU)

FLOATERS:
Lisa Schaefer, (CCAP)
Denise Coleman (NRCS)
Allyson Gibson (LCWP)
Jason Fellon, (DEP NC WS Mgr)
Christina Fesler, (DEP SC WS Mgr)
Teddi Stark (DCNR)
Jared Shippey (NRCS)
Martha Shimkin (EPA)
Autumn Rose (EPA)
Lee McDonnell (EPA)
Suzanne Trevena (EPA)
Tracy Clarke (EPA)
Jamie Shallenberger (SRBC)
Tyler Shenk (SRBC)