

# BRADFORD COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Stoll Natural Resource Center  
200 Lake Road, Suite E, Towanda, PA 18848  
Telephone (570)265-5539 Ext.

DECEMBER 9, 2024, MEETING

The December 2024, meeting of the Bradford County Conservation District was called to order by Keith Heimbach on December 9, 2024, at 12:30 PM, at the Stoll Natural Resource Center.

District Directors Attending the Meeting in person were Keith Heimbach – Chairman, Daryl Miller – Vice Chairman, Tony Ventello, Brian Zeidner and Alvin Herman.

Others attending the meeting in person were Cathy Yeakel – District Manager, Jenny Marino – Accounts Supervisor, Lacy Powers – Natural Resource Specialist, Glenn Bell – Ag Resource Specialist, Brad Cummings – Chapter 102/105 Program Manager, Adam Chorba – Forest Specialist, Patrick Cullen – Chesapeake Bay Engineer, Dan Rhodes – Education Coordinator, Joe Quatrini – Technical Team Leader, Kevin Brown – Ag Team Leader, Miranda Neville – Ag Resource Specialist, Ty Moon – PA Fish and Boat Commission, Sean Freidhof – DCNR Service Forester and Rachael Fish – DEP CDFR.

Others attending via zoom – Breanna Ameigh – WNV Coordinator

## REPORTS FROM COOPERATING AGENCIES AND GUESTS:

Commissioners - Daryl Miller reported that the budget is on the table for approval. In addition, they are working on Bridge Construction projects and communication towers.

PA Fish and Boat Commission – Ty Moon reported there is a new online boating safety course and there are in person classes offered throughout the year as well. Online 2025 fishing licenses went on sale December 1<sup>st</sup>. A new regulation change concerning boating and engine cutoff switches will be posted in the PA Bulletin.

DCNR – Sean Freidhof provided updates on end of year activities.

Commission Report – Field Representative – A handout of the December 2024 DEP Conservation District Field Rep Talking Points was handed out and discussed. Important training and dates were highlighted by Rachel Fish.

Claverack REC – Brian Zeidner reported that they were working on getting power restored to those who lost it during the heavy snow. They had 13,500 members without power.

NRCS – Anthony Ventello provided a report with the following updates. One CSP contract was funded for FY25. EQIP IRA (Inflation Reduction Act) “Act Now” ranking deadline is December 13<sup>th</sup>. NRCS is ranking 13 cover crop, 4 forestry, and 5 stream bank stabilization projects under this funding source. They will hear if any have been funded after the 12/13 deadline. New staff are attending trainings to get their planner certification. Tess Flynn-Belles transferred to the NRCS office in Waverly, NY. Her last day with NRCS was 11/8.

Daryl Miller made a motion to accept the November 4, 2024, minutes as written. Tony Ventello seconded the motion; motion was unanimously passed.

**OLD BUSINESS** - None

**COMMITTEES** - None

## NEW BUSINESS

2025 Meeting Dates – The following 2025 Board meeting dates were presented to the Board: January 6th, February 3rd, March 3rd, April 7th, May 5th, June 2nd, July 7th, August 4th, September 8th, October 6th,

November 3rd and December 8th. Alvin Herman made a motion to accept the proposed 2025 Board meeting dates as presented. Brian Zeidner seconded the motion; motion was unanimously passed.

Administrative Assistant Position – Interviews were conducted for the open Administrative Assistant Position. The chosen candidate was Elizabeth Burgess. Her proposed start date is January 6, 2025. Brian Zeidner made a motion to approve the hire of Elizabeth Burgess as the Administrative Assistant. Tony Ventello seconded the motion, Daryl Miller abstained. Motion was unanimously passed.

Increased phone stipend for 2025 – The phone stipend was discussed, and it was decided to keep the current phone stipend amount for 2025 at \$50.

Water Testing – In the past the Conservation District has been a pickup and drop off location for water test kits for a Sayre Water Testing company. Staff has requested to stop offering this service. Tony Ventello made a motion to quit being a pickup and drop off location for water testing. Alvin Herman seconded the motion; motion was unanimously passed.

Strategic Plan – Strategic planning grants are open for the 2025 fiscal year. The Board decided to wait until the 2026 fiscal year. Tony Ventello is going to contact someone he knows who does them locally.

Financial Feasibility Study – The Board has been discussing getting a financial feasibility study completed for the district. It was decided to try and tie this in with our strategic plan. Cathy will work on a proposal for this service.

Women in Ag – The Conservation District will be having another Women in Ag event at the Wysox Fire Hall on April 4, 2025. We are looking for presenters. Please let Miranda know if you have any ideas.

2023 Draft Audit – The 2023 draft audit was presented for approval by the Board. Alvin Herman made a motion to accept the 2023 Audit as presented. Daryl Miller seconded the motion; motion was unanimously passed.

QuickBooks – Our QuickBooks subscription is coming to an end. It has been increasingly more difficult to get updates on Jenny's computer for the desktop version of QuickBooks through USDA. If USDA approves of it, we would like to change to the online version of QuickBooks. Daryl Miller made a motion to move forward with getting the online version pending USDA's approval. Brian Zeidner seconded the motion; motion was unanimously passed.

Ag Preservation Update – An update was given on the status of Ag preservation funds. It is projected that we will have enough funds encumbered to move forward to preserving the Bracken Farm in August 2025. In addition, the Ag Preservation Board needs more board members. If anyone is interested, please contact Glenn Bell, Ag preservation specialist.

DGLVR Job Announcements – The conservation district is ready to advertise for 2 DGLVR specialists. Tony Ventello made a motion to move forward with advertising and interviews for the DGLVR positions. Daryl Miller seconded the motion; motion was unanimously passed.

Bradford County Watershed Program Contract – Tabled until next meeting.

## **PROGRAM UPDATES**

Nutrient Management Plans – None

D&G Contracts – Staff presented a contract for approval for Springfield Township, Strobridge Road, in the amount of \$241,920.00. Alvin Herman made a motion to approve the contract with Springfield Township. Brian Zeidner seconded the motion; motion was unanimously passed.

ACAP Updates – Staff presented a PowerPoint highlighting ACAP projects, with before and after photos, for the Board.

Treasure's Report & Payment of Bills – The Treasurer's Report was presented to the Board. Darly Miller made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report and pay the bills. Brian Zeidner seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed.

Correspondence – A summary of correspondence received was provided at the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at pm by Keith Heimbach at 1:46 PM.

The next meeting of the Bradford County Conservation District will be held on Monday, January 6, 2024, 12:30 PM, at the Stoll Natural Resource Center and via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Yeakel

District Manager

## **December 2024 DEP Conservation District Field Rep Talking Points**

### **2025 Conservation District Director Nominations**

Information packets for 2025 Conservation District Director nominations and appointments were sent out to county chief clerks and copies went to district managers. District managers are encouraged to contact chief clerks to discuss the 2025 nomination process and to answer questions regarding upcoming vacancies on their board. Appointments are due to the State Conservation Commission by December 15. Conservation District Field Representatives and the State Conservation Commission are available to answer questions concerning the director nomination process.

### **Manure Management Manual Question & Answer Document**

DEP will be looking to publish a Question & Answer document related to the Manure Management Manual Revisions and the new MMP Short Form that were published in April 2024. The Program has received some questions through the regional Q&A sessions that will be included in the document, but we want to give anyone who may still have questions the opportunity to get them answered. We will begin compiling the Q&A document in the new year. We are asking that anyone who may have questions related to the Manure Management Manual revisions and the MMP Short Form to send them to Nathan Radabaugh at [Nradabaugh@pa.gov](mailto:Nradabaugh@pa.gov) by January 1, 2025 in order to have them included in the Q&A Document.

### **Updated SOP for Routine Ag Inspections and Complaints**

November 15 an update was held on the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Routine Ag Inspections, Complaint Investigation, and Follow-up for the Conservation District Ag Staff. The session included discussions on key recommendations from the Ag 102 Focus Group, and how that feedback was incorporated in the SOP and corresponding Inspection Report. The session was recorded and is now available on Clean Water Academy for review for any staff that was unable to attend. Once the SOP is approved internally and corresponding training is developed, it will also be available with this course.

The course title on CWA is “Standard Operating Procedure for Agriculture Routine Inspections, Complaint Investigation and Follow-up” and can be found here [Course: Standard Operating Procedure for Agriculture Routine Inspections, Complaint Investigation, and Follow-up](#)

### **NEW Wetland Determinations Training Course in CWA**

The Bureau of Waterways Engineering and Wetlands’ Division of Wetlands Encroachment and Trainings developed a comprehensive 8-hour training, done over 6 courses, on wetland determinations. This training was done in collaboration with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) and the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS). This training will be expanded over the next two years with current collaborators to eventually be a complete resource on wetland determinations within the state of Pennsylvania.

This training will give participants a basic understanding of how to properly recognize wetlands in Pennsylvania and at the conclusion they will be able to identify and evaluate the three components that make up a wetland; hydrology, hydrophytic vegetation and hydric soil. This training was designed specifically to meet DEP’s regulatory programs related to wetland identification and the 1987 Army Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual and the associated Regional Supplements. This training is not a substitute for field experience, and is meant to be foundational educational information. These lessons do not cover all wetland topics, terms, or other information but are meant to provide relevant training for DEP and the public.

This training is available for all staff and public to access on the Clean Water Academy (CWA) as a valuable resource on wetlands in the state of Pennsylvania. Check out the training at this link: [Course: Introduction to Wetland Determination - 2024](#)

## **Streamlining Permits for Economic Expansion and Development (SPEED)**

The SPEED program requires the use of qualified professionals (QPs) to augment DEP and CCD staff for the review of Chapter 102 permit applications and NOIs, as well as certain Chapter 105 applications, dam safety, and air quality approvals. The QP Information For Bid (IFB) was posted on October 4, 2024, and ends December 31, 2024. A workgroup consisting of Chapter 102 CCD and DEP staff has been formed to develop guidance on SPEED implementation and will be meeting monthly for the foreseeable future. DEP is also holding monthly statewide calls with Chapter 102 staff to answer questions about how SPEED may impact the Chapter 102 program. Please be on the lookout for invites to these meetings, and in the meantime, you may continue to send questions to RA-EPCHAPTER102@pa.gov.

## **2024 PAG-02 General Permit**

The final PAG-02 General Permit was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on August 31, 2024. The permit went into effect on December 8, 2024. Any projects that did not receive an approved Notice of Termination (NOT) or submit a Renewal NOI by December 7, 2024, are considered to be operating without an NPDES permit and subject to enforcement. District staff should reference the 2024 PAG-02 Permit section of the 102 Resource Center in Clean Water Academy for all PAG-02 needs, including the Compliance Strategy SOP for permittees who did not meet the December 7<sup>th</sup> deadline.

A PAG-02 General Permit Course has been created in Clean Water Academy and made available to the public. A Clean Water Academy user login is not required to access this course unless the individual desires a course completion certificate. This course includes explanations of the differences between the 2019 and 2024 versions, how to complete the NOI, the permit requirements, and more. The course can also be found by searching for “PAG-02” in Clean Water Academy. Please inform the general public and regulated community about this resource!

## **Chapter 102 ePermitting**

On October 10, 2024, the transition to stop use of the Clean Water Chapter 102 ePermit System was announced via email. As of December 8, 2024, users can no longer submit applications or Notice of Intent (NOI) within the ePermit system for Chapter 102 permits administered by DEP’s Bureau of Clean Water (Individual NPDES Permit, PAG-02 General NPDES Permit, Individual E&S, and ESCGP-4). Applications and NOIs submitted in the system will be allowed to move through the permit review process to issuance. *This notice does not apply to E&S applications or ESCGP-4 NOIs submitted to DEP’s Oil & Gas Program, which will continue to use ePermit.*

## **Individual NPDES Permit**

The construction stormwater Individual NPDES Permit was updated on November 15<sup>th</sup> to include many of the elements found in the 2024 PAG-02, and is also available in the 102 Resource Center. The new permit template will be used for all New and Major Amendment issuances starting on December 8<sup>th</sup>. The Individual NPDES Permit application and associated documents were also updated and released in early December. Applicants are expected to use the new forms start March 8, 2025.

## **Keystone Environmental ePermitting System (KEES)**

BCW has partnered with PennDOT to bring Chapter 102 PennDOT application reviews to the KEES platform, similar to the Chapter 105 program. This does not replace the Chapter 102 ePermit system, but instead provides a successful mechanism for electronic review of PennDOT applications. The KEES Individual NPDES Permit review was released November 21st, but staff are not expected to use it until training is provided by PennDOT. PennDOT will be providing both virtual and regional training opportunities to ensure CCDs receive proper training on the system, likely starting with the southcentral region and associated CCDs. Please be on the lookout for these training announcements.

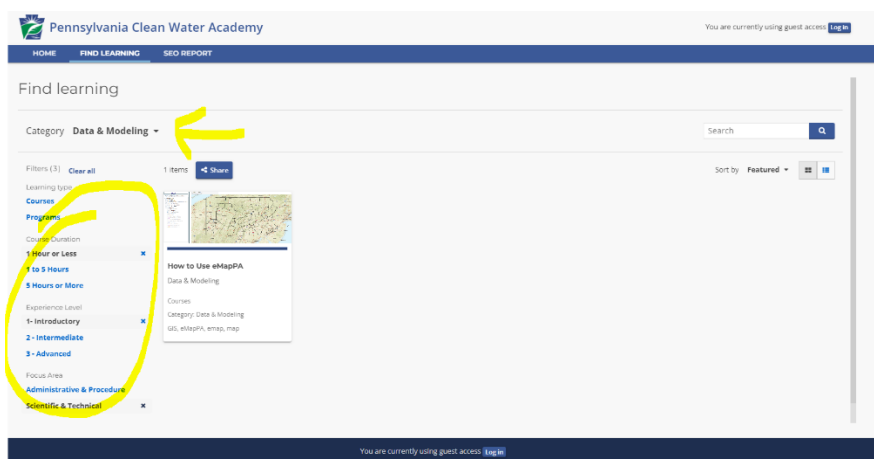
KEES PAG-02 review and Individual NPDES Permit review enhancements are expected to rollout in February 2025. Until then, staff should continue to accept KEES-generated PDFs and/or standard “paper” submissions for all PAG-02 PennDOT submissions.

**DRAFT NOT SOP Request for Comments** – On November 26, Krista Brown sent the Updated NOT SOP to Conservation Districts for Comments. Conservation Districts should submit comments no later than January 6, 2025 to [RA-EPCHAPTER102@pa.gov](mailto:RA-EPCHAPTER102@pa.gov)

Use of the NOT SOP once finalized, will begin on March 8, 2025 to coincide with when permittees are expected to begin using the updated NOT form. The Program anticipates having training in February to review the finalized SOP as well as provide an opportunity for District Staff to ask questions.

### **Clean Water Academy**

**CWA “FIND LEARNING” Page to Add Filters** - Clean Water Academy is in the process of assigning Filters to all courses on the FIND LEARNING Page. These filters will allow learners to filter the various Course Categories by Course Duration, Course Experience Level and Focus Area. For example a Learner will be able to choose the Category of Water Resources\Data & Modeling and Filter for content of ‘1 Hour or Less’, ‘Introductory’ and ‘Scientific and Technical’. Course’s will slowly be assigned filters over the next couple months as PA Clean Water Academy works with the various programs on course filter assignments. Additional filter options are being explored. Suggestions for other filters are welcome.



**Managers and Other Supervisory Staff May Activate the TEAMS Tab in Clean Water Academy** – The TEAMS tab in CWA allows managers to create training programs and assign courses to their staff. To update or activate the TEAMS Tab click on the Attachment B and Other Forms Quick Link. Next click on the “Request TEAMS Tab update or Add”

### **Chesapeake Bay Program**

**CAP Implementation and Coordinator Grants** - The CAP Program is anticipating the announcement of the CAP Implementation and Coordinator Grants in Early December.

#### **Cap Program to Transition to Practice Keeper from FieldDoc –**

- Effective December 31, 2024, the CAP program will no longer use FieldDoc to track and report CAP-funded projects. All future CAP-funded projects must be reported through PracticeKeeper. County partners will retain full access to their FieldDoc accounts until December 31, 2024. However, we strongly encourage partners to begin reporting any new CAP funded BMPs through PracticeKeeper immediately.
- To ensure compliance with CAP grant requirements, please take the time to upload a timestamped photo for each BMP currently entered in FieldDoc. DEP staff will be conducting a review of all CAP-funded projects on December 2, 2024, to verify that timestamped photos are included for all FieldDoc-reported practices. If any projects are missing these photos, your DEP CAP project advisor will reach out to the relevant partners for follow-up.

**Dates to Remember**

**SCC Meetings – 10:00 AM**

- Hybrid Meeting.....Jan 21
- Hybrid Meeting .....Mar 18

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

- Conference Call.....Dec 10
- Conference Call .....Feb 18

**Also**, check the Conservation District Training/Special Events Calendar at, [www.PACD.org](http://www.PACD.org). Select the "Events" tab and then the "Training Calendar" tab.

NOVEMBER  
CORRESPONDENCE

- #1 FARMSHINE
- #2 PASA Sustainable Agriculture Conference Announcement – February 5-7, Lancaster, PA.
- #3 PENNLines – Claverack REC, Inc.
- #4 PA DEP, Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields Program
  - Copy of Receipt of Final Report to Resource Environmental Management for the SWN Production Company, LLC Greenzweig Large Impoundment, Herrick Township.
- #5 PA DEP, Clean Water Program
  - Copy of Jones Home Farm Notification of First Land Application (30-Day Notice) to Denali Water Solutions, Herrick Township.