

BRADFORD COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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

September 9, 2024, MEETING

The September 2024, meeting of the Bradford County Conservation District was called to order by Keith Heimbach on September 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, Alvin Herman – Secretary/Treasurer, Tony Ventello – Board Member, Nicole Harris – Board Member, Robert Miller – Board Member and Brian Zeidner – Board Member.

Others attending the meeting in person were: Cathy Yeakel – District Manager, Adam Chorba – Forest Specialist, Daniel Rhodes – Education Coordinator, Lacy Powers – Natural Resource Specialist, Chad Spencer – NRCS, Jen Johns – Buffer Specialist, Patrick Cullen – District Engineer, Glenn Bell – Ag Resource Specialist, Brad Cummings – Chapter 102/105 Program Manager, Miranda Neville – Ag Resource Specialist, Jonathan Vannoy – Natural Resource Specialist, Joe Quatrini – Tech Team Leader, Bruce Chase – Associate Director, John Sullivan – Associate Director, and Sean Freidhof – DCNR.

Others attending via Zoom: Rachael Fish – DEP CDFR

REPORTS FROM COOPERATING AGENCIES AND GUESTS:

Commissioners - Daryl Miller reported that an EMS study was conducted a few years ago that has resulted in hiring an EMS/Fire Service Training Coordinator for the county to conduct EMR/EMT training within the county. The county is in the final stages of being a testing site for national certifications.

DCNR – Sean Freidhof reported that seed collection is in full swing for red spruce. He highlighted that hikers should know their abilities and the trail they are hiking.

Commission Report – Field Representative – A handout of the September 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 there was a good turnout for their yearly meeting at the Wyoming County Fair with 2,200 people in attendance. The fiber buildout is continuing, and they are hooking up new people every day, currently working in the Hollenbeck area. Brian also reported that the second spraying of the pollinator garden has been completed. He has been submitting articles in the newspaper highlighting aspects of the project as part of the Conservation District's weekly column. A website is being developed.

NRCS – Chad Spencer reported that they completed one CSP contract for @ \$20,000, CREP reenrollments have been completed and working on status reviews for FY25. Also, staff continue working on construction and inspections with assistance from BCCD. In addition, the USGS is putting a monitoring site in the NB Towanda Creek.

Brian Zeidner made a motion to accept the August 5, 2024, minutes as written. Daryl Miller seconded the motion; motion was unanimously passed.

OLD BUSINESS - None

COMMITTEES - None

NEW BUSINESS

Chesapeake Lease – A natural gas lease was presented for approval by the board. Daryl Miller made a motion to approve and sign the lease document. Tony Ventello seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously passed.

CDFAP Allocation Worksheet – CDFAP Allocation amounts were presented for approval and submission. Brian Zeidner made a motion to approve the amounts on the allocation worksheet. Alvin Herman seconded the motion; motion was unanimously passed.

Budget and Planning Meeting – The budget and planning meeting will take place, Monday, September 16, 2024 at 11:00 in the Board Room. Lunch will be provided. Please let Cathy know what you would like to order.

OTHER

Forestry Updates – It was reported that there has been some occurrences of white oak stressors resulting in bacterial leaf scorch and early leaf drop. The interns are done for the year and did a great job. K-10 shipments will be occurring soon. The seedling sale is in the works, if you have any recommendations please send them to the District Forester.

NFWF – The district received a NFWF Planning and Technical Assistance grant for Accelerated Stream and Forest Restoration in Bradford County.

USC Contract – A contract with USC was presented for approval for an upland planting consisting of 1.6 acres totaling \$5,000. Alvin Herman made a motion to approve the contract. Brian Zeidner seconded the motion; motion was unanimously passed.

USC Buffer Specialist Contract – A contract with USC was presented for approval for partial funding of the forester position through March 1, 2025 totaling \$16,960. Tony Ventello made a motion to approve the contract. Nicole Harris seconded the motion; motion was unanimously passed.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Nutrient Management Plans – The Goodview Farm LLC, Canton Township, Nutrient Management Plan was presented for approval. Robert Miller made a motion to approve the NMP as presented. Brian Zeidner seconded the motion; motion was unanimously passed.

D&G Contracts – None

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 1:08 pm by Keith Heimbach

The next meeting of the Bradford County Conservation District will be held on Monday, October 7, 2024, 12:30 PM, at the Stoll Natural Resource Center and via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Yeakel

District Manager

AUGUST
CORRESPONDENCE

- #1 FARMSHINE
- #2 BAY JOURNAL
- #3 DEP, Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields Program
 - Copy of Receipt of Final Report to VHB for the Former Paxar Facility, Sayre Boro
 - Copy of Receipt of Notice of Intent to Remediate and Final Report to Resource Environmental Management, Inc. for the SWN Production Company LLC – GU 12 – Vanorder Patrick Pad, Herrick Township.
 - Copy of Site-specific Standard Final Report Approval to Avery Dennison Corporation for the Avery Former Paxar Facility – Final Report, Sayre Borough
 - Copy of Statewide Health Standard Final Report Approval to SWN Production Company, LLC for the GU 12 Vanorder-Patrick Pad Contamination Release Cleanup, Herrick Township
- #4 DEP, NCRO – Waterways and Wetlands
 - Copy of E41-9999 Authorization Notification to PennDOT for Structure 8201000100000, New Albany Borough.
- #5 DEP District Oil and Gas Operations
 - Copy of Water Obstruction and Encroachment Permit Issuance to HEP Pennsylvania Gathering, LLC for the Ches to UR Pipeline, Stevens Township
- #6 National Association of Conservation Districts - 2023 Annual Report
- #7 National Conservation Foundation – 2023 Annual Report

September 2024 DEP Conservation District Field Rep Talking Points

DEP's Environmental Education Grants Program now accepting applications

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) 2025 Environmental Education Grants Program is **accepting applications through November 15, 2024**. Projects must be implemented during the period July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026. Funding is provided on a reimbursement basis.

Funding priority will be given to environmental education projects that engage people living, working and/or attending school within **Environmental Justice (EJ)** areas in topics related to **Climate Change** and/or **Water**. Use the DEP [PennEnviroScreen](#) to determine if the project will engage audiences within designated EJ areas.

Awards range from up to \$5,000 for local projects to \$30,000 for regional or statewide initiatives. Additionally, proposals that meet the General Grant Level II requirements (Engaging students and teachers from at least 60 Pennsylvania counties at *three levels*, local, state, and national; AND at least 30% of the audience lives, works or attends school within an EJ area) may be awarded up to \$65,000.

The 2025 Environmental Education Grants Manual and other pertinent information is available at [Environmental Education Grants](#). The Environmental Education Grants Program has supported a wide range of activities from tours and workshops to hands-on field experiences and action projects. Go to [2024 EE Grant Awards](#) for a listing of projects that were awarded funding in Spring 2024.

A free 2025 Environmental Education Grants Program webinar will be held on October 10, 2024 from 11:30 am-1:00 pm. DEP staff will provide proposal tips and instructions for completing required application forms. The program will conclude with a Q&A session. **Registration by September 30, 2024 is required:** [2025 EE Grants Program Webinar Registration](#).

Questions may be directed to: RA-epEEgrants@pa.gov

Coastal Zone Grant Round Now Open

Applications for Coastal Zone grants are being accepted from Monday August 26 through Tuesday October 15, 2024, at 11:59PM. Eligible applicants include government entities and incorporated non-profits conducting projects in the two Pennsylvania Coastal Zones: the Lake Erie Coastal Zone and the Delaware Estuary Coastal Zone. Funds can be used for a variety of projects. Conservation Districts in the Coastal Zones are encouraged to apply. The Coastal Zone includes Berks, Bucks, Delaware, Erie, Montgomery and Schuylkill Counties. For more information, see the Coastal Zone grant webpage ([Grants \(pa.gov\)](#)) or contact Shane Gutsie at sgutsie@pa.gov.

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.

Chapter 105 Permitting Improvements

On July 5, 2024, BWEW Director Domenic Rocco emailed Program Managers, Group Managers, Delegated Conservation Districts and others to make several announcements regarding its Chapter 105 Water Obstruction and Encroachments Permitting Program. That announcement included:

1. General Permit Improvements - BWEW has made significant improvements to its General Permit (GP) Registration Form, Instructions, and General Permit-Aquatic Resources Impacts Table (GP-ARIT). The goal is that general permit registrations could be reviewed and authorized more expeditiously to allow staff to focus on other matters. One item worth mentioning is that there will be a reduced emphasis on floodways as “specific activities” which is explained in the GP-ARIT. These documents were published on June 28, 2024, are available to the public now, and required effective September 1, 2024. The new form and instructions can be found on the Department’s eLibrary under Permit and Authorization Packages > Waterways Engineering and Wetlands > General Permits or by direct link here: <https://greenport.pa.gov/elibrary/GetFolder?FolderID=4050>
 - a. Conservation Districts can submit their questions to the following resource account [RA-EP105QUESTIONS@pa.gov].
 - b. In the coming months, we plan to hold a short training webinar to discuss these changes in more detail and expectations for reviewing registrations.
2. Chapter 105 Pilot for Joint Permit Applications (JPA) - Similar to the Chapter 102 Pilot for NPDES Construction Permits, BWEW has released a JPA Pilot that will be available statewide and involve the 6 DEP Regional Offices and the Regional Permit Coordination Office (RPCO). To participate, applicants will be required to attend 2 preapplication meetings with the second meeting serving as a pre-submission conference. Priority will be given to Publicly Funded Energy Projects and Environmental Restoration Projects. Since the pilot is for JPAs, conservation districts will not play a direct role.
3. Updated Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) - As part of DEP’s program-wide initiative to update SOPs, updated SOPs will soon be available for General Permit (GP) Registrations, Joint Permit Applications (JPA), and Environmental Assessment (EA) Submissions. To make things more efficient, BWEW conveniently combined three GP-related SOPs into one SOP. BWEW also split the JPA and EA into two separate SOPs due to the evolution and needs of our program.
4. Online Bridge and Culvert Tool - In October 2023, BWEW released a new and innovative online tool regarding Bridge & Culvert Maintenance and Repair on our website. This tool is designed to help bridge and culvert owners understand and be informed of permitting and notification requirements for bridge and culvert maintenance under various scenarios, including emergency situations. While this tool was designed for all bridge and culvert owners, it was not designed with PennDOT in mind and does not take into account EXX-9999’s, funded staff contacts, etc. However, we believe it will be useful as long as those limitations are understood.

A public announcement launching the Streamlining Permits for Economic Expansion and Economic Development (SPEED) program was made on August 12, 2024 and includes the GP Improvements and JPA Pilot. That announcement can be viewed on DEP’s website at <https://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/NewsRoomPublic/articleviewer.aspx?id=22452&typeid=1> Stay tuned as details of these efforts will follow

Chapter 105 Wetland Determination Training and Future CWA Program Announcement - Waterways Engineering and Wetlands in collaboration with the Army Corps of Engineers have created a series of trainings focused on wetland determinations set to release by the end of September for DEP and PACD staff. They will focus on Wetland Hydrology, Vegetation and Supporting Information. These will also be paired with our recently released trainings with The Natural Resources Conservation Services on hydric soils and hydric soil indicators to give the user a full overview of the wetland determination process.

We are also happy to announce that these trainings are just the first part of our Wetland Determination Program set to fully release by the end of this Fiscal Year, which will include additional trainings from The Army Corps of Engineers, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) and The Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS). This collaborative effort will offer a program of courses that will provide a user 15-20 hours of crucial wetland determination training along with professional development hours.

Access to the Clean Water Academy for this and other training is available at [PA Clean Water Academy: Log in to the site \(remote-learner.net\)](#)

2024 PAG-02 General Permit

The final PAG-02 General Permit was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on August 31, 2024. The permit goes into effect on December 8, 2024, and all Renewal NOIs must be received (postmarked) by December 7, 2024. Renewal NOIs received before December 7th may be reviewed and issued before December 8th, *as long as they have an effective date of December 8, 2024*. Please use the language included in the PAG-02 Authorization Letter template to capture this scenario.

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 great new resource!

Chapter 102 Resource Account Correction

The Bureau of Clean Water (BCW) recently sent out the July Chapter 102 Quarterly Newsletter. It has been brought to our attention that there was a discrepancy on the newsletter related to the Chapter 102 Resource Account emails, specifically, the Permit Forms resource account. DEP and Conservation District staff are to copy DEP Central Office with approved permit forms, such as NOIs and NOTs to the RA-102PermitForms@pa.gov. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused. Please direct any additional questions to Luke Graver at lugraver@pa.gov.

2024 Act 38 Odor Management Program Certification

Odor Management Specialist certification training (for Commercial, Public, Individual, or Educator status) will occur on September 24, 2024 for the Day-1 Training, September 25, 2024, for the Day-2 Training, and on October 11, 2024, for the Day-3 training & exam. Please note that since no program delegation authority has been given to Conservation Districts, CD staff are allowed to go through the OM Certification training for the Educator status only.

To attend the OMS Certification training, please register via the [PA Plants - Bureau of Plant Industry \(pa.gov\)](#) online database at <https://www.paplants.pa.gov/NOMHB/NOMHBCourseWorkSearch.aspx>. For additional certification information, please go to the SCC's [Odor Management Certification Program](#) webpage at <https://www.pa.gov/en/agencies/pda/about-pda/boards-commissions/state-conservation-commission/odor-management-program/odor-management-certification-program.html>. For additional certification related questions, please contact Mike Aucoin at (717) 772-5218, or maucoin@pa.gov.

DEP's Manure Management Plan Workbook and Short Form Course is Now Open on Clean Water Academy.

On August 2nd, the new Manure Management Plan Workbook and Manure Management Plan Short Form course went live on Clean Water Academy. The course provides an overview of the Manure Management Planning requirements and reviews the content of the Manure Management Plan (MMP) Workbook and the MMP Short Form. The learning activities for the MMP Workbook and the MMP Short Form walk the learner through the different parts of each. The course provides completed examples of the MMP Workbook and the Short Form. The course page also provides links to download the MMP Workbook, the MMP Short Form, the *Land Application of Manure* appendices, and record keeping templates. It is open to the public and County Conservation District staff are encouraged to share the link with their customers and as part of their outreach efforts.

The content in this course reflects the changes that were implemented in the April 27, 2024 publication of the *Land Application of Manure* Technical Guidance Document revisions. This course is open to anyone to utilize, including the public, and can be accessed without the need to create a Clean Water Academy account. As DEP continues to develop content and resources related to the Manure Management Plan Workbook, they will be added to this course.

Course Title: Manure Management Plan Workbook and Short Form
<https://pacleanwateracademy.remote-learner.net/course/view.php?id=1308>

Ag101 Self-Paced Course Seats Available:

Ag 101: Introduction to Agriculture will assist new employees with little or no agricultural experience to learn the basics of farms and farming, including crops, livestock, and natural resources, common to Pennsylvania and other Mid-Atlantic and Northeast states.

Visiting a farm can be a daunting task if one was not raised around an agricultural business. Farms are complex systems that produce food, plants, animal feed, meats, dairy, and much more.

This training is geared towards conservation professionals; agriculture service providers, farm-partner professionals, and people interested in working with farmers and will introduce conservation professionals and other professionals who interact with farms to the basics of farming. One will learn about the many types of farms, common farm implements and terminology, natural resources important to the success of a farm, such as water resources and soil, describe the use of natural resources in farming; understand challenges facing farms and farmers today, assist farmers in their decision-making process to support long-term sustainability, and describe best practices in arranging and conducting farm visits. One will also learn about working with and supporting farmers, as well as, best practices in farming such as biosecurity and integrated pest management.

In this self-paced course, one will watch educational videos and complete knowledge check questions to learn the basics of agriculture in Pennsylvania, and throughout the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast. The course includes many resources and introduces one to the wealth of information available to you.

There are nine short section quizzes in the course. One will need to achieve a score of 80% or more on the quizzes in order to pass this course and receive a certificate of completion, which is required with the "seat" that the SCC will provide.

To receive the Free Seat code, please contact Brady Seeley at braseeley@pa.gov. A certificate of completion is required to be submitted to the SCC after completion of the course.

Ag 101: Introduction to Agriculture can be found at <https://extension.psu.edu/ag101-introduction-to-agriculture>

ACAP – Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program

The 24-25FY state budget included an investment of \$50M per year into the clean streams fund. 71.5% of these funds being allocated to the ACAP program. ACAP now has a state dedicated funding source of \$37.75M per year of non-lapsing funds.

Commission staff will request approval of the FY24-25 allocations for ACAP at the September SCC meeting. The Commission has \$43.495M of funds comprised of newly dedicated state funds as well as interest funds to allocate. The SCC will retain 4% of these funds for administration and 4% for contractual services. The remaining \$40M will be allocated to conservation districts using the same formula as the original apportionment.

ACAP legislation outlines 4 criteria to be used when allocating the funds, these criteria were all weighted equally at 25% each. The SCC also added a minimum allocation of \$300,000. Districts should keep in mind that the 24-25 FY allocation includes interest funds that may be lower in future years as the original funds are used, this may reduce allocations amounts in the future.

2024 REAP Application Round

REAP began accepting applications for the FY24 program on August 1st. Requests for REAP Tax Credits are expected to exceed the annual funding allocation. The deadline for submitting FY24 REAP applications was September 1st. Any eligible applications that were not able to be funded this round will roll over to FY25 round. As of August 20, the Commission has received over 300 FY24 applications. Questions may be directed to Joel Semke (jsemke@pa.gov) or Nicole Bloom (nbloom@pa.gov)

Chesapeake Bay Program

Two-Year Milestone Updates - Tier 2 Counties (Bedford, Centre, Cumberland, and Lebanon) should be preparing their Two-Year Milestone Updates. As part of this, Tier 2 Counties were provided a spreadsheet showing their 2023 progress, current CAST scenario numbers, and state recommendations for the county. Numeric changes to BMPs should be entered and provided to the Project Advisor by **September 9, 2024** to provide SRBC time to “run” the numbers in CAST and provide feedback. **Draft Two-Year Milestone Updates are due on October 2, 2024. Final documents are due December 1, 2024.**

Annual Progress Reporting - All other counties are responsible for providing their Annual Progress Reporting. The draft documents are due on October 1, 2024 to the county’s Project Advisor. Final documents are due December 1, 2024

Information about Annual Progress Reporting and Two-Year Milestone Updates can be found here:
<https://pacleanwateracademy.remote-learner.net/course/view.php?id=1316>

2025 CAP Grant round will open October 1st and close on October 31st - Counties are encouraged to start identifying projects now and should be prepared to discuss the projects they intend to apply for during the August and September monthly CAP 1-1 calls. The minimum allocation threshold for counties will be \$200,000 again this year, as long as the county applies for at least that amount of funding. Orientation to the 2025 CAP Grant Round Application process including the use of FieldDoc to enter practices (deeper dive to follow in October 2024) and overview of the application template can be found here
<https://pacleanwateracademy.remote-learner.net/course/view.php?id=1306>

Dates to Remember

SCC Meetings – 1:00 PM

In-Person Meeting	Sept 10
Hybrid Meeting.....	Nov 12

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

Conference Call.....	Oct 8
Conference Call.....	Dec 10

Management Summit

Wyndham Garden, State College	Sept. 18-19
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New Manager Training

Wyndham Garden, State College	Sept. 17 & 19 & Oct 23
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Chapter 102 Internal Trainings (Virtual)

VSIR, SCM Form, New Owner Form, EP Analysis	Sept. 11	9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
PAG-02 Compliance and Inspections	Oct. 22	TBD
PAG-02 Permit Review SOP and Exceptions SOP	Oct. 30	9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Notice of Terminations (NOT)	Nov. 6	TBD
PAG-02 General Q&A	Nov. 19	9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Calendar invitations for all webinars will be sent out by Krystal Bloom or Krista Brown, feel free to forward to staff as appropriate. These webinars will be recorded and saved on Clean Water Academy.

Chapter 102 Small Group Training

Sediment Traps and Basins (Seats still available!)	Sept. 24	9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Fall Virtual Basic Training – This is not meant to be a substitute for in-person attendance at the annual Basic Training, but instead provides abbreviated training for those who were hired after May of this year. (Seats still available!)		
o Two days:	Nov. 13-14	9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Channels (Please join the waitlist!)	Dec. 10	9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

To register, log into Clean Water Academy and visit: <https://pacleanwateracademy.remotel-learner.net/course/view.php?id=922>

Verbal Judo

In-person – State College	Tentative Oct 16 & 17
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Also, check the Conservation District Training/Special Events Calendar at, www.PACD.org. Select the "Events" tab and then the "Training Calendar" tab.