



Greene County Conservation District

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GREENE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT MINUTES

Regular Meeting

December 21, 2010

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bradley Eisiminger at 9:55 a.m. at the Mezzanine Conference Room, Fort Jackson Building, and 19 South Washington Street, Waynesburg, Pennsylvania. Directors in attendance were Bradley Eisiminger, Chairman; Archie Trader, Vice Chairman; Tom Headlee, Treasurer; Jim Cowell, Secretary; Pam Snyder, Commissioner Representative; Jim Kenney, Director; and Bill Wentzel, Associate Director and Program Associate. Guests and District staff in attendance, in alphabetical order, included Jim Butler, Izaak Walton League; Ken Dufalla, Izaak Walton League; Chris Hardie, Planner, Planning and Development; Sherene Hess, RC&D Coordinator, Penn's Corner RC&D; Chuck Kubasik, Field Representative, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP); Bob McBride, Forester, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR); Laurel Rush, Ag Technician, Greene County Conservation District; Ray Rutan, Izaak Walton League; Becky Salosky, Fiscal Officer, Greene County Conservation District; Lisa Snider, District Manager, Greene County Conservation District; Bob Ventorini, Biologist, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission; and D. Winkler, Izaak Walton League.

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Archie Trader to enter into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter regarding the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)

III. RECONVENMENT

Following the Executive Session, a motion was made by Archie Trader to reconvene the meeting at 10:35 a.m. Pam Snyder seconded. (Motion Passed)

Jim Butler – Izaak Walton League – Water Testing Partnership Program – Although this item did not appear until later on the agenda, Mr. Butler gave his presentation at this time. He distributed a copy (attached) of an “Overview” of a proposal to measure and monitor watershed quality in Greene County. Briefly, he explained that the purpose of the program is to create a certified comprehensive data base of area watersheds to be continually updated on a regular basis. The monitoring will be completed by trained volunteers and will be available for use by qualified parties. A group of 8-9 volunteers are ready to proceed with training to date. This group of folks will be monitoring TDS levels and pH.

Mr. Butler noted that it is most important and urgent to establish “base-lines” as soon as possible since there are areas of immediate concern due to the rise of chloride and TDS levels. Also,

experts are cautioning that certain weather conditions could result in a similar incident that occurred in 2009 throughout the mainstem of Dunkard Creek, where high TDS levels were believed to cause the Golden Algae Bloom.

The attached overview gives a full description of the phases of the project and the administration of the project by the Harry Enstrom Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit charitable corporation. Other organizations are invited to participate, provided they follow the standards and guidelines of the Izaak Walton League.

On behalf of the Harry Enstrom Chapter of the Izaak Walton League, Mr. Butler requested a donation of \$12,000 to \$15,000 to complete the project, with a minimum of \$10,000. He said that grants are also being applied for to obtain matching funds for the services of a consultant, software, communications, etc. from other organizations.

In conclusion, Mr. Butler invited the board to review the "Project Overview" and referred any questions to himself or Mr. Ken Dufalla.

Mr. Trader said that he recently met with the Izaak Walton League and feels very strongly about the importance of this matter. He also said that currently no data is available on county streams and he feels that it is important to have this information so that a baseline can be established.

Mr. Dufalla, President of Harry Enstrom Chapter on the Izaak Walton League, noted that the information will be available to the public through the Chapter's Website. He also said that a member of the Conservation District staff is invited to complete the training for the project. All data will be available to the District as needed. The Izaak Walton League is not anti-industry and feels that as long as work is completed correctly the natural resources should not be affected.

Chairman Eisiminger thanked the Izaak Walton League for their presentation and said that the Conservation District will take the matter under consideration and possibly have an answer at the January meeting.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Tom Headlee to approve the Minutes of the November 9, 2010 meeting. Archie Trader seconded. (Motion Passed)

V. TREASURER'S REPORTS

A motion was made by Archie Trader to approve the Treasurer's Reports as mailed. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Laurel distributed flyers and announced that the Southwest Regional No-Till Conference will be held February 2, 2011 at St. Vincent College. Cost of the registration is \$30.00 per person and Nutrient Management Credits are available for attendees. **On a motion by Pam Snyder, approval was granted for Laurel to attend the conference. Archie Trader seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- b. Lisa noted that a letter was received from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) stating that due to the low numbers of Gypsy Moth egg masses, they will not be conducting the Gypsy Moth Program in 2011.

VII. REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

No Request for Assistance forms were received.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

Lisa gave an update on the proposed reclassification of the South Fork of Ten Mile Tributaries being considered by the Environmental Quality Board (EQB). She noted that the EQB is scheduled to meet today and will consider Foundation Coals' withdrawal of the rulemaking petition for the South Fork of Ten Mile Creek. She read an excerpt from the letter as follows "upon recommendation by the Department on August 19, 2008 the Board accepted for further study the Rule Making Petition that was submitted by Foundation Mining, LP of Waynesburg. The petition requested the EQB to redesignate the tributaries of the South Fork of Ten Mile, including House, Hoge, and McCourtney Run in Greene County, from High Quality to Warm Water Fisheries. On November 23, 2010 the Department received notification from the petitioner which requested that the petition be withdrawn from further consideration by the Department and the Board. The Petitioner's request is being provided to the Board as an informational item".

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- a. The proposed 2011 Objectives were mailed to Board members for review. Lisa noted that all new programs, additional duties etc. were added to the last page. **A motion was made by Archie Trader to accept the 2011 Objectives. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- b. Lisa and Becky met with Budget Committee Members, Mr. Headlee and Mr. Kenney to review the proposed Budget. It was mailed with the meeting packets for review. Changes suggested by Mr. Kenney and Mr. Headlee were incorporated into the mailed budget and a "spreadsheet" was also included that represented salaries and their potential funding sources. Lisa noted that approximately \$73,000 would be needed to fund the salary and benefits the overruns for the Agriculture Technician, Watershed Specialist, Second Technician and newly hired Environmental Program Specialist. **After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Jim Kenney to approve the 2011 Budget. Pam Snyder seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- c. The next item discussed was the West Nile Virus (WNV) Monitoring Program. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) requested that we complete a grant application for \$5,500 for the 2011 program season. These funds would include \$3,900 for salary and benefits for an intern for a period of July through September; \$1,350 for training, travel, insurances and licenses; and \$244 for equipment and supplies. Lisa noted that assistance is available through DEP in the event "positives" are found or should pesticide applications be needed. This proposal will be submitted for review by the County Commissioners and requested to be on the agenda of a January 2011 public meeting of the County Commissioners. **A motion was made by Tom Headlee to approve the submittal of the application to DEP. Jim Kenney seconded. (Motion Passed)**

- d. The next item, the Penn's Corner Agreement, was tabled at the November meeting. Education and outreach to farmers regarding USDA, NRCS Farm Bill Programs would be the main objective of this agreement. **A motion was made by Jim Cowell to enter the agreement with Penn's Corner. Pam Snyder seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- e. Laurel presented the Willis Nutrient Management Plan for review and approval. She said that the plan meets all of the Act 38 requirements and recommends its approval. **A motion was made by Archie Trader to approve the Willis Nutrient Management Plan. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- f. Lisa presented a request from the Pennsylvania Envirothon for donations to support the 2011 event. **A motion was made by Pam Snyder to donate \$100 to the Pennsylvania Envirothon. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- g. Laurel discussed the next item of business, the Appalachian Grazing Conference. The SW Project Grass Chapter is raffling off a paid registration to the Appalachian Grazing Conference. Laurel asked for suggestions for choosing an individual (by January 15th) to submit for the drawing for that prize. After discussion, it was decided to submit the name of this year's "Outstanding Cooperator" Award, Jeanne Williams. If she is not interested then Jim Butler, recipient of the "Forestry Award" would be the alternate.
- Secondly, Laurel distributed brochures with the detailed Conference schedule to be held March 4th and 5th at the Waterfront Place Hotel in Morgantown, WV. She requested approval to attend this event with the expenditures of \$75 for "Early Registration" and a two night hotel fee at a rate of \$85.00 per night. **A motion was made by Pam Snyder to approve the attendance of the conference by Laurel with the two expenditures and also an additional \$75 scholarship (to cover the early registration fee) for a producer from Greene County to attend this event. Archie Trader seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- h. An addition that did not appear on the Agenda was the payment to Greene Township (approximately \$6,000-\$7,000) for the Dirt and Gravel Roads Project they completed on Hartley Hill Road. The Quality Assurance Board (QAB) was scheduled to make a final inspection of the site, however; inclement weather resulted in its cancellation. **After discussion, a motion was made by Archie Trader to approve the payment to Greene Township, pending the approval of the Dirt and Gravel Road Quality Assurance Board. Jim Kenney seconded. (Motion Passed)**

X. PUBLIC COMMENT

Bob Vantorini, Three Rivers Fisheries Biologist of the PA Fish and Boat Commission – Mr. Vantorini, was invited to make a presentation at today's meeting utilizing a Power Point presentation. He informed the board of the status of the Monongahela River Monitoring Project, funded in-part through a donation of \$15,000 from the Conservation District.

He also briefly explained the restructuring of his office resulting in his reassignment to Somerset County. He displayed the project's budget of \$15,000 and noted what has been used and what remains. The project included hiring a vendor for \$10,000 to complete the Macro Invertebrate identification, however, problems occurred and these funds remain. Mr. Ventorini assured the board that the identification will be completed and the PA Fish and Boat Commission are committed to see the project through although there have been delays. A balance of approximately \$1,000 also remains for equipment. A proposal was presented to the Conservation District Board at a previous meeting to purchase Rotenone to conduct a Lock Chamber Survey, however, that request was denied. Thoughts are to use the remaining \$1,000 to conduct public meetings within the community to discuss 3 Rivers Management Plan issues that is currently being completed as a result of the Monitoring Project.

Invertebrate samples were taken in 2009 at 15 sites along the Monongahela River. Mr. Ventorini noted that one of the traps located downstream from Dunkard Creek was in place prior to the large fish kill event. In the end, a total of 75 samples were obtained, 5 per site, and delivered to the vendor. Mr. Ventorini answered questions from the board, who thanked Mr. Ventorini for his update on the project.

XI. DISCUSSION OF STAFF REPORTS

Laurel distributed the Core 4 Calendars completed in conjunction with Penn's Corner RC&D and welcomed feedback for the next publication. She also received information from Penn's Corner on the Grassland Competition which she will distribute to the schools. She also noted that Penn's Corner RC&D has requested that she be nominated for the position of Secretary of the Council. She said that duties of the position would be to approve the Minutes prior to distribution, attendance at some meetings, and her signature on certain documents. She does not expect it to involve too much of her time. The board expressed their support of this endeavor.

Lisa gave a brief update regarding various matters. She noted that a property owner located near I-79 has signed a Consent Order with DEP for violations that occurred at the site. The District was able to recover most of the staff salary expenses incurred regarding this matter from PA DEP which was approximately \$4000.

Regarding the Farmland Preservation Program, Lisa noted that an issue with the ownership of the coal rights on the Willis parcel was found. Until the matter is resolved, the board cannot proceed. Mr. Willis will advise us as to whether he wishes to proceed with the Easement. Mr. Trader urged a prompt resolution of this matter so that another application can be ready and additional funding is not lost. Also, regarding the Farmland Preservation Program, no funding was obtained as a result of the requests mailed to the Coal, Oil and Gas Industries, etc.

In another matter, Lisa noted that the second applicant offered the Technician's position has declined the offer and it may be necessary to re-advertise the position, Tracy Zivkovich informed her prior to today's meeting that she will contact her with further information. If there are no other candidates she will advertise the first of the year.

XII. REPORTS FROM COOPERATING AGENCIES AND GUESTS

- a. Sherene Hess – Sherene thanked Laurel for her work on the Core 4 Calendar Project. A new project for Penn's Corner is the reforestation of coal mined lands in Armstrong County through the Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative. Another project

approved at their December meeting is the Source Water Protection Plan Development through the River Alert Information Network (RAIN). RAIN is a consortium of water suppliers who are working with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to protect our water. In closing, Sherene reported that Penn's Corner hosted a very successful State Association meeting in October. A member of Penn's Corner serves on their Executive Committee.

- b. John Scott – John announced that the Farm Show will be held in January with the reception scheduled to be held on the 7th. He added that this will be the last event planned under the current administration. He noted that this will most likely be his last meeting as the Regional Director and said how much he enjoyed attending our meetings. He plans to stay involved with Conservation Districts, possibly by serving as an Associate Director in Allegheny County and he hopes to see everyone again. The Board thanked Mr. Scott for his contributions.
- c. Chuck Kubasik – Chuck distributed a written report and highlighted some of the major points. A free two week training session for Agricultural Conservation Technician's and Nutrient Management Technician's will be held in April. The first session is for new technicians and will be held April 4th-8th. A session is scheduled for April 25th-29th for technicians who have already attended the Level I training. Similar training for E&S Technicians is also planned. The tentative dates for Level I training are May 9th-13th and then May 16th-20th for more experienced technicians. All sessions will be held at Fort Indiantown Gap and registration is required through PACD.

Other scheduled training includes Chapter 102 training for the new regulations to be held in Cranberry Township on February 24th. Reservations are required.

- d. Bob McBride, PA DCNR Greene County Forester – In the past year, he has visited 25 woodland owners comprising 1,000 acres in Greene County. Many of these individuals are interested in a Stewardship Plan and changes have been made in that program. Previously, funding of the program was the responsibility of the U.S. Forest Service. Now that responsibility has shifted to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and many questions remain. In closing, Mr. Bride distributed a pocket calendar to anyone wishing one.
- e. Chris Hardie – Thirteen projects were approved this year and 12 are pending. Sixty-Four Lot Splits were completed in 2010 compared to Sixty-Nine the previous year. Over 400 "Public Notices" have been received this year which is a significant increase. In closing, Chris noted that a report received from the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) indicated that commercial development in the state has declined, but of the surveys they received, Greene County was the only County to show an increase in development, probably due to the oil and gas industry.

XIII. The next regular meeting will be held on January 18, 2011.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Archie Trader to adjourn the meeting at 12:00 p.m. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca K. Salosky
Fiscal Officer

