

**GREENE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MINUTES
September 20, 2011**

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bradley Eisiminger at 10:05 AM in the Mezzanine Conference Room, 19 South Washington Street, Waynesburg, Pennsylvania. Those in attendance are as follows:

Greene County Conservation District Directors and Associate Directors

Bradley Eisiminger-Chairman; Archie Trader-Vice Chairman; Pam Snyder, Commissioner Representative; Tom Headlee-Treasurer; Jim Cowell-Secretary; Jim Kenney-Director; J. Robert Rice-Director Emeritus; Bill Wentzel-Associate Director/Program Associate

Guests and Cooperating Agencies

Chris Hardie-Department of Economic Development and Bob McBride and Russell Gibbs-DCNR, Bureau of Forestry.

Staff

Lisa Snider-District Manager; Laurel Rush-Ag Technician; Julie Maxwell-Watershed Specialist; Jeremy Kelly-Environmental Program Specialist II; Becky Salosky-Fiscal Officer; Robbie Matesic-Executive Director, Department of Economic Development

Mr. McBride, Mr. Gibbs, and Mr. Hardie attended a portion of the meeting.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Jim Kenney to approve the minutes of the August 30, 2011 meeting. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed).

IV. TREASURER'S REPORTS

A motion was made by Commissioner Trader to approve the treasurer's reports with the following additional expenses from the General Fund. Jim Kenney seconded. (Motion Passed).

Ck 906 Becky Salosky – Reimbursement for District meeting lunch - \$51.43

Ck 907 Pitney Bowes – Term Rental - \$161.72

V. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no Correspondence to bring before the Board.

VI. REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

There were no Requests for Assistance to bring before the Board.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Ms. Snider gave an update on the Farmland Preservation Program (FLP). At their September 8th, 2011 meeting, the FLP Board accepted the James F. and Pearl Willis Living Trust Easement offer and authorized submission of the encumbrance to the Bureau of Farmland Preservation.

Following the meeting, an e-mail was received from Attorney Greg Hook, Solicitor for the Greene County's Farmland Preservation Board, expressing his dissatisfaction with the resolution of the surface coal rights. He will be responsible for the Title Insurance and he is not comfortable certifying title based on Attorney Proden's document that explained the ownership issues associated with surface coal rights. Consequently, Attorney Hook spoke to Doug Wolfgang, Executive Director, Bureau of Farmland Preservation, who in turn consulted with his Bureau counsel. The Bureau's counsel confirmed that resolution of the coal rights is determined by Attorney Hook. An emergency meeting of the FLP Board will be called with Attorney Hook. Ms. Snider noted that to resolve the issue, the attorneys will consider a Quit Claim Deed or Quiet Title and that will most likely lead to the delay of this easement until the beginning of next year.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. A correction to Aleppo Township's Dirt and Gravel Roads Program application for the Moreford Road project was discussed. Ms. Snider noted that the original application, for a total of \$4,026.65, was approved at the June 21st, 2011 GCCD meeting. When signing the contract, it was realized that the additional work was not included (44 tons of railroad ballast, 120 tons of 2-A stone and 40 feet of 15 inch pipe). The township amendment was submitted for an additional \$3,407.15 for work requested by the Quality Assurance Board (QAB). This would bring the total project cost to \$7,433.80.

After discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Snyder to approve the project with the amendment for a total of \$7,433.80. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed).

- b. As required by the Farmland Preservation Program, Ms. Rush presented the Conservation Plan of Jim F. and Pearl Willis Living Trust for his 53 acre parcel. The plan has been approved and signed by Suzy Petery of NRCS and Mr. Willis.

A motion was made by Commissioner Trader to approve the Willis Conservation Plan. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed).

- c. Due to the success of last year's annual awards luncheon held at the Greene County Career and Technology Center, it was decided to try to hold this year's event there as well, serving locally grown foods. The luncheon could be held in early November and the October and November GCCD Board meetings could be combined. The earlier date would ensure a wider variety of local food products.

Susan Funka Petery of NRCS has offered two possible candidates, Jim Willis and Richard Patton, for this year's Outstanding Cooperator Award. The Agriculture Committee will visit both farms and recommend a candidate. The Board agreed to accept the recommendation of the committee, and requested to be informed through e-mail of their selection.

Nominations for the Forestry award have not yet been received.

- d. An additional item that did not appear on the agenda is the notification from John Berger of the Nutrient Management Program that a \$5,400 allocation that was lost last year has been restored and is now available for the administration of the Agricultural Easement Program.

A motion was made by Commissioner Trader to approve the application for the funding. Commissioner Snyder seconded. (Motion Passed).

- e. Due to health reasons, Theresa Matscherz regrettably resigned from her position as a director of the Greene County Conservation District. Ms. Snider noted that her term was due to expire at the end of this year, so her vacancy can be filled at the beginning 2012.
- f. Laurel noted that the Pennsylvania Envirothon will be celebrating their 25th Anniversary next year and will be hosting the National competition at Susquehanna University in Snyder County. They are requesting monetary donations as well an item "unique to our County" to be placed in the "Welcoming Bags". Lisa thought that we had already contributed, but will check in the meeting Minutes and report back at the next meeting.

Laurel has tentatively scheduled our County Envirothon for May 3rd, 2012. We will also be celebrating our 25th year.

- g. Newly appointed Service Forester for Greene and Washington Counties, Russ Gibbs, arrived and introduced himself. Mr. Gibbs will be working out of the Washington Agriculture Office.

IX. DISCUSSION OF STAFF REPORTS

Staff reports (attached) were either mailed with the “meeting packets” or distributed at the meeting. Additional comments follow.

Julie Maxwell – In her written report, she included her notes from the Upper Mon River Association (UMRA) meeting she attended and discussed at the August GCCD meeting.

Laurel Rush – She attended the Penn’s Corner RC&D Executive Council meeting yesterday and highlighted some of the matters discussed. The PA Association of RC&D Councils will meet on September 26th with the President of Penn’s Corner attending. It is hoped that the loss of funding will be discussed.

The Ag Committee of Penn’s Corner will host the annual No-Till Conference on February 1, 2012, at St. Vincent College. The National RC&D Council recommended that the local councils continue with their “Area Work Plan”. At the meeting, Penn’s Corner decided to keep the plan and update as needed after all of the Conservation Districts have the opportunity to review and comment.

The Grisby Project Fund, established to operate and maintain an acid mine drainage system at the Grigsby site under a consent order with the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), was discussed at the RC&D Meeting. Proposals have been submitted to establish a treatment system at the site, but have all been denied. Should the Penn’s Corner RC&D Charitable Trust dissolve, GCCD will have to pass the funds to another 501-C-3 organization to be administered. Fund raising to cover audit and administrative costs for the trust was also discussed at the meeting. It is estimated that approximately \$4,000-\$5,000 will need to be raised. The next meeting of Penn’s Corner will be held on December 19th at 9:00 a.m.

The GCCD lime spreader has been rented and in use for the last several weeks. Laurel also requested to meet with the agricultural committee members Jim Cowell, Jim Kenney and Greg Hopkins following this meeting to discuss the new Chapter 102 Ag Compliance and the potential sprayer purchase.

Work continues on the revisions to the Project Grass By-Laws. This regional initiative promoting grazing and grazing education was started by Bob Rice and now consists of thirteen counties in Western PA. The consensus of the GCCD Board was to have at least two votes per county and it is now being considered

to have three votes per county; two Conservation District appointees and a county farmer.

Bill Wentzel – He noted that he is investigating a complaint regarding a drainage issue in Washington Township on Frank O’Leary’s property regarding a potential improper stream crossing.

Jeremy Kelly – He noted that his written report includes the sites he has visited either by himself or with Bill. Earth movers at all the sites have been cooperative and have really made an effort to correct problems, especially at the Wisecarver Dam Rehabilitation site.

Lisa Snider – Lisa noted that she and Ms. Matesic will be attending the Floodplain Monitoring Annual Meeting on October 18th and 19th. Dialogue continues with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on a watershed assessment for the entire Monongahela River Watershed. The County Commissioners have signed a letter of intent for the project. Ken Dufalla, President of the Izaak Walton League, informed her of a meeting scheduled to be held this afternoon with Alpha Natural Resources to discuss water testing results.

The Tri-County Oil and Gas Expo will be held October 2nd and 3rd in Fayette County at Nemaocolin Woodlands and GCCD will share a table with the Department of Economic Development and Greene County Tourism.

As a result of the road assessment conducted by Lisa and Mary Jane Kent, funding of the Dirt and Gravels Program has increased. The estimated allocation for 2013-2014 is \$78,979, a significant increase over the \$38,000 we currently receive. The increase will be incremental over a 3 year period with an allocation of \$51,764 in 2011, \$65,372 in 2012, and \$78,979 in 2013. She urged everyone to speak to their supervisors to encourage program participation. The program will be discussed at the upcoming Township Convention scheduled for October 20th.

An allocation of \$22,425 was approved through the Conservation Fund Allocation Program (CFAP) for the 2011-2012 Agricultural Conservation Technician (ACT) program.

Robbie Matesic - A new natural gas pipeline is being considered by Williams Transco. The proposal includes a 36” and a 24” pipeline that would be subject to the jurisdiction of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). If approved, it will follow the right-a-way of Tetco and affect about 240 properties in Greene County. There are no compressors planned in our county. Currently, surveys are being conducted for environmental, archeological, and historical, significance. A Proposed Project Summary and Geological Information Survey (GIS) map is available and she will provide a copy to Lisa to share with the Board and attach to these minutes. Mr. Headlee requested additional information.

She and Lisa will participate in a conference call on September 22nd to review the status of the FEMA flood plain mapping. Work continues on the proposed countywide Noise Ordinance with discussion planned at Thursday's Greene County Planning Commission meeting.

Jim Kenney As a service for farmers, Jim Kenney suggested that the Board consider the purchase of an herbicide sprayer to rent. He purchased a 100 gallon boomless sprayer for his use, applied the herbicide "Remedy" to control Multi Flora Rose and blackberries and was impressed with the results. He cautioned that although this particular herbicide does not kill grasses, it is harmful to legumes. The units costs about \$1,700 and are available to rent at a number of Conservation Districts in West Virginia as well as Southern States Stores. Southern States charge \$50 per day and require the user to purchase the herbicide from them. He spoke to Grow Mark in Washington County and found that they are not interested in providing rentals.

Commissioner Snyder expressed concern regarding certification to apply herbicides. Mr. Kenney said that certification is not required for this particular herbicide; however, some do require certification. Commissioner Snyder urged caution regarding the certification. Equipment specifications and methods for transport were also discussed. Commissioner Trader suggested that a survey be conducted to determine if there is interest in renting such a unit. Laurel suggested that we also include an aerator and frost seeder in the survey. Lisa noted that the survey could be included in the newsletter which should be distributed in the near future. Laurel agreed to research the herbicide sprayer.

X. REPORTS FROM COOPERATING AGENCIES AND GUESTS

Bob McBride – Since the last meeting, he visited four Greene County woodland owners.

Chris Hardie – The Planning Commission has rescheduled their meeting for September 22nd. They are working on 17 projects including; 8 gas compressors, 2 coal facilities, 5 commercial structures, one minor subdivision, and an office addition. A total of 300 public notices have been received this year which is about a 15 percent increase from last year. Also on the increase, most likely as a result of the gas industry, is the number of lot splits they received, a total of 55 thus far this year.

XI. The next regular meeting will be announced.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Commissioner Snider to adjourn the meeting at 11:10 a.m. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca K. Salosky
Fiscal Officer

<u>MEETING MINUTES CERTIFICATION</u>
We, the undersigned, agree that the minutes taken above were approved in their entirety by the Greene County Conservation District on _____, 2011.
Chairman, Greene County Conservation District
Secretary, Greene County Conservation District