

MINUTES
**CONSERVATION AND NATURAL
RESOURCES ADVISORY
COUNCIL**

November 21, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT

Gary Kribbs, Chairman
Rocco Ali, Member
Greg Goldman, Member
Stock Illoway, Member
Bob Kirchner, Member
Walt Peechatka, Member
Rick Sayles, Member
Janet Sweeney, Member
David Trimpey, Member
Geraldyn Umstead, Member
Ephraim Zimmerman, Member

Gretchen Leslie, CNRAC Adviser
Katie Woodbury, CNRAC Assistant

GUESTS PRESENT

Mike Walsh, DCNR
Keith Salador, Citizens Advisory Council
Teddy Borawksi, DCNR
Ellen Shultzabarger, DCNR
Kelly Sitch, DCNR
Fred Brown, Citizen

WELCOME

Chairman Kribbs opened the meeting and welcomed members and guests. Mr. Kribbs introduced Geraldyn Umstead, a new member of Council.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council unanimously approved the May 2018 and July 2018 minutes.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Mike Walsh, Deputy Secretary for Administration, DCNR

Deputy Secretary for Administration Mike Walsh gave an overview of the Department's accomplishments for the past two months. Secretary Dunn traveled all over the state to engage with stakeholders and discuss what is most important to them in their region. One of these tours focused on how DCNR is leading by example through investments in sustainable infrastructure, including the installation of new electric vehicle charging stations at 43 state parks and forests

throughout the state. Mr. Walsh also mentioned how fire season kept many DCNR forest firefighters busy both in Pennsylvania and throughout the country. Other exciting news includes the announcement of Community Conservation Partnership Program grants and the moving of the historic Odettes Tavern building, which will become a new visitor center for New Hope.

Janet Sweeney asked how the Department decides where to install electric vehicle charging stations.

Mr. Walsh said DCNR evaluates where there are gaps in the grid of charging stations across the state and prioritizes those areas.

Stock Illoway asked how DCNR is monitoring the number of people using the electric vehicle charging system.

Mr. Walsh said the Department monitors the electricity through the onsite meter.

Greg Goldman said it would be interesting to hear an update from Greg Czarnecki on the Climate Initiative in the near future.

Stock Illoway asked if DCNR forest firefighters receive any special training.

Mr. Walsh and Ellen Shultzabarger, State Forester, said the forest firefighters were out of the office for 3-4 months this year. They are well respected for their firefighting experience and are very well trained; training is a key component in their work.

DCNR ADVISER REPORT

Gretchen Leslie, CNRAC Adviser

Gretchen Leslie mentioned a few highlights from September and October 2018: River of the Year nominations for 2019 opened; Governor Wolf signed HB 544, an act encouraging landowners to make land and water areas available to the public for recreational purposes by limiting liability for motorized recreation; and the Bureau of Forestry received its FSC and SFI certifications.

PRESENTATIONS

Kelly Sitch, Botanist

DCNR's Mock Well Pad

Kelly Sitch gave an overview of the Bureau of Forestry's work with a mock well pad in Tiadaghton State Forest. DCNR tested methods for site reclamation, addressing challenges such as compacted soils, poor grass establishment and invasive species. The Bureau used different soil ripping techniques to see what conditions provide the best environment for native species to establish root systems. Based on the data from these tests, the Bureau developed a standard seed mix for companies to use on DCNR land. The data also informed appropriate maintenance techniques to encourage native establishment and discourage invasive species from taking over the area. The mock well pad is a great opportunity to educate industry about best management practices for site reclamation.

Gary Kribbs asked how the Bureau keeps deer away from the reclamation areas.

Mr. Sitch said traditional deer fencing seemed to be successful over the past few years.

Ephraim Zimmerman asked how industry responded to the data.

Mr. Sitch said some companies have embraced the methods. The Bureau hopes companies will find the information useful and will encourage others to use these methods.

Walt Peechatka asked if DEP's Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation has used any of the information.

Mr. Sitch said the sites are not quite the same, so the information may not be as relevant to them.

**Keith Salador, Executive Director
DEP's Citizen's Advisory Council**

Mr. Salador introduced himself to Council as the new Executive Director for the Citizen's Advisory Council (CAC). CAC will focus primarily on environmental justice and abandoned mine land reclamation in 2019. Mr. Salador expressed his interest in working with Council on relevant issues to both councils.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Gary Kribbs updated Council on his trip to the Loyalsock State Forest to attend a public meeting on the District Forest Management Plan. Many questions arose related to PGE's Loyalsock Creek Pipe Project. As the project is in the early stages, there was no new information presented at the meeting. Bureau of Forestry staff gave a few members of Council a tour of the specific areas of concern. Council determined it would like to send a member to the December 13 public meeting for this project.

WORKGROUP REPORTS

Bob Kirchner formally released the Motorized Recreation Workgroup's report for Council's review. The Snowmobile/ATV Advisory Committee also received a copy of the report.

Paul Zeph updated the group on the Penn's Parks for All strategic planning process. Penn State completed both a telephone survey and an online survey, so they are now analyzing the results. Overall there was nothing too surprising. Most people indicated high support for healthful outdoor recreation activities, with many respondents supporting quiet, natural and wild experiences. Mr. Zeph said Council will have an opportunity to comment on the plan this spring.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Fred Brown, a citizen and advocate for off-road motorized recreation, said he looks forward to reading Council's recommendations for motorized recreation in the state. Mr. Brown said he would welcome the opportunity to work with council on this issue.

MEETING ADJOURNED

The chairman and council adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

Notice of the November meeting was published in a newspaper of general circulation in Dauphin County and mailed to individuals and offices in compliance with the Sunshine Act (1986-84). These minutes constitute the official record of the Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Council; no official transcript is provided.