

MINUTES
**CONSERVATION AND
NATURAL RESOURCES
ADVISORY COUNCIL**

January 24, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT

Gary Kribbs, Chairman
Rocco Ali, Member
Cliff David, Member
Cindy Adams Dunn, DCNR Secretary
Bill Engle, Member
Bill Forrey, Member
Stock Illoyay, Member
Joanne Kilgour, Member
Bob Kirchner, Member
Walt Peechatka, Member
Janet Sweeney, Member
David Trimpey, Member
Ephraim Zimmerman, Member

Gretchen Leslie, CNRAC Adviser
Katie Woodbury, CNRAC Assistant

GUESTS PRESENT

Tom Ford, DCNR
Jake Newton, DCNR
Jeff Schmidt, Sierra Club of PA
Jennie Shade, DCNR
Sven-Erik Spichiger, PA Department of Agriculture

WELCOME

Chairman Kribbs opened the meeting and welcomed members and guests.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council unanimously approved the November 2017 minutes.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Cindy Adams Dunn, Secretary

Secretary Dunn gave an overview of her travels since the November CNRAC meeting. The Department held a meeting in Lancaster for Conservation Landscape partners to discuss ongoing issues and initiatives in their respective landscapes. The Governor's Office will be highlighting agencies during "Cabinet in your Community" events where secretaries from several departments participate in joint press conferences throughout the state; DCNR will be featured at

several events in the future. Other major events include a staff tour of the Delaware Canal, the Bureau of Forestry Winter Meeting, and communications outreach on winter recreation. DCNR staff continue to advance work related to the Diversity Initiative.

Dan Devlin, State Forester, will be retiring at the end of March. He had a significant impact on the work of the Department, and his knowledge and experience will be greatly missed.

Lyme Timber received another \$25 million low-interest loan from PennVEST to acquire the remainder of their original acreage from their first application. The Department will be working closely with Lyme in the coming months to discuss the donated easement.

Bill Engle asked questions related to exports of Pennsylvania timber to China.

Stock Illoway asked if DCNR works with groups like boy scouts and girl scouts, particularly for infrastructure projects.

Secretary Dunn said DCNR does engage partner organizations; One Bird Two Two Habitats is a great example.

Ephraim Zimmerman suggested DCNR should consider involving members of the public in the diversity initiative.

Ephraim Zimmerman asked if the Department works with PennDOT frequently.

Secretary Dunn highlighted a combined DCED, DCNR, PennDOT project in Erie as a model.

DCNR ADVISER REPORT

Gretchen Leslie, CNRAC Adviser

Gretchen Leslie updated Council on ongoing initiatives: the public comment period for Snowmobile/ATV grant regulation changes opened in January; the Department continues to get pressure from the communities and legislators to do more for motorized recreation; DCNR continues to work with the PA Department of Agriculture on Chronic Wasting Disease; Loyalsock is the 2018 River of the Year; the Bureau of Forestry will hold a Riparian Forest Buffer Conference from February 28 – March 1; and the 10-month crews of the Outdoor Corps started their work throughout the state.

PRESENTATIONS

Tom Ford, Director, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation

DCNR Special Funds

Tom Ford gave Council a brief overview of DCNR's special funds. The Governor announced awards for grant round 23 in December 2017, and the Bureau is hoping to announce the PennVEST multifunctional buffer awards in early March. A new C2P2 grant round opened on January 22.

Mr. Ford explained the origin of the special funds. The Pennsylvania legislature created these funds for specific environmental purposes, and the funds have had huge economic impacts since

their creation. The Keystone Fund is funded through a realty transfer tax, and the Environmental Stewardship Fund is funded through landfill disposal tipping fees. Most of DCNR's grants are funded through Keystone. These special funds came into scrutiny in the past budget cycle because there was confusion over whether or not all of the funds in the accounts are committed. Mr. Ford assured Council the remaining funds from each year are all dedicated to specific projects.

Joanne Kilgour asked if DCNR anticipates the same legislative pushback in this year's budget cycle.

Tom Ford said it is possible. The Department is currently working to educate elected officials on the specifics of the funds.

Bob Kirchner asked about the availability of snowmobile funding.

Tom Ford said the snowmobile community should target the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program, which receives funding from the Federal Highway Administration.

Sven-Erik Spichiger, Entomology Program, PA Department Of Agriculture Spotted Lanternfly

Mr. Spichiger gave an overview of issues related to Spotted Lanternfly, an invasive species found in Pennsylvania. The species first appeared in Berks County, but it is native to southeast Asia. It has already proven to be a major pest on grapes and peaches in South Korea. In the US, spotted lanternfly has established populations in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) conducts surveys to monitor the population and its potential spread. Negative survey work allows trade to continue and is essential to several industries in Pennsylvania. The species is commonly found on ailanthus trees, but it also devastates hops, grapes, hardwoods, and nursery industries. In 2017 PDA found spotted lanternfly on basil, blueberries, cucumber, horseradish, milkweed, and maple, walnut, apple, red oak, and hickory trees. When it feeds, the spotted lanternfly ejects a honeydew that eventually turns to mold. It can lay eggs on multiple surfaces, which is why it is so easy for them to move to different locations.

Strategies to control population spread include egg mass removal, tree bands, personal biosecurity, ailanthus tree removal, and community outreach. PDA is working with federal government agencies to develop a more comprehensive control method.

WORKGROUP REPORTS

Bob Kirchner reported he met with Secretary Dunn and DCNR executive staff to go over expectations for a workgroup report. He has attended Larson Design's public meetings on an ATV connector trail between Bloody Skillet and Whiskey Springs. The workgroup hopes to analyze all sides of the issue and come up with recommendations for the Department, but his issue is much larger than just DCNR.

Bill Forrey said the strategic planning workgroup is waiting on results from the State Parks Strategic Plan public survey.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jeff Schmidt, Sierra Club Volunteer, said he is concerned about Larson Design's proposal for a connector trail in Sproul State Forest and the impacts it would have on the resource. The focus of the Department has traditionally been on finding concentrated areas for motorized recreation- not long trails. There are several issues with the current proposal. It is a major trail covering 33 miles by land and traversing 11 water features, including EV streams and wetlands. There are 37 road crossings and five pipeline crossings. It is also adjacent to the Russell Letterman Wild area, and there is still no solution for how to traverse the Bucktail Natural Area. South Renovo is not interested in opening streets to allow the trail to cross their land, and PennDOT to this point has been unwilling to open a necessary bridge for off-highway vehicles. Mr. Schmidt urged the motorized recreation workgroup to consider negative environmental impacts in its recommendations.

Cliff David asked if DCNR has a response to Mr. Schmidt.

Secretary Dunn said DCNR has two ongoing studies. A state representative of the area has several community groups interesting in connecting trails- Larson Design Group is looking at this possibility. The second study focuses on the opportunity for off-highway vehicles statewide, particularly focusing on the traditional concentrated areas. The issue has tremendous legislative interest.

MEETING ADJOURNED

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

Notice of the January 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.