

Practice Approval System

A Certification Process for Conservation Professionals to Design Agricultural Best Management Practices



PennState Extension

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The Center for Agricultural Conservation Assistance Training

Needs Assessment

- skill gap identified at PA in the Balance 2022
- insufficient technical assistance available
- lack of consistency of practice implementation
- increased availability of project funds

Collaborative Approach



PennState Extension

The Center for Agricultural Conservation Assistance Training



Pennsylvania
State Conservation Commission



A photo of participants in the inaugural PAS training in June 2025.

Training Process

- 1 Ag Conservation Keystones Training
- 2 Fundamentals Training
- 3 Applied Training
- 4 Mock Plan
- 5 Real World Project

Educational Approach

- practices as a system
- hands-on classroom training
- independent homework assignment
- real world design w/ oversight

Levels of Certification

Verification Certification

Provisional Certification

Full PAS Certification

Objective

To build technical capacity and consistency in conservation practice implementation through a standardized training and certification program.

Certification Packages

Grazing Management
Watering Systems
Stream Corridor
Barnyard Stormwater
Cropland Stormwater
Cropland Practices

Grazing Management Results

73%

Increased knowledge of grazing management BMPs

87%

Increased confidence in applying practice in professional roles

69%

Plan to increase technical assistance to landowners

Percentage of 58 respondents who reported the above from post-training surveys.

Acknowledgements

A special thanks to the PA State Conservation Commission, Herbert, Rowland & Grubic Inc., Penn State Extension, and my program co-lead, Jacob Tomlinson.