

**MINUTES**  
**CONVENTIONAL OIL AND GAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**March 26, 2015**

**Call to order:** The initial meeting of the Conventional Oil and Gas Advisory (COGAC) was held in the Rachel Carson State Office Building, Harrisburg, PA on March 26, 2015. The meeting convened at 10:01 a.m.

**COGAC MEMBERS PRESENT**

Marc Cline, Sr., Bruce Grindle, Dave Ochs, Burt Waite, Dave Yingling. Non-voting members present: Jim Morrison, Doug D'Amore, Sherry Tune.

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION STAFF PRESENT**

Scott Perry, Kurt Klappkowski, Elizabeth Nolan, Joseph Adams, Seth Pelepko, Myron Suchodolski, Kelly Burch, Joseph Kelly, Susan Ghoweri, Harry Wise, Ann Mathew, Todd Wallace, Jessica Shirley, Katie Hetherington Cunfer and Darek Jagiela.

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF BYLAWS/ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

COGAC began the meeting with a discussion of draft Bylaws provided by the Department. Discussion topics included the scope section and the Committee's oversight, statutory authority for the creation and composition of COGAC, the inclusion of non-voting members on COGAC, term limits, the ability of the Committee to have remote participation by members versus the use of alternates, holding meetings in locations outside of Harrisburg and the use of executive sessions. The discussion concluded with COGAC tabling any formal action with regard to the Bylaws or election of officers.

**REVIEW OF REVISIONS TO 25 PA. CODE CHAPTER 78**

Klappkowski provided an overview and summary of the current draft final rulemaking developed by the Department in response to the almost 25,000 public comments received on the proposed surface activities rulemaking, including the efforts to reach this point in the process and next steps. COGAC raised issues concerning the release of the draft comment and response document, failure to "restart" the process in the wake of the Fiscal Code amendments made by Act 126 of 2014 and consideration of small business impacts in the draft final rulemaking.

COGAC raised concerns about the definitions related to the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (especially "other critical communities") and possible changes to the PNDI process. Several other definitions were discussed, including "abandoned water well" and "certified mail" as well as the scope of the definition of "conventional well" as it relates to gas storage wells. Waite requested that a definition for "oil well" be added to this section. Ochs suggested that the definition for "gathering lines" be altered to reflect the current Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission regulatory structure, to exempt "production lines." Under section 78.15(f), Grindle raised a concern about impacts to scenic rivers as part of oil and gas operations and the ability of resource agencies to veto development projects.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Paul Hart of the Pennsylvania Independent Oil and Gas Association (PIOGA), submitted public comments opposing the draft final rulemaking due to the increased costs of compliance for conventional operators and the process used to develop the draft final rulemaking.

Trisha Sheehan, representing the Moms Clean Air Force, submitted comments supporting protection of children's health through regulation. While a good first step, Ms. Sheehan urged greater protection, including limits on methane leaks at well sites.

## **REVIEW OF REVISIONS TO 25 PA. CODE CHAPTER 78 (CONTINUED)**

Klapkowski continued with the summary and overview of the draft final rulemaking after public comment and lunch. Cline raised an issue concerning requiring operators to replace impacted water supplies with better water than existed prior to drilling. The Department responded that the standard is in place but that a guidance document will be developed to address difficult technical and specific issues related to water supply replacement in addition to the rulemaking. COGAC also raised concerns about the timing of the submission of the predrill survey data, both in terms of the 10-day window and the relation of submission to assignment of the API number.

Under area of review, Waite raised an issue concerning vertical oil wells being based on a 300-foot spacing situation but it appears that the rulemaking requires additional surveys. Pelepko responded that we are balancing risk of communication with actual drainage areas, so it is appropriate to go beyond the basic spacing distances for the purposes of are of review. Waite also raised the issue of landowner response to questionnaires and Grindle asked who bears the liability for communication where the landowner does not respond or a well is not identified.

Under temporary storage, Ochs raised a concern that the 1000 square foot cutoff for the 2:1 slope requirement was too small and that perhaps 3000 or 5000 square feet might be more appropriate for a cutoff. Grindle raised concerns about how manifolded pits would be address under this section.

D'amore raised concerns relating to vandalism and security issues at production facilities. A further comment was made that monthly inspections should not be required especially not on forms provided by the Department. Centralized tank storage was a great concern for the members of COGAC and clarification was requested as to whether or not this section was intended to apply to conventional operations as structured today. The Department stated that this was intended to apply only to waste storage off of the well site and that clarification was appropriate.

Under section 78.58, members expressed concern that the three-day notice requirement would be fairly difficult to comply with given well development timing. For the waste management sections, 78.60 – 78.63, Waite raised concerns about disposal of drill cuttings containing drilling soaps and more information will be provided to the Department to review.

Cline raised issues concerning approximate original contours in terms of post-drilling and post-plugging restoration issues. Adams responded that including "to the extent practicable" allows

for operators to request leaving well sites in their current condition and Perry noted that landowner consent allows for leaving sites in that condition.

Members expressed concerns about the five-gallon spill reporting requirement as being too stringent, especially given that more hazardous liquids can be spilled in greater amounts without notice to the EPA. There was also a request that bioremediation be expressly called out in the remediation section as a potential option for the operator who has a spill or release. Waite expressed basic concerns with the use of the Act 2 process for cleanups, as well as some of the timeframes to have certain steps in the cleanup process to be completed and the 42-gallon cutoff as being too stringent.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Holding another COGAC meeting in April was discussed but not agreed upon. The next COGAC meeting was set for Thursday, August 27, 2015 and Thursday, October 29, 2015.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:21 p.m.