

# **CHAPTER 5 – ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PREPARERS AND AGENCIES CONTACTED**

## **5.0 Environmental Assessment Preparers**

Gary R. Camus, Chief- Federal Aid and Grant Coordination Section, Habitat Planning Division

Michael T. Pruss, Chief- Private Lands Section, Habitat Planning Division

## **5.1 Preparer Qualifications**

### **Gary R. Camus**

#### Education:

Bachelor of Science, Environmental Resource Management, Emphasis in water pollution control – 1979  
The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA

Graduate studies in Water Resources Engineering – 1980-81 -Villanova University, Villanova, PA

Invented and developed device to secure water samples in reservoirs/lakes at various determined depths.

Continuing Education - 1985 to Present- Including environmental, carbon emissions, management, regulatory issues and policy.

#### MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Developed the Pennsylvania Game Commission's first Geographic Information System based mapping project for the Cooperative Public Access program and the first-ever Cooperator Survey with 100% funding acquired from national not-for-profit trade association foundation in its largest grant award to any state, resulting in information sharing online with over 1.5 million hunters and wildlife enthusiasts.

Manage all Commission federal grant programs with current annual budgets of over \$27 Million and tripled federal funding to the agency over a four-year period.

Developed the first approved state monitoring plan for bats that allowed for maximum limestone mining removal utilizing modified blasting plans with no negative impacts to the bats or environment. Resulted in additional limestone recovery valued at \$3 Million and provided for future industry analysis platform.

Diligently represent the Commission on the Governor's Pesticide Advisory Board and Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council, and as the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Climate Change Coordinator resulting in savings and additional non-agency funding of several million dollars for completion of agency objectives.

Authored White Paper for agency carbon credit trading scenario. Determine, evaluate, and participate in policy formulation at the state and federal level regarding green and fossil fuel energy development practices and impacts on agency environmental and fiscal operations.

Currently participating in oil and gas resource extraction policy development at the federal level regarding Pittman-Robertson Act funded programs and state wildlife, land and fiscal impacts.

#### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

2002-Present - Chief, Federal Aid and Grant Coordination Section, **Pennsylvania Game Commission**, Harrisburg, PA

Planned and implemented the Agency's first statewide shooting range safety evaluations and lead reclamation and remediation program and procedures utilizing State-of-Art Treatment Technology on 47 Commission operated law enforcement and public shooting ranges. Negotiated and developed plans

with contractor for a comparable industry savings of \$2 Million. Coordinated range facility upgrades and reconstructions providing for increased downrange safety drop zones on private lands and elimination of any safety hazards.

Monitor all Bureau/Agency activities of over 350 staff to ensure compliance with US Fish and Wildlife Service and Department of Interior regulatory requirements. Successfully managed the Commission's first two Agency-wide federal program audits of an eight-year period resulting in no loss of Federal funding, and developed corrective action plans with resolution and implementation actions. Manage NEPA program for the agency relative to all federal funding programs and actions ranging from land acquisitions to environmental management procedures and actions. Include SHPO Coordination actions for the PGC relative to federal funded programs.

Managed and modified the Agency's Cooperative Public Access Programs resulting in increased access to over 5 million acres of private, federal and state property open to the public for wildlife management and hunting. Develop policy and standard operating procedures.

Managed Bureau reorganization efforts associated with the Divisions of Federal/State Agency Coordination, Game Lands Planning and Development, Federal Aid and Public Access and Engineering. Developed standard operating procedures and Bureau annual budget formulation for two consecutive fiscal years that resulted in significant savings and increased productivity with a 7 percent reduction in workforce.

2003-Present - Environmental Consultant, **Pennsylvania Friends of Wildlife**, Venetia, PA

Co-Founded Pennsylvania Friends of Wildlife, a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization established to assist the Pennsylvania Game Commission in program implementation, funding and providing wildlife-related education to the public. Currently developing federal income tax code charitable tax deduction programs for public access cooperators and carbon credit trading potential for the Commission; developed white paper for such action. Potential for income generation of \$80-120 Million for the Commission.

2003-2009 - Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officer, **Pennsylvania Game Commission** Adams County, PA, District 4-01-1.

Conducted law enforcement activities throughout the year; responsible for almost half of the citations issued in the District for a 5-year period with a 100% conviction rate. Outstanding Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officer for Adams County, PA in each of years 2005-2008. Assisted in Hunter Trapper Education program instruction. Provided guidance and assistance to the Safety Zone Cooperator Program management in the district.

1999-2002 - Wildlife Impact Review Coordinator. **Pennsylvania Game Commission**, Harrisburg, PA

Responsible for National Environmental Policy Act evaluations, Threatened and Endangered Species reviews and critical habitat protection for planned development activities related to the mining industry, oil and gas transmission pipelines, regional electricity transmission lines and FERC licensed hydro-electric production facilities on private and public lands, including State Game Lands. Evaluated and developed species and habitat mitigation plans for likely and observed impacts from planned and past mining practices on species and critical habitat conditions. Allowed for most activities to occur following impact minimization and mitigation plan implementation by industry resulting in significant time and cost savings and maximized resource recovery valued at over \$100 Million.

1991-1999 - Mining Engineer **PA Department of Environmental Protection**, McMurray, PA

Conducted engineering and environmental permit reviews of underground and surface coal and industrial mineral production facilities, forestry/environmental reclamation issues, and wildlife/fisheries issues including streams and wetlands impacted by mining operations. Coordinated and developed mitigation activities associated with wildlife and fisheries habitat impacts, stream and wetland

reconstructions, slope-stability issues, and chemical and passive acid-mine-drainage treatment systems. Co-authored “Engineering Manual for Mining Operations”, a handbook dealing with all engineering aspects of mining in Pennsylvania and the environmental issues requiring attention for use by mining engineers. Managed office Right-to-Know program for employee safety implementation plan.

1984-1991 - Mining Specialist **PA Department of Environmental Protection**, Knox / McMurray, PA  
Performed engineering and environmental permit reviews of surface coal and industrial mineral production sites and wildlife/fisheries issues including stream and wetlands impacted by mining operations. Reviewed and developed/approved mitigation activities associated with streams and wetlands, erosion and sedimentation control plans, and stream and wetland encroachment permits. Designed and implemented geophysical studies utilizing electrical resistivity/conductivity and magnetometer methodologies to detect/verify subsurface conditions consistent with mine subsidence and bedrock fractures relative to surface structure and stream channel damage. Evaluated and developed plans for likely mitigation of damaged areas from past mining practices. Balanced additional surface and underground coal mining of reserves with permitting cost-effective reclamation of problematic environmental conditions with streams and wetlands.

1982-1984 - Co-Manager, **Cool Springs, Inc.** Bethel Park, PA  
Managed multiple-site outdoor recreational facilities including golfing driving ranges, pro shops, swimming, outdoor skating, miniature golfing, softball and hardball batting cages, indoor and outdoor restaurant areas, dance hall and outdoor natural areas. Involved in all facets of operational management, scheduling, planning and contracting. Facilities employed over 75 full and part-time staff. Policy and strategic planning development resulted in 20 percent revenue increase over 2 years. Developed internship college training program with local colleges for summer program staffing issue resolution.

## **Michael T. Pruss**

### Education:

Bachelor of Science: Wildlife and Fisheries Science, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA May 1989

Master of Science: Wildlife Ecology, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH - December 1991

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

#### FARM OWNER and FARM OPERATOR

**Ewe-Win Farm**, Lewistown, PA, August 2002 – current

Own and operate a family-run forage based grazing operation primarily focused on Registered Katahdin meat sheep. Have participated in the CREP, DCP, EQIP and GRP programs on the farm, as well as many related state-based programs. Participate in county and youth fairs, and coordinate, implement and host the annual Mid-Atlantic Hair Sheep breeders auction. Have developed a thorough understanding of the standard farming practices and activities utilized in Pennsylvania and the northeastern United States, as well as the social and economic influences on program participation.

**PRIVATE LANDS SECTION CHIEF - PA Game Commission**, Harrisburg, PA, November 2004 – current.

Administer and supervise all PA Game Commission involvement in the development and statewide implementation of Farm Bill and other private lands habitat enhancement programs throughout the state.

Develop and set quantitative habitat enhancement and conservation goals for private lands within the commonwealth. Represent the Game Commission on the USDA State Technical Committee. Develop training programs and conduct training for PGC staff on Farm Bill and private lands habitat enhancement opportunities. Serve as Game Commission and bureau liaison with federal Farm Bill implementing agencies (e.g. NRCS, FSA) and collaborating state agencies (e.g. DEP, PDA, DCNR, PFBC). Cooperatively work with private conservation partners (e.g. WPC, CBF, DU, PF, NWTF) in developing proposals to implement Farm Bill and private lands habitat enhancement programs within the state. Administered the NRCS/PGC Contribution Agreement for the implementation of CREP. Supervise, direct and monitor activities of 8 field-level habitat biologists in implementing Farm Bill and private lands habitat initiatives. Developed and supervises a monitoring program to assess implementation success and management effects related to Farm Bill and private lands initiatives. Represents the Game Commission on the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Agricultural Conservation Committee and Farm Bill Working Group. Administer and supervise the statewide Public Access Programs to provide recreational use opportunities to hunters and trappers on 3,000,000 acres of private lands through 13,800 individual contracts with private landowners. Hold the Public Agricultural Herbicide Applicator license for our agency's herbicide application operations on over 80,000 acres of non-forested lands. Have Power-of-Attorney signature authority for our agency for all USDA Conservation and Commodity programs. Manage all habitat based agency agreements with local, state and federal agencies. Represent the Game Commission on the PA Prescribed Fire Council and serves as statewide lead on prescribed fire issues.

**REGIONAL WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST - Pheasants Forever, Inc.,** April 2000 – November 2004  
Develop membership programs and local chapters of volunteers in new states and new counties within states in the northeastern U.S. Support, assist, and supervise local chapter volunteers in 29 chapters in 5 states with agency coordination, youth program development, fundraising, legislative activities, equipment acquisition, project prioritization, and habitat planning. Respond to members' wildlife and habitat issues. Develop merchandising, fundraising, and funding programs for the organization in the northeastern U.S. Collect and summarize fundraising and habitat data, and create an annual report for each. Direct the food plot seed program for the northeastern U.S. Coordinate all budgeting procedures for the organization's regional budget. Coordinate with federal and state wildlife and resource agencies on small game season and bag limits issues, public lands habitat development, private lands access, youth program development, and Federal and State wildlife habitat initiatives. Lobby for and advocate Farm Bill programs at the state and federal level, assist with program implementation at the State Technical Committee level, state office level (FSA and NRCS), county office level (Conservation Districts, FSA, NRCS), and on the ground implementation (private contractors, chapter volunteers). Write grants geared toward improving wildlife habitat or acquiring wildlife habitat. Evaluate habitat for current and potential wildlife, assist volunteers and landowners with habitat planning, including writing habitat plans.

**HABITAT SPECIALIST - Arizona Game and Fish Department,** Pinetop, AZ, December 1999 – March 2000

Coordinate with intra-agency departments and programs to incorporate habitat planning and evaluation in field activities. Coordinate with state and federal wildlife and resource agencies to ensure compliance with state wildlife habitat rules and laws. Evaluate federal, state and private project proposals to ensure compliance with applicable habitat and wildlife laws and rules. Recommend, and when necessary, require project changes to minimize impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat. Train department personnel on habitat related issues. Represent the department on inter-agency teams, committees and working groups. Manage sensitive species location data and disseminate location information at appropriate scales for mitigation of proposed projects. Provide wildlife habitat related comments on proposed projects and plans, including timber harvests, grazing plans, U.S. Forest Service forest plans, municipal and private development plans,

road development and improvement, and projects involving navigable waterways. Present information on department programs, policies, opportunities and ongoing and proposed activities to other agencies, municipalities, and the public, including sportsmen's groups, conservation groups, environmental groups, and homeowners associations. Design studies, and collect wildlife and wildlife habitat data to respond to information needs of the program.

**NONGAME SPECIALIST - Arizona Game and Fish Department, Tucson, AZ, August 1995 – December 1999**

Duties: Plan and manage Nongame wildlife project budgets. Develop external funding sources and write and submit grant proposals for internal and external funding sources for wildlife research and monitoring. Supervise up to 3 field biologists, up to 6 summer interns and numerous volunteers on a variety of projects, including Jaguar Management, Mount Graham red squirrel Management, Sonoran Tiger Salamander Survey and Monitoring, and Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy-owl Survey and Management. Coordinate surveys and monitoring of Nongame (primarily federally threatened and endangered) species in southeast Arizona. Survey and monitor wildlife as necessary when projects and subordinates can't meet the demands of customers. Collect and analyze wildlife and habitat data. Develop work plans and annual implementation plans for wildlife species management. Write final project reports, annual performance reports, and federal aid reports for the Department on all Regional Nongame activities. Assist other agencies, University staff, and private researchers in the development of grant proposals to study Nongame species. Review grant proposals and final reports for internal and external grants. Serve on committees and work groups for Nongame species, such as Mexican Spotted-owl Recovery Team, Mount Graham Red Squirrel Study Committee, Sonoran Tiger Salamander Participation Team, Tarahumara Frog Recovery Team, Ramsey Canyon Leopard Frog Conservation Team, and Jaguar Conservation Team. Develop and implement plans for Nongame habitat restoration and monitoring. Serve as Department lead on re-introductions, such as San Pedro River Beaver re-introduction. Review draft Commission Orders and Rules and identify needs for changes in current Rules and Orders. Respond to internal and external requests for information on wildlife. Provide information and interviews to the print and news media. Present wildlife and habitat information to civic groups, educational institutions, conservation groups and sportsmen groups. Plan and implement internal and external training on wildlife survey and monitoring techniques. Develop innovative wildlife techniques to accomplish species survey and monitoring. Represent the Department at public meetings and agency coordination meetings on Nongame issues.

**WILDLIFE SPECIALIST - Arizona Game and Fish Department, Tucson, AZ, February 1992 – August 1995**

Duties: Survey game, Nongame and endangered species, including birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians using helicopters, fixed-wing airplanes, boats, optics, spotlights, mist nets, seines, traps, snares, bionic ears, night vision scopes and goggles, infrared camera devices, various conventional traps, snares, scat analysis, hair traps, tracking, and tape call back/response. Coordinate Regional Heritage Database Management System reporting. Write annual performance reports, including Federal Aid, Nongame, USFWS, and WAFWA reports. Write biological evaluations of sensitive habitats for land acquisition. Take lead on special projects, such as wildlife transplants, following complex procedures, including NEPA process and organizing and hosting public scoping meetings. Coordinate wildlife water checks, maintenance, re-development and development, including cooperative agreements with the BLM, USFS, and State Land Department. Enter, summarize and analyze wildlife survey data. Monitor wildlife capture drug and equipment distribution and use, and write annual drug reports. Provide computer, statistical, and software assistance. Assist on wildlife captures and ongoing research studies, including bighorn sheep, javelina, mountain lion, bobcat and coyote. Respond to nuisance wildlife calls, including manual and chemical restraint of animals and developing positive public and media contacts.

GRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT - **University of New Hampshire**, Durham, NH, August 1989 – December 1991

Coordinated with the USFS and New Hampshire Fish and Game Department to develop a joint moose-deer interaction study. Supervised, trained and coordinated 12 field assistants in data collection and data entry. Mapped deer wintering areas from topographic maps and aerial photos, and analyzed study areas using non-photographic remotely sensed data and ERDAS in conjunction with ARC/INFO. Collected deer and moose density data and browse use data. Analyzed seasonal use of browse biomass by deer and moose relative to pellet group frequency using MINITAB. Frequently used four-wheel drive pick-ups, ATV's and snowmobiles to access study areas. Wrote interim reports, final report, Master's Thesis, and peer-reviewed scientific article on the project.

## **5.2 Governmental Agency Contacts**

The following state or federal agencies have been provided a copy of this Environmental Assessment for review and/ or have been contacted for information relative to implementation of the activities proposed in the Pennsylvania VPA-HIP agreement.

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources

Pennsylvania Department of Natural Resources- Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory

Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council

USDA Farm Service Agency- Pennsylvania State Office

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service- Pennsylvania State Office

## **5.3 Non-Governmental Organization Contacts**

National Wild Turkey Federation- State Biologist

Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts

Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs

Pennsylvania Forestry Association

Pheasants Forever

The Nature Conservancy