

# Gubernatorial Candidate Proposes Dividing DER

**VERNON ACHENBACH, JR.**  
Lancaster Farming Staff  
**MYERSTOWN** (Lebanon Co.) — Announced Republican gubernatorial candidate Tom Ridge has called for the division of the state Department of Environmental Resources into two distinct cabinet-level agencies.

Ridge has been touring the state in recent weeks visiting local GOP party members drumming up support and attempting to increase his name recognition — some political pundits have referred to him as the "most well-known unknown" candidate.

Ridge will apparently be going up against a field of candidates for the job that Gov. Robert Casey is no longer eligible to hold, having served two terms.

Last week, prior to a golf-outing fundraising event at a Lebanon public golf course, he stopped in Myerstown at the American Legion to meet with potential supporters and to discuss local issues of concern.

Among the things he outlined was a government that served its constituents, a bureaucracy with a face and that had as a mission helping people solve problems.

In that light, he discussed dividing DER into two separate entities — a Department of Environmental Protection which would

be concerned with regulation and enforcement; and a Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, which would be concerned with the maintenance of the state park system and state forests.

Additionally, he said that a new attitude must be developed in order to change the role of DER from public adversary to public partner.

During a Tuesday telephone interview from his Washington D.C. office, Ridge said what his proposal means for agriculture in Pennsylvania is what it would mean for other businesses and industry: DER would not cease to monitor the health of the state's environmental resources, but it would be more cooperative in finding solutions instead of merely decreeing an activity illegal.

The specifics of his proposal are not worked out — the logistics, transition and implementation of a plan to dismantle perhaps the largest state agency in terms of responsibilities and to put into place effective sibling agencies.

However, the concept of splitting up DER has received much support from various sectors of the community, including some previous DER secretaries.

Projected effects are equally conceptual.

However, several people who met Ridge have commented on his



**U.S. Congressman Tom Ridge meets with Lebanon County people as part of his effort to gain recognition outside of his home area in his bid for state governor in 1994.**

political abilities and strength in speachmaking and in gaining supporters.

On Tuesday, Ridge said he is still forming a full platform and is relying on input from people he meets as he wends his way across the state, from county to county.

"First of all, as I go about preparing my road map for Pennsylvania's future, and prepare to display my vision, (I hold) that agriculture and rural economic development have a really high

priority."

The Congressional district which Ridge currently represents as a sixth term U.S. congressman is considered primarily rural with some urban areas and includes Erie, Crawford, Mercer and part of Lawrence counties.

Ridge said that representing his home area has presented him with many opportunities to learn more about issues which are widespread, ranging from urban problems to rural problems.

"I have a very diverse district. I've had to learn as much about steel imports as much as dairy price supports."

He also said that he understands urban health care issues, but he also understands that "rural communities have the same needs, but may have to address (those needs) differently.

"For someone from a very diverse district with a heavy rural population, I've just have had experience working farm families and rural people for 11 years.

According to Ridge, he has been on a "journey to know Pennsylvania" before he announced his intent to seek the governorship. "I started a personal journey, privately, a long time ago."

Over the past months, he has been forming an agricultural coalition, headed by Dennis Grumbine, of Myerstown (formerly chairman of the Republican farmers for Bush campaign). Grumbine has also served for a number of years as a state Farm Show commissioner and has been involved in local and state agricultural leadership.

Ridge said he is seeking help from the agricultural community

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## ASCS Announces Rates

2415, Washington, D.C., 20013.


**LIONVILLE** (Chester Co.) — Loan and purchase rates for Chester and Delaware County's 1993 corn, grain sorghum, and soybean crops were recently announced by the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS).

In Chester County, the rates are \$1.91 per bushel for corn, \$2.96 per hundredweight for sorghum, and \$5.12 per bushel for soybeans. In Delaware County, the rates are \$1.92 per bushel for corn, \$2.96 per hundredweight for sorghum, and \$5.12 per bushel for soybeans.

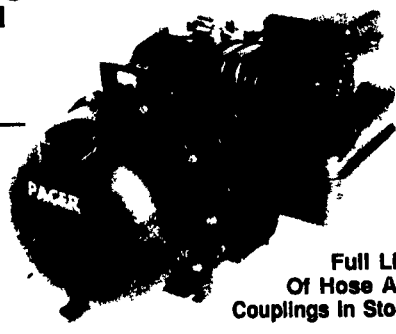
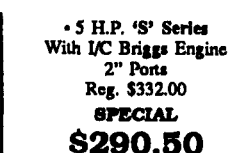


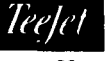


ASCS official Hollis D. Baker said the loan rates reflect changes in the national average price support rates for the crops, as well as adjustments for location and transportation costs. "These adjustments were limited to a three percent change except for soybeans, in addition to the change in the price support rate for these crops."

Price support loans provide operating capital for farmers, enabling them to hold their crop off the market and benefit from price increases that often come after harvest.

Copies of the loan and purchase rates may be obtained from the Chester/Delaware County ASCS office, or by writing to the Cotton, Grain and Rice Price Support Division, USDA-ASCS, P.O. Box



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