



# PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Dear Centre County Residents,

On behalf of the Centre County Board of Commissioners and Planning Commission, we are pleased to present the *2013 Centre County Planning Commission Annual Report*.

This past year, Tom Poorman, representing the Lower Bald Eagle Valley Planning Region from Boggs Township stepped down after nine (9) years as a member of the County Planning Commission. Tom's knowledge and experience as a Township Supervisor provided valuable input that enhanced the work we do throughout the County. We want to thank him for his many years of dedication and service.

From a subdivision and land development perspective, activity remained at one of the lowest levels in recent years. However, requests for services that we provide to the municipalities and community increased. Staff assisted with numerous activities that included but was not limited to grant writing, GIS mapping and data support, development and review of municipal ordinances, public water system trouble shooting and maintenance, housing affordability, farmland preservation, source water protection, and floodplain information. The Planning Office also increased its support to local economic development groups in an effort to retain jobs, grow local businesses, and increase our visibility to businesses looking to move to Centre County.

As we move ahead in 2014, our staff looks forward to working with the local communities to ensure that all of the residents have the opportunity to live, work, and play in this great place that we call home – Centre County.

Sincerely,

*Robert B. Jacobs, AICP*

Planning Director

### MISSION STATEMENT:

It is the mission of the Centre County Planning and Community Development Office to provide the citizens of Centre County with professional planning services by promoting a coordinated and cost effective approach to the orderly growth and development of their communities.

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## SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

One of the important tasks performed by the Planning & Community Development Office is the administration of the Centre County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO). This aspect of 'county planning' is done to help ensure that benefits realized by development activity outweigh negative impacts that might result from an increase in the demand on local facilities and services as well as providing assistance concerning developer compliance with applicable local, state and federal land use controls.

To achieve this goal, the Planning & Community Development Office staff is charged with the duty of administering the County's Ordinance. The staff's main focus is within the 25 municipalities that fall under the jurisdiction of the County's SALDO, as well as to receive, review and monitor all plans originating from those municipalities that have adopted their own local subdivision and land development ordinances. The administration of the County's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance is the direct responsibility of staff members Anson Burwell and Chris Schnure.



In comparison of the subdivision and land development activity data for 2013, the total number of 'subdivision lots' created computes to 145 county-wide and represents a 27% decrease in the number of lots created from the previous year's total of 199 lots. This change seems consistent with and reflects the continued

and sustained affects of the economic climate of the last five years.

Unlike the above, 'land development units' data compiled in 2013 show a total of 703 units. This number represents a 19% decrease in land development activity from last year's total of 866 units. These numbers are consistent with last year's numbers and primarily reflect new student apartment housing in the Centre Region. Three plans make up the bulk of the development activity, namely The Grove at State College (creating 392 residential units in the Toftrees Planned Community in Patton Township), the Turnberry Traditional Town Development, Phase 2A (creating 95 residential units in Ferguson Township) and the Rosewood Cove Land Development, Phases 2 & 3 (creating 48 residential units just outside of the Centre Region in Spring Township).



Upon comparison of the data compiled for 2013 with the previous year's numbers, it seems evident that the national, state and local economic conditions are still having negative effects on growth patterns regarding subdivisions creating new residential lots; however, the continued rise in the creation of residential land development units would seem to indicate that the inventories of existing stock has been depleted such that there is now a market and growing

demand for these type of units, especially within the Centre Region. For example, the 2013 development activity for the creation of new residential lots is at a level similar to the county totals compiled in 2012....which are well below 50% of the numbers generated in previous years; however, the creation of residential land development units has nearly reached the high-water mark of 870 unit total compiled in 2005 when land development was at a peak.

In regard to the various indicators that we routinely observe, the consistently low numbers of subdivision lots created in the past several years coupled with the significant increases in land development activity is a pattern that seems to indicate that the bottom may have finally been reached with a resurgence in activity predicted to occur locally. If our observation are correct, we predict that the 2014 numbers will reflect a slight upward trend in overall development activity.

If you would like to review additional information regarding development activity, please reference the 2013 Centre County Subdivision and Land Development Activity Report on file at the following website: [www.centrecountypa.gov](http://www.centrecountypa.gov)



COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL PLANNING CONTROLS

2014

	Adopted Comprehensive Plan	Planning Commission	Municipal SALDO Applies	County SALDO Ordinance Applies	Zoning Ordinance	Parkland Dedication Ordinance	Building Permit Ordinance	Federal Flood Insurance Program	Ag Security Area	Storm-Water Ordinance
<b>CENTRE COUNTY</b>	X	X		X						X
<b>CENTRE REGION</b>										
State College Borough	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X
College Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Ferguson Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Halfmoon Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Harris Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Patton Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>LOWER BALD EAGLE VALLEY REGION</b>										
Howard Borough	X	X		X	X		X	X		
Milesburg Borough	X	X		X	X		X	X		
Boggs Township	X			X	X		X	X		X
Curtin Township				X			X			
Howard Township	X			X			X	X		
Liberty Township	X	X	X		X		X	X		X
<b>NIITTANY VALLEY REGION</b>										
Bellefonte Borough	X	X	X		X		X	X		X
Benner Township	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X
Marion Township	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Spring Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Walker Township	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>MOSHANNON VALLEY REGION</b>										
Philipsburg Borough	X	X		X	X		X	X		
Rush Township	X	X	X		X		X	X		
<b>MOUNTAINTOP REGION</b>										
Snow Shoe Borough	X	X		X	X		X	X		
Burnside Township	X			X			X	X		
Snow Shoe Township	X			X	X		X	X		
<b>PENNS VALLEY REGION</b>										
Centre Hall Borough	X	X		X	X		X	X		
Millheim Borough	X	X		X	X		X	X		
Gregg Township	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Haines Township	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	
Miles Township	X			X	X		X	X	X	
Penn Township	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	
Potter Township	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>UPPER BALD EAGLE REGION</b>										
Port Matilda Borough	X	X		X	X		X	X		
Unionville Borough				X	X		X	X		
Huston Township	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	
Taylor Township				X	X		X	X	X	
Union Township	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	
Worth Township	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X

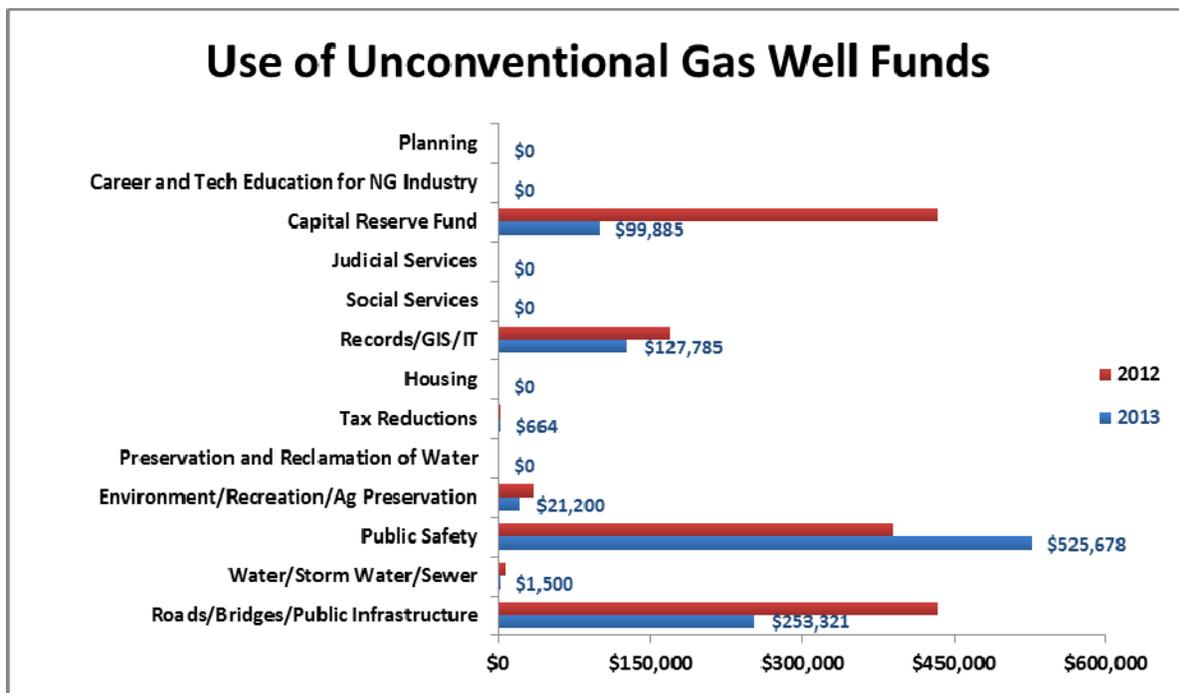
## CENTRE COUNTY MARCELLUS SHALE GAS DRILLING: 2013

In 2010, the Centre County Planning and Community Development Office took the lead to facilitate a county-based natural gas task force to address the emerging Marcellus Shale Gas industry opportunities and challenges. That year, 2010, 40 Marcellus gas wells were drilled. In 2013, no Marcellus Shale Gas wells were drilled. As a result of the diminishing activity, the Centre County Natural Gas Task Force reduced their meeting sched-

ule but continues to maintain current information on their website at <http://www.centrecountypa.gov/index.aspx?NID=210>. The end of year tally shows 63 Marcellus wells drilled, 24 in production, and four (4) open permits.

**Unconventional Gas Well Fund** disbursements occurred in July 2013 to each municipality in Centre County. This dis-

bursement is the second of 15 annual payments scheduled to occur under the provisions of Act 13, which established a payment provision for distribution of natural gas impact fees. The Act also stipulated that the impact fees be used for 13 activities. The chart below tabulates how Centre County’s municipalities are using their impact fee distributions.



## RURAL GASIFICATION

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded a \$160,000 grant to SEDA-COG, Centre, Clinton and Mifflin Counties to identify priority natural gas expansion projects in each county. The feasibility study, titled the Rural Gas Utilization Initiative (RGUI), will identify targeted investment areas (TIAs) to which natural gas infrastructure could be extended and the legal and/or administrative framework to operate and/or maintain the infrastructure by way of a cooperative, authority, or board-type model.

Target Investment Areas (TIAs) will be identified and analyzed using Geographic

Information Systems (GIS) data and software. These TIAs will be assessed on a number of weighted factors to determine the locations of concentrations or clusters of potential users and prioritize the identified areas to determine if the site is in close proximity to existing natural gas service. GIS staff from each county met on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014, to review what data is available at each county and begin to refine the process of identifying the TIAs.

The funding, maintenance, and operation of a natural gas line extension will require legal guidance, recommendations, and input from the Pennsylvania Public Utility

Commission. Other entities with knowledge of how to form and administer an operational body for natural gas line extensions on a multi-county level will need to be consulted. A request for proposal (RFP) to obtain a Utility Law professional was issued June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

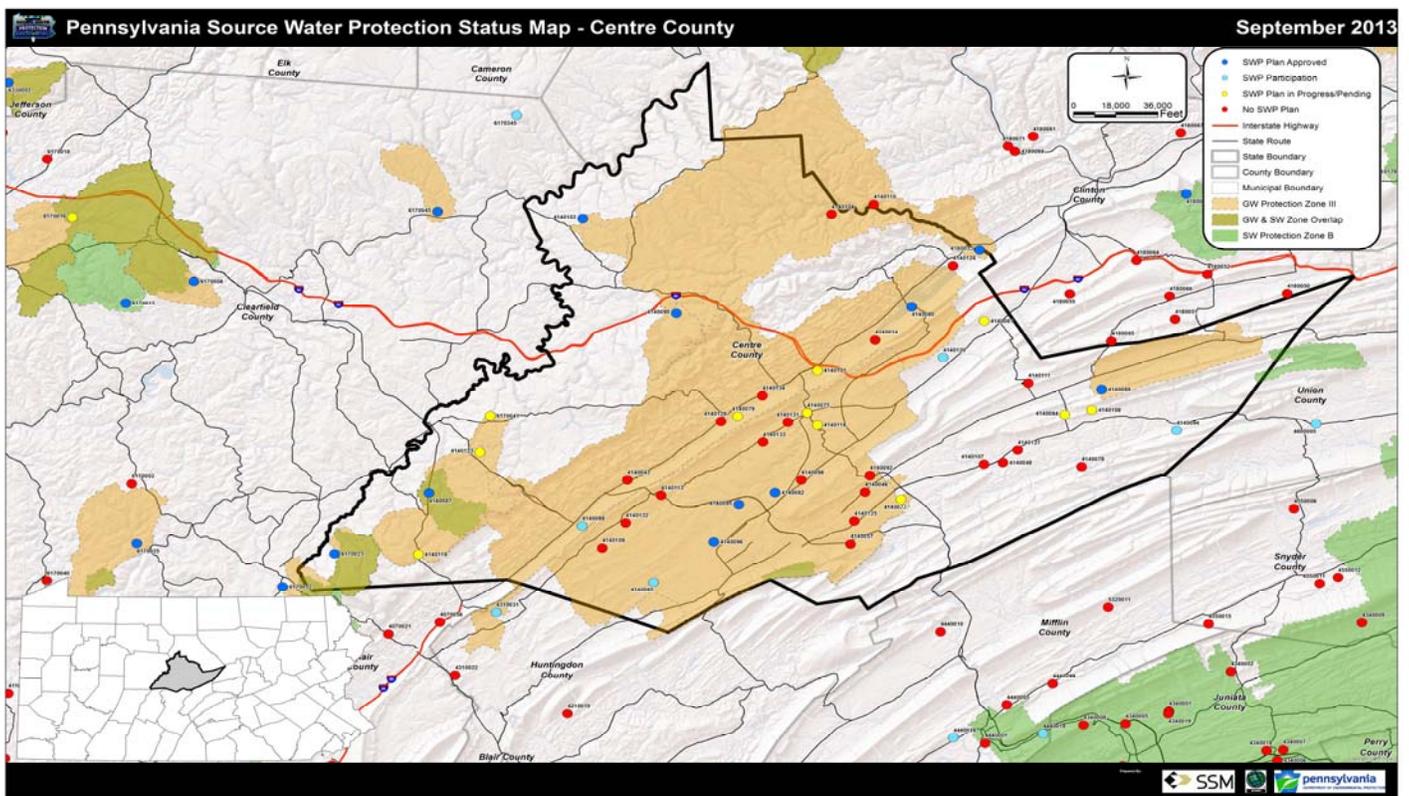
In addition, funding for capital investments for these identified projects will be researched and explored. Don Kiel, Project Manager at SEDA-COG, is the primary lead on this initiative. The feasibility study is to be completed in March 2015.

## SOURCE WATER PROTECTION PLANNING

Source Water Protection is a voluntary local effort to protect drinking water sources from pollution. At the end of 2012, only four (4) of Centre County’s 45 drinking water systems had approved Source Water Protection Plans (College Township, Howard Borough, Penn State University, and State College Borough). In 2013 four (4) more plans were added to the completed list and 15 additional water

systems were enlisted in the PA Department of Environmental Protection Source Water Protection program with plans in progress. Plans completed in 2013 included:

- MountainTop Regional Water Authority serving residents in Burnside Township, Snow Shoe Borough and Snowshoe Township.
- Philipsburg PA American Water
- Miles Township Water Authority—East serving residents in Rebersburg, Smullton and a portion of Miles Township.
- Cooper Township Municipal Authority serving residents in Clearfield County from a water source located in Rush Township, Centre County.



## CENTRE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATES

**Implementable Comprehensive Plan Approach:** In 2013, the Centre County Planning and Community Development Office began to transition their approach to updating the county’s comprehensive plan from a format that was heavily dependent upon the compilation of background data to an approach now favored by the PA Department of Community and Economic Development know as an “implementable comprehensive plan”. The “implementable compre-

hensive plan” approach is based on the assessment of community issues (problems to be solved, needs to be addressed, and opportunities to be pursued) AND recommendations to resolve the issues.

Using this approach, staff developed a chapter specific to **forest land** and identified eight (8) issues of importance. The three high priority issues addressed were:

- Forest fragmentation and deforestation caused by industrial activities.
- Lack of landowner education relative to the retention of forested lands.
- The need to protect drinking water through forest conservation practices.

Moving forward, the “implementable comprehensive plan” approach will be refined as new topics are addressed. By the end of 2013, efforts were underway to assess the issues relative to **economic development** in the county.

## TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

CCPCDO staff continues to take a proactive approach to the coordination of land use and transportation infrastructure development. In conjunction with the Centre Regional Planning Agency (CRPA), the CCPCDO provides staff support to the federally governed Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO).

The CCMPO is the lead entity responsible for developing the county's transportation plans and allocating federal, state and some local transportation funds toward priority projects.

### Act 89 - A comprehensive funding package for Pennsylvania

After years of compounding funding issues and much debate, Pennsylvania took a significant step toward addressing the transportation infrastructure funding gap.

On Nov. 25, 2013, Governor Tom Corbett came to Potters Mills in Centre County to sign into law House Bill 1060, Pennsylvania's most comprehensive piece of state

transportation legislation in decades. This legislation, known as Act 89, will invest an additional \$2.3 billion into transportation by the fifth year of the plan. Partial funding for the new transportation package is being derived from the elimination of the flat 12-cent gas tax and modernizing an outdated transportation financing structure through the uncapping of the wholesale, Oil Company Franchise Tax.

While this state funding package will help the Commonwealth address a number of much needed transportation improvements, the funding challenges on the federal level remain. September 2014 will mark the sunset of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) federal transportation funding legislation.

The CCMPO will be monitoring closely the progress on any future federal funding packages or continuing resolutions.

### 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program

While Act 89 was certainly good news for Pennsylvania, the timeline used to ensure its passage, did delay development of the new 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program or TIP.

The TIP identifies the county's highest priority transportation projects, develops a multi-year program of implementation, and identifies available federal and non-federal funding for the programmed project phases. The TIP covers a four-year period of investment, must be fiscally-constrained, and is updated every two years through a cooperative effort of local, state and federal agencies, including participation by the general public.

The CCMPO will be working diligently throughout the first half of 2014 to move the new TIP forward to final adoption in the fall.

### Long Range Transportation Plan 2044

CCPCDO and CCMPO staffs

spent a significant part of 2013 developing a new Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

MPOs are required by federal law to update their LRTPs every 4 years. Centre County's LRTP 2040 was adopted in 2010 and will sunset upon the adoption of a new LRTP 2044 in September 2014.

The LRTP process includes development of a candidate project wish list, prioritization of those projects and financial analysis to determine what projects could be programmed over the next 30 years.

The CCMPO will be finalizing the plan elements over the first half of 2014, including ongoing solicitation of comments, to ensure that this plan best captures the transportation needs and wants of the larger Centre County community.

### To Learn More

To learn more about the TIP, LRTP and all the other initiatives being undertaken by the CCMPO, please visit [www.ccmppo.net](http://www.ccmppo.net).

## ROUTE 322 POTTERS MILLS GAP

Throughout 2013, PennDOT and their consultant team from McCormick Taylor have completed significant work on the Route 322 Potters Mills Gap Transportation Project.

This project is intended to construct safety and congestion improvements on a 3.75-mile long section of Route 322 in Potter Township, Centre County.

The project area begins west of the Route 322/Route 144 intersection at Potters Mills and extends east to the Centre County/Mifflin County line.

This two-lane section of Route 322 is known for motorist delays due to truck traffic negotiating steep grades and the absence of alternate routes during incident-related road

closures. The Route 322/Route 144 intersection also exhibits a crash history in excess of the statewide average, despite a number of safety improvements previously undertaken by PennDOT to

improve safety.

The first phase of construction is slated to be let in late 2014 with completion of the entire project expected in 2019.



## HOUSING



Centre County offers a First Time Home Buyer Program to eligible County residents providing down payment and closing costs assistance in the amount of \$10,000 or 10% of the purchase price, whichever is less. The assistance is in the form of a zero percent deferred loan that is made payable when the house is sold, when the mortgage is paid off, when the house is no longer used as a principal residence, or is refinanced for more than 100% of the purchase price.

In 2013, the County, through its participating lenders, assisted three home buyers. Since the inception of the program, 310 home buyers have taken advantage of the program. For more information visit <http://www.centrecountypa.gov/index.aspx?NID=218> or call the Centre County

Planning Office at 355-6791.

In November 2013, the Centre County Board of Commissioners signed an agreement with the Centre County Housing and Land Trust to provide 15 hours per week of the Housing Coordinator's staff time to serve as the Housing and Land Trust's Executive Director.

The expanded role of the Housing Coordinator's position will enable the Housing and Land Trust to further develop its programs to better serve the affordable housing needs of the communities and residents of our County.

Administration of the Centre County Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program continues in the Penns Valley Region. The program is designed to bring

order to reduce ongoing and future maintenance costs, promote energy efficiency, and to preserve decent affordable owner-occupied housing. Interested homeowners should call the Planning Office for more information.

Staff is actively involved with the Centre County Affordable Housing Coalition in an effort to increase awareness of affordable housing issues in our communities.

In 2012, Centre County was awarded \$150,000 of PHARE (Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement) Funds under Act 13, Natural Gas Impact Fee. In 2013, the funds will be used for rental assistance, helping individuals and families with rent and security deposits and preventing homelessness.

## CENTRE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

The mission of the Agricultural Land Preservation Board is to preserve the County's prime agricultural land. The nine member board was established in 1989 and has purchased Agricultural Conservation Easements on 41 farms in seven townships totaling 6,432 acres. Funding for easement purchases comes from the Bureau of Farmland

Preservation, Centre County Government, and the federal Farm and Ranchland Protection Program.

In 2013, the Agricultural Land Preservation Board completed preservation on two farms. The program utilized the updated LESA system for the first time in 2013 to score and rank over

65 applicants to the Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement Program. The three top-ranking farms were selected for easement purchase. Their easement placement is scheduled to be completed in mid-2014.

## CENTRE COUNTY FARMLAND TRUST

The Centre County Farmland Trust is a publicly supported, tax exempt, nonprofit organization [501(c)(3)]. The trust is authorized by the Internal Revenue Service and the Pennsylvania Department of State to accept, hold and administer conservation easements. Governed by a 15 member Board of Trustees established in 1996, the Trust has preserved 11 farms totaling over 1,000 acres. Two farms were preserved in 2012, one with exceptional historic value in Penns Valley

Land owners wishing to donate a conservation easement as a charitable gift must meet the minimum criteria established by

the Internal Revenue Service and the Trust. Land owners must have a current survey and legal description of the property along with an appraisal by a Certified General Appraiser who determines the easement value. Once approved by the trustees, an easement deed is prepared along with extensive documentation that establishes the condition of the land at the time the easement deed is recorded. Land owners who qualify may be able to claim their donation as a charitable gift and take advantage of federal tax reductions. Eased properties are inspected annually by the Board to en-

sure that the easement deed is being observed. Conservation easements are permanent and become part of the deed when land is sold or transferred. The land owner still owns the land but has donated the right of present and future land owners to develop the property.

Funding comes from annual memberships of individuals, families and corporate sponsors. Grants to support specific projects have come from the Hamer Foundation, Centre County Community Foundation, The Bureau of Farmland Preservation, Wal-Mart and Sam's Club.

## CENTRE COUNTY 2013 WEST NILE VIRUS SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL PROGRAM



West Nile Virus is a disease that resides in bird populations and can be transmitted to humans through the bite of a mosquito that has previously bitten an infected bird. While most cases of West Nile Virus in humans are mild or even undetected, in some instances the virus can result in inflammation of the brain or spinal cord, and can result in death.

Since mid year 2000, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) has made funds available in the form of annual grants to Pennsylvania Counties for the purpose of monitoring the local mosquito population for the presence of West Nile Virus, for the purchase of equipment and pesticide products for controlling mosquito numbers, and for public outreach to teach citizens how to protect themselves from becoming infected by West Nile Virus.

In Centre County the West Nile Virus (WNV) Program is administered by the CCPCDO. In 2013 the staffing consisted of a County Coordinator and one field assistant, both of whom are part time County employees.

### Funding

The Centre County West Nile Virus (WNV) Program expended \$51,977 in grant funding in 2013. Centre County's PADEP funding for the 2014 WNV Program will be \$42,548.

### Surveillance and Control

During the surveillance season from early April until the end of September, larval and adult mosquitoes from 400 test sites

throughout the County are captured and sent to PADEP in Harrisburg for identification. The adult mosquitoes are further tested for West Nile Virus if they are found to be a species that can infect humans with the virus. In 2013 there were 741 sampling events in Centre County that resulted in 32,090 mosquitoes being shipped for identification and possible testing. There were 594 West Nile Virus tests performed on adult Centre County mosquitoes, with 16 positive results. The County's WNV program is also responsible for collecting and shipping dead birds for virus testing. Sixteen birds from Centre County were tested in 2013, with four testing positive for West Nile Virus.

Unlike 2012, when a human case of WNV was confirmed in Centre County, there were none in the County in 2013. Nor were there any cases of animals reported by veterinarians as being infected with the virus in 2013.



The presence of a positive mosquito or the presence of large numbers of a mosquito species that can transmit the virus to humans can result in the application of pesticides to reduce the population of these "disease vectors". In 2013, Centre County West Nile Virus staff conducted 135 pesticide applications to control mosquito numbers.

Additionally, County WNV staff responded to 36 citizen requests for information, dead bird collection, or mosquito surveillance and control.

### Public Education

Public education is also an important part

of the West Nile Virus program. In 2013, the County West Nile Virus program gave WNV presentations to the six County Senior Centers, and also maintained an educational booth at the Grange Fair in Centre Hall.

### Protect Yourself

Following several years of declining positive mosquito results, in 2010 West Nile Virus began a significant return to Pennsylvania. By 2012 there were 3,410 positive mosquito results statewide, along with 135 birds and 51 veterinary (horse) cases. Sixty human cases of WNV were confirmed in 2012, with 4 deaths. In 2013 there were eleven human cases with one death. Residents should take reasonable precautions to avoid



mosquito bites, such as wearing long sleeves and pants where mosquitoes are active, and using insect repellents containing DEET or Picaradin. Elimination of standing water around the home is the single most important thing residents can do to reduce breeding populations. Rain gutters, swimming pool covers, bird baths, ornamental ponds, and especially tires are all capable of breeding large amounts of mosquitoes.



## GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS) AND MAPPING



The internal and external GIS websites were upgraded in 2012 to provide the public and County employees with more tools, data layers and layer control options. The [public GIS website](http://centrecountypa.gov/index.aspx?NID=505) (<http://centrecountypa.gov/index.aspx?NID=505>) is a free service offered by Centre County for anyone with an internet connection. The [internal website](http://centrecountypa.gov/index.aspx?NID=205) (<http://centrecountypa.gov/index.aspx?NID=205>) is available through a WebIA subscription and provides users with more detailed information not provided on the public GIS site.

Centre County Government provides mapping services to municipalities, conservation groups, authorities, school districts, landowners, businesses, and the general public. Tax parcel boundaries, streets, buildings, floodplains, land use, and zoning are basic features on most maps; other datasets may be available upon request.

## FACT SHEET UPDATES

The countywide and regional fact sheets have been updated and are available for download in PDF from the Planning and Community Development Office’s website under the link “Data and Maps”.

The countywide fact sheet references a variety of data sources for population demographics, labor force statistics, employer establishments, housing, education, infrastructure, agriculture, land use, and historic resources. When possible, the most up-to-date information is presented, depending on the source of data and data release dates.

The regional fact sheets reference population, labor force, economic statistics, education, and housing. The regional

fact sheets also cite a number of references and display the most recent data available at the time of publish. Regional fact sheets, in most circumstances, provide municipal level data and compare those figures with the regional landscape.

The fact sheets reference the following sources: U.S. Census Bureau’s Decennial Census, U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, Pennsylvania Department of Education, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, U.S. Census Bureau’s Economic Survey, Centre County Association of Realtors, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Centre County Building Report, Centre County 2003

Comprehensive Plan, Central Pennsylvania Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

The fact sheets are typically updated to reflect the decennial census timeline (updates in 1990, 2000, and 2010). The U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) now offers annual updates on social, housing, economic, and demographic characteristics in 1-, 3-, and 5-year cycles. The ACS is an estimate based on a sample population and does not collect the same data as the ten-year cycle census.

## GRANT ASSISTANCE / ADMINISTRATION

County planning staff provided support in various forms for the following grant projects completed or underway in 2013. In some cases staff time was used as in-kind services and in others, staff met the compliance requirements for receipt of the reimbursement dollars; acting as project administrator.

**Redevelopment Assistance Capitol Program (RACP)- Central PA Institute of Science and Technology,**

**Transportation Training Center (TTC):** The TTC officially opened in 2013 providing career and technical educational training opportunities for high school students and adults in both heavy equipment operations and diesel equipment maintenance and



repair. The county planning staff administered the \$5 million RACP allocation that reimbursed CPI for approximately 50% of their total construction costs.



**MAP 21 | Transportation Alternatives – Bellefonte Rail Diesel Car #9167:** Due to the historic significance of this rail diesel car, Federal grant requirements stipulated that the project scope of work meet the US Department of the Interiors “Standards for Rehabilitation”. Planning staff provided assistance with the development of the project. Grant funds in the amount of \$295,000 will be used to refurbish the rail car making it operational for excursion trips.

## GRANT ASSISTANCE / ADMINISTRATION CONT'D

### Community Conservation and Economic Development Program – CCC Camp S-121 Marker, Curtin Township:



In June 2013 on the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the CCC Camp's opening, the Curtin Township Supervisors dedicated a historical marker at the site of the Civilian Conservation Corps Camp, formerly located mid-way between the villages of Monument and Orviston. This \$5000 grant paid for the manufacture and installation of a bronze plaque that was attached to a native stone commemorating the location of the CCC Camp site. Many local volunteers, including Boy Scout Troop #54 participated in this effort.



**PA Community Forest Grant:** Two (2) PA Community Forest grant applications were developed by staff and submitted on behalf of Philipsburg Borough. The first grant was for \$1,500 to purchase 10 trees and materials

for a planting project on North Centre Street (SR 53). This project will be completed with Borough staff and volunteers. The second grant, \$1,420, is to conduct a street tree inventory of the entire Borough. This project will be completed by Penn State along with Borough staff and volunteers.

**Centre County's ACT 13 PHARE Grant Program:** The Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement (PHARE) Program provides funding to address housing needs in counties impacted by the natural gas industry. Centre County planning staff provided grant writing assistance and implementation guidance for two such projects in 2013 as follows:

- In July 2013, Central PA Community Action began accepting applications for rental assistance with priority given to individuals living in communities most impacted by the natural gas activities. The \$150,000 grant award received from the PA Housing Finance Agency combined with \$50,000 from Centre County's Housing Trust Fund (ACT 137) resulted in a \$200,000 program.
- In September 2013, Round Two PHARE awards were announced providing funds for rental assistance and housing unit rehabilitation. This project will use a combined funding amount totaling \$200,000

### DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2):

- Howard Borough Pedestrian/Bicycle Trail: DCNR provided \$46,000 toward the completion of ¾-mile trail following the historic Bald Eagle Valley Railroad right-of-way connecting the East End and West End Borough Parks. These funds coupled with Transportation Enhancement (TE) funding created a total \$252,000 project. Ribbon cutting for this project occurred on September 24, 2013.
- Penns Valley Rails to Trails Feasibility Study/ DCNR Funding: Staff provided administrative assistance for this \$64,000 project to determine trail feasibility along a 27-mile historic rail corridor. The study will be finalized in Summer 2014. In early 2014, staff aided Gregg Township with grant applications to DCNR and PennDOT for design and construction of the Spring Mills Trail segment. A decision on these grants



will be announced in late 2014.

- Philipsburg 13<sup>th</sup> Street/Powerhouse Fields: Through the combined efforts of Philipsburg Borough, the Cold Stream Recreation Foundation, and NRG Energy Company, staff facilitated the submittal of a grant request for a successful award of \$40,000 to refurbish a Borough playground with new equipment and a walking path.

**US Environmental Protection Administration | STAG:** Staff provided assistance toward the successful completion of a \$250,000 grant awarded to the Haines-Aaronsburg Municipal Authority (HAMA) and Millheim Borough. These funds will be used to complete a water line inter-connect between the respective water systems.

### Centre County Natural Gas Vehicle Program:



Two grants were awarded in 2013 by the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to Centre County for 50 percent (50%) of the cost of converting or upfitting 21 diesel or gasoline fueled vehicles to

**GRANTS CONT'D**

operate on compressed natural gas. The total of these two grants was \$210,505. Participating with the county on this effort are: Centre County Office of Transportation, Centre Area Transportation Authority, Centre County Recycling and Refuse Authority, Ferguson Township and Patton Township.

**MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND SUPPORT**

The Planning Office has a great working relationship with the County's municipalities. The support we provide helps municipalities reduce their overall costs with the development and administration of their ordinances. In 2013, the Planning Office provided support to the following municipalities for zoning ordinance development and amendments: Haines Township, Milesburg Borough, Miles Township, Port Matilda Borough, Rush Township, and

Unionville Borough. The Planning Office also assisted Benner and Potter Townships with the development of Official Map Ordinances which help municipalities plan for future roads, parks, trails, and special protection areas.

The Planning Office continues to provide staff support to the following regional municipal planning groups: Nittany Valley Joint Planning Commission,

Penns Valley Region Planning Commission, and the Upper Bald Eagle/ Halfmoon COG. These planning groups meet on a regular basis to collaborate on important issues, share ideas, address public safety concerns, and provide cost effective services across municipal boundaries. We applaud their cooperative efforts.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM**

The Centre County CDBG program is a comprehensive source of federal funding that helps the rural municipalities in Centre County meet their community development needs in Low to Moderate Income communities. Over \$8.9 million of Federal CDBG Funds have gone into improvements to critical public facilities or the provision of needed services in Centre County since the programs inception in 1984.

Infrastructure projects, such as public water, sewer, storm-water and streets are considered highest priority by state and federal grant administrators and by Centre County Planners. This priority can be seen in the 2013 CDBG funding awards indicated in the table and is expected to continue into the foreseeable future. Continuing changes in water and sewer regulations, along with aging infrastructure, places an unduly heavy financial burden on rural, low income residents

when their community needs to expend funds for necessary system improvements. In the past 18 years CDBG funds have helped over half the municipal water suppliers in Centre County come into or stay in compliance with basic requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act. Insuring residents access to a safe and dependable supply of drinking water.

Federal program rules require that the expenditure of CDBG funds must meet one of three primary National Objectives. These are: Benefit to Low and Moderate Income (LMI) Families; Elimination of

Slum & Blight; and Urgent Threats to Public Safety. A minimum of 70% of a County's CDBG expenditure must be to the LMI objective which is determined by the US Census or by conducting an income survey. Centre County's program has historically funded projects that benefit LMI families. The CCPCDO maintains a close working relationship with all the municipalities and municipal Water and Sewer Boards in the County and seeks the input of these local officials in determining how to allocate the County's annual entitlement of CDBG

Funds. Overwhelmingly, local officials support continued infrastructure funding in the low income sections of the County. Often, the County's CDBG funds are used to assist the local communities to leverage other funding sources to help address the large financial demands for infrastructure upgrades. The funding philosophy of the Centre County Commissioners has been that water and sewer infrastructure improvements contributes both to the immediate health of a community and also provides a solid base for long term economic development.

Project	Municipality	Community	2013 CDBG Funding
Water Main Replacement	Haines Twp.	Woodward	\$157,000
Water Meter Purchase	Miles Twp.	Madisonburg	\$41,000
Total System Water Meter	Port Matilda Boro	Port Matilda	\$40,973

## 2013 CCPCDO STAFF

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## 2013 PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS

The Centre County Planning Commission is comprised of elected officials and interested citizens to represent the regions of the County. The Commission meets on the third Tuesday of each month in the Willowbank Office Building. The Commission provides valuable input on the activities of the CCPCDO.

<i>Freddie Persic, Chairman</i>	<i>Centre Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/16</i>
<i>Robert P. Dannaker, Vice-Chairman</i>	<i>Nittany Valley Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/15</i>
<i>Angelica "Mimi" Wutz, Secretary</i>	<i>Upper Bald Eagle Valley Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/14</i>
<i>Michele L. Barbin</i>	<i>Mountaintop Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/15</i>
<i>D. Richard Francke</i>	<i>Centre Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/16</i>
<i>Dennis Hameister</i>	<i>Centre Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/15</i>
<i>Christopher Kunes</i>	<i>Penns Valley Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/14</i>
<i>Jack Shannon</i>	<i>Moshannon Valley Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/14</i>
<i>Vacant</i>	<i>Lower Bald Eagle Valley Region</i>	<i>Term Expires: 12/31/16</i>

## 2013 CENTRE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Stephen G. Dershem, Chairman

C. Chris Exarchos

Michael Pipe

Timothy T. Boyde, County Administrator

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**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**

[WWW.CENTRECOUNTYPA.GOV/  
PLANNING](http://WWW.CENTRECOUNTYPA.GOV/PLANNING)

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