



Conservation Conversation

Centre County Conservation District 2012 Annual Report

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The Centre County Conservation District celebrated 58 years of service to Centre County residents in 2012. The Centre County Conservation District was formed at the request of farmers and others in the county who were interested in conservation of soil and water resources and land use planning. The County was declared a Conservation District by the Centre County Board of Commissioner in October 1954. The District was initially organized to provide for the conservation of soil and water resources, assist in watershed protection and flood prevention, preserve woodland and wildlife, protect public lands, and to protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the people within the community. The District is a subdivision of State government and is administered by a volunteer based Board of Directors. The district board is currently composed of four farmer directors, two urban-public directors and one county commissioner, along with four associate directors. In 2012 there were eight full-time employees. Some of the programs that the district staff administer include: The Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Program, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), Chapter 105 Stream Encroachment, Dirt & Gravel Road, Chesapeake Bay Program, Nutrient Management, Ag Conservation technical assistance, as well as sponsor the County Envirothon, and Ag in the Classroom programs. Monthly board meetings are held the second Wednesday of every month at the Bellefonte Willowbank Building, Room 146 at 7:30pm, and are open to the public.



Board of Director, President, Donn Fetterolf, received honorary Citation from Senator Jake Corman's Office for 28 years of service to the district, during the 2012 Farm City Banquet.

Mission Statement

The Centre County Conservation District is a committed, professional agency functioning as the primary local source of assistance to all individuals and organizations who benefit from the county's natural resources that we collectively strive to sustain and improve.

2012 Conservation Awards

Clean Streams Award

◆ David J. Modricker

Cooperating Conservation Farmer

Charlie Vonada

Watershed Stewardship

◆ John Buzzell

One hundred and forty eight guests joined together for an enjoyable evening of great food and fellowship at New Hope Lutheran Church for the Annual Farm City Banquet. A special thank you to area FFA educators and students for their participation in making this event such a huge success.

Centre County Dirt & Gravel Roads Program-2012

The Dirt & Gravel Roads Program strives to reduce erosion, sediment and dust pollution relating to dirt and gravel roads. Many Conservation Districts participate in a grant program to fund projects with the goal to minimize sediment transport from public roads—with a special focus on roads in special protection watersheds. Funding is limited to roads open to public use and municipalities that wish to participate must have personnel that have recently (within 5 years) attended the program's two-day *Environmental Sensitive Maintenance (ESM)* training workshop.



2012 completed Potter Township project, Egg Hill Road. Shown here is a new cross-pipe with headwall/endwall, as well as Driving Surface Aggregate (DSA) installed.

The Centre County Conservation District received 4 applications from 3 Centre County municipalities in 2012 for potential funding of dirt and gravel road projects. After site visits were completed, two were selected by Centre County Conservation District's Quality Assurance Board (QAB, consisting of representation from the PA Fish & Boat Commission, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Conservation District) and funded for a total of \$26,600.

The participants with approved projects for 2012 were:

Potter Township: approx. 2700' of Egg Hill Road

This project included installation of cross-pipes and headwalls, ditch and bank stabilization, and stabilizing this length of road with DSA. The Centre County Dirt and Gravel Roads Grant Program fully funded the \$10,000 grant request for this project.

Worth Township: approx 2000' of Shady Dell Road

This project included adding road base and DSA (Driving Surface Aggregate), and installing turnouts to improve drainage along its length. We funded \$16,600 of the \$20,000 requested for this project.



Contact the Centre County Conservation District for more information regarding the Dirt and Gravel Roads Program or check out the Center for Dirt and Gravel Road studies website at: <http://www.dirtandgravel.psu.edu/>.

Shady Dell Road, 2012 Worth Township completed project. This project included adding several turnouts, a replaced cross-pipe, and approximately 2000' of road with DSA installed.

CCCD Completes Little Fishing Creek Project, Phase 1

The Centre County Conservation District has completed a Growing Greener funded agriculture project in the Little Fishing Creek watershed. The District collaborated with other organizations to leverage funds and services to address nonpoint source pollution on four farms. We partnered with the following programs and agencies: DEP Stream Bank Fencing Program, North Central PA Conservancy, Clearwater Conservancy, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Environmental Quality Incentive Program, PACD engineers, Chesapeake Bay Program, US Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, PA Fish and Boat Commission, Resource Enhancement and Protection Program and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

With the help of our partners, we met the following deliverables, reducing the nutrient and sediment load to Little Fishing Creek.

- *Developed two Nutrient Management Plans covering 586 acres.*
- *Developed a Rotational Grazing Plan for 90 beef cows on 55 acres.*
- *Paid to install 9,000 feet of stream bank fencing.*
- *Excluded 155 cows from 6,570 linear feet of stream.*
- *Established seven acres of forested riparian buffers.*
- *Paid to install four stabilized stream crossings.*
- *Developed one spring.*
- *Installed 3,815 feet of water supply pipeline.*
- *Installed seven watering facilities.*
- *Treated or eliminated over 8 acres of animal concentration areas.*
- *Installed 23,280 square feet of heavy use area protection.*
- *Stabilized 1,150 feet of access lanes.*
- *Stabilized 1,100 feet of cattle walkways.*
- *Installed 860 feet of roof runoff controls.*
- *Installed 1,100 feet of underground outlets.*
- *Installed 80' of subsurface drains.*
- *Created 310 feet of stabilized waterways.*
- *Installed a 120-foot mudsill and three log veins in the stream.*

BEFORE



AFTER



However, in spite of these successes, we are not finished!

The District has secured an additional \$312,432 of Growing Greener funds to continue our work in this watershed. Stay tuned for more updates of our progress!

Number of Chapter 105 General Permits Acknowledged by CCCD in 2012

GP-1	GP-2	GP-3	GP-4	GP-5	GP-6	GP-7	GP-8	GP-9	GP-11**
7	0	8	4	2	3	5	4	0	14

****GP-11 is submitted to and acknowledged by DEP North Central Office, Williamsport.**

General Permit	Activity	Remarks (some examples or other comments)
GP-1	Fish Habitat Enhancement Structures	Also needs review/approval by PA Fish and Boat Commission
GP-2	Small Docks and Boat Launching Ramps	For use on ponds, lakes, or watercourses (streams, creeks, rivers, etc.)
GP-3	Bank Rehabilitation, Bank Protection and Gravel Bar Removal	To rock armor or otherwise stabilize eroding sections of streambank- limited to 500' total length
GP-4	Intake & Outfall Structures	Water only; for water supply (ponds) and/or discharge (ponds, stormwater, etc.)
GP-5	Utility Line Stream Crossings	For crossing below or above a stream channel.
GP-6	Agricultural Crossings and Ramps	To provide a stabilized ford crossing of stream for equipment or livestock (or both)
GP-7	Minor Road Crossings	To cross a stream with a contributing watershed of 1 sq mile (640 acres) or less
GP-8	Temporary Road Crossings	To install and use a stream crossing for 1 year or less (unless extension granted in writing)
GP-9	Agricultural Activities	For minor drainage and other structures located within regulated floodways of small streams (with watershed of 100 acres or less)
GP-11**	Maintenance, Testing, Repair, Rehabilitation, or Replacement of Water Obstructions and Encroachments	For some activities and structures not applicable (or qualified) by other General Permits listed above

Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Program

2012 proved to be another busy year for Conservation District staff in the Soil Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control program, as submission numbers for E&S plan reviews and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction Activities Permits increased slightly over 2011 levels. 2012 brought some additional program changes including a re-issuance of PAG-02, the NPDES General Permit for construction Activities. These permits now authorize activities for a period of five years. The previous version of this permit authorized activities for a period of two years. In addition, several NPDES forms were revised in 2012, including the Co-permittee/transferee form in April, Notice of Termination forms in June, and the Application form in November - and again in January 2013

An annual summary of program activities for 2012:

- 118 Erosion and sediment pollution control plans submitted, covering **1,069** total acres and **471** disturbed acres.
- 35 General NPDES permits and 8 general permit revisions were submitted.
- 11 Individual permits, and 13 individual permit revisions were submitted
- 50 Complaints were investigated

PENNVEST Projects Gearing up to Start

The Centre County Conservation District was awarded over \$2 million from the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST) Non-Point Source Program to install agricultural best management practices on four farms in Centre County. The farms are made up of three dairy and one beef operation and are located in Spring, Marion, Curtain and Ferguson Townships.

The primary goals of the PENNVEST Non-Point Source Program are to improve water quality or protect existing exceptional value or high quality waters, promote water conservation and energy efficiency and promote economic development. The program has been designed to maximize the performance of key environmental performance measures including pounds of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment reduced to surface or ground water. It is roughly estimated the Conservation Districts four projects will reduce 8,940 pounds of nitrogen, 3,680 pounds of phosphorus and 450 tons of sediment from entering local streams annually. The District is partnering with TeamAg Inc. to complete all four projects in 2013.

Watershed Highlights from Penns Valley & Spring Creek Conservation Associations

Penns Valley Conservation Association: www.pennsvalley.net

PVCA hired Consultant Andrea Ferich as Executive Director and they are in the process of procuring an Environmental Educator to coordinate education activities with the Penns Valley schools. They received funding for the Lower Georges Valley project and with CCCD and NRCS they applied for funding for Clint Buck farm.

PVCA Watershed committee is working with CCCD to assist in Ag BMP implementation in the Valley. This past summer they co-sponsored with CCCD the *Waterways and Wetlands Education Series*.

Spring Creek Watershed Association: www.springcreekwatershed.com

The Spring Creek Watershed Association is focusing on encouraging local water authorities to develop Source Water Protection Plans by taking advantage of a DEP grant opportunity.

The group is working with Janie French of Pennsylvania Organization of Waterways and Rivers on capacity building.

Last Spring the group presented *An Evening about Spring Creek* with Bob Hazelton and Bob Carline to eighty attendees at the Courthouse Annex in Bellefonte.

Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grant



Stabilized feeding pad with filter area.

The Centre County Conservation District was awarded a \$75,000.00 Chesapeake Bay Small Watersheds Grant through the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). The grant funds will be matched by over \$100,000.00 in non-federal funds. The target watershed is Penns Creek. The District is partnering with Penns Valley Conservation Association to install agricultural BMPs on four dairy and one beef operation located in the Penns Creek watershed.

Pictures (left & right) reflect BMP's installed on a dairy farm in Haines Township in 2012.



Streambank fencing with stabilized crossing



2012 EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

The Centre County Conservation District Education Program is two-fold, offering environmental education programs for both students and adults. Last year the Watershed Specialist taught watershed education utilizing the Enviroscape model to hundreds of county fifth graders in the Bellefonte and State College Area School Districts. She participated in Penns Valley Field Days at Muddy Paws Marsh and the Penns Valley Environmental Center. She assisted the Beech Creek Watershed Association when they brought over one hundred students from Mount Nittany Middle School to the Snow Shoe area to learn about Acid Mine Drainage. She participated in several Field Days at the Bald Eagle State Park and at Seven Mountains Camp. She was a guest lecturer in two Penn State classes.

The District applied for and received a PACD mini grant to fund a summer *Waterways and Wetlands* series in the Penns Valley watershed. They

collaborated with the Penns Valley Conservation Association, Penn State Cooperative Extension, US Fish and Wildlife Service, landowners John and Catherine Smith, Greg and Mary Kay Williams and Lysle Sherwin to present four environmental workshops throughout the summer.

CCCD assisted several environmental organizations with outreach activities. We participated in the League of Women Voters Green Forum and Green Homes and Gardens Tour. We took part in planning and implementing the Centre County Public Issues Marcellus Shale forum and we moderated the Spring Creek Watershed Association sponsored *An Evening about Spring Creek*. The District participated in Earth Day activities on the Penn State campus.

The District sponsored the Centre County Envirothon, an environmental education competition for high school age students. District staff also participated in both the Pennsylvania Envirothon, held last year at University of

Pittsburgh, Johnstown and the North American Envirothon, held last year at Susquehanna University. Hundreds of students from 45 states and 9 Canadian provinces came to Pennsylvania to participate in the North American Envirothon. CCCD, in cooperation with the Centre County chapter of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps at ClearWater and Trout Unlimited, completed the Healthy Waters Project, an EPA initiative funded through DEP. We collected data on nine sites in the Beech Creek watershed that were in close proximity to Marcellus Shale drilling sites and reported our results in a comprehension paper presented to DEP.

We continue to reach a wide audience through the CCCD display, exhibited at the Grange Fair and at various watershed events. We presented last year's Watershed Stewardship Award to long time volunteer, John Buzzell, at the Farm/City dinner in November.

CONSERVATION DISTRICT WORKS WITH STATE COLLEGE YOUNG FARMERS

Daina Beckstrand, Conservation District Agricultural Technician, is working with Paul Heasley (Advisor for the State College Area Young Farmers Group, FFA Chapter, and High School Teacher) in providing a Manure Management Plan Development Program at the monthly Young Farmers Group meetings. Each member of the Young Farmers Group will be paired with a State College High School student and/or FFA member. The students will assist in developing the Manure Management Plans for the farmers, such as developing the farm maps using the PA One Stop program, while also

learning aspects of the agricultural career field and community assistance. Daina teaches a new topic, or section, of the Manure Management Manual at each meeting, with the goal of having each member write their own Manure Management Plan by April 2013. Mr. Heasley has obtained a National FFA grant to assist with the costs of the program, such as soil and manure tests, student workbooks and testing supplies. We are hoping this can be a pilot program for other FFA chapters and Young Farmers Groups to adopt. We believe this project will further lead our farm operators from manure management planning to erosion and sedi-

ment control planning. Members may be interested in developing an Agricultural Erosion and Sediment Control Plan after April 2013, as many of the necessary components (i.e. maps, resource concern identification and appropriate BMPS) will have been developed with the Manure Management Plan. We are using a 'soft approach,' offering technical assistance and support to make Plan development easier and understandable for local farmers.



NRCS Accomplishments FY 2012 CENTRE COUNTY, PA.

Since 1935, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (originally called the Soil Conservation Service) has provided leadership in a partnership effort to help America's private land owners and farmers conserve their soil, water, and other natural resources.

NRCS provides technical assistance based on sound science and suited to a customer's specific needs. We provide financial assistance for many conservation activities. Participation in all NRCS programs is voluntary.

Programs administered by our agency FY2012 consisted of the following: *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative (CBWI), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program*

(WHIP), Emergency Watershed Program (EWP) and Soil Survey Programs

Easement Programs such as: Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP), Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP), Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP) and Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

Our Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) program provides conservation technical assistance to land-users, communities, units of state and local government, and other Federal agencies in planning and implementing conservation systems. During 2012 the Lamar NRCS Field Office was able to write conservation plans and obligate contracts for 40 participants in Centre County. These plans and contracts would involve over 3,910 acres and total approximately \$1,023,546 in financial assistance funding for implementation or

plan development.

The local NRCS Office continues to reach out to all segments of the agricultural community, including underserved and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, to ensure that our programs and services are accessible to everyone. NRCS manages natural resource conservation programs that provide environmental, societal, financial, and technical benefits.

Lastly, NRCS will strive to continually provided expertise in soil science, leadership for soil surveys and for the National Resources Inventory, and with outreach and education activities. For example, every year our office provides assistance with the soils component of the Centre County Envirothon both study sessions and actual Envirothon which is typically held in May.

USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex (including gender identity and expression), marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

Manure Management Plan Writing Workshop

On January 26, 2013 The Centre County Conservation District hosted a Manure Management Plan writing workshop at the Lions Club in Centre Hall. Over 75 people attended the workshop.

The Intent of the workshop was to assist landowners/operators to develop their own manure management plans.

All farming operations that land apply manure (mechanically or grazing) or agricultural process

wastewater, whether they generate the manure or import it from another operation must have a written Manure Management Plan.

The District plans to host more plan writing workshops at different locations throughout Centre County

The workshops will be posted on the District website at

www.centrecountypa.gov as they are announced.

Manure Management Guidelines

Who these Guidelines pertain to:

All Farmers that generate or use manure, regardless of the size of the farm, including farms that:

1. Pasture livestock or poultry, or
2. Maintain an Animal Concentration Area (barnyard, exercise lot, or feedlot), or
3. Apply manure to their crop fields

Farmers that are defined as CAOs or CAFOs need to follow a different, more detailed

Nutrient Management Planning process.

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