



Conservation Conversation

2007 Annual Report



Inside this issue:

2007 Annual Report	
E & S/NPDES Permits	2
Dirt & Gravel Road	3
Envirothon/Growing Greener/Chesapeake Bay	4
Calendar of Events	5
Watershed Specialist	6
Nutrient Management Ag/BMP	7-9

The Centre County Conservation District was formed at the request of farmers and others in the county who were interested in the conservation of soil and water resources and land use planning. The county was declared a District by the Centre County Board of Commissions in October 1954, in accordance with the provisions of the “Soil Conservation Law” of 1945, Act 217, of the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The District is a subdivision of state government and is administered by a seven-member Board of Directors. The current District Board is composed of four farmer directors, two urban directors, and one County Commissioner. Currently there are ten full-time staff members. The County Conservation District, through delegation agreements with the Pa Department of Environmental Protection and the PA Department of Agriculture, administers many environmental programs in Cente County. Some of the programs that the District staff works with include the following: Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control program, Chapter 105 Stream Encroachment, Dirt & Gravel Road, Chesapeake Bay program, Nutrient Management, Ag Conservation Technical Assistance, and sponsoring the Centre County Envirothon.

The following information will highlight the District’s programs and activities in 2007.

Special Projects/Grants

The Cente County Conservation District continues with Chesapeake Bay and Growing Greener grants providing funding for the installation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) on county farms. Some of those practices include stream bank fencing, agriculture crossings, waterline installations, riparian buffer installation, roof run-off systems, and heavy use protection areas. In 2007, over \$108,000 was paid for installation of BMPs and for administration of such programs.

The Department of Environmental Protection awarded an Energy Harvest Grant in the amount of \$323,100 for a methane digester to be installed in Centre County . Work began in 2007, at Hogs Galore, utilizing \$108,000 of grant funding, and is scheduled to be completed by June 30, 2008.

Program Administration

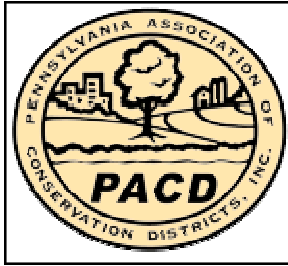
Funding for District staff and programs comes from several sources. The State Conservation Commission received funding from the Department of Environmental Protection and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture for technical assistance for staff

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.



funding. In Centre County, approximately \$90,310 was received for the District Manager, two Resource Conservation Coordinator staff, and the Nutrient Management/ Agriculture Conservation Technician. Partial funding in the amount of \$32,000 was also provided for the Watershed Specialist Position through a Growing Greener Grant. In addition, PennDOT assists with funding for one technician, as well a clerical position in the amount of \$56,275.



The Conservation District also worked with cooperating agencies to sponsor a Cover Crop/Pasture Walk held at the WillowBank Farm owned by John Glick in 2007. Co-sponsors include the Clinton County Conservation District, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture, and the Penn State Cooperative Extension Service.

Funding from the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD) supported a Cover Crop Summit held at Penn State University in June.



E & S/NPDES Chapter 105 Programs

Centre County Conservation District participates in administration of the E & S Program (Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control), NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System), and Chapter 105 (Dam Safety and Encroachment Act-Water Obstruction and Encroachment) programs. Four technical staff and one clerical support staff team together with this program. Highlights of 2007 are as follows:

E & S

- * \$46,823 collected in Erosion and Sediment Program Fees
- * 156 Plans submitted with 171 total reviews affecting 1997 acres

NPDES

- * 27 general permits processed, and 9 individual permits processed
- * \$11,250 NPDES Permit fees collected



If you have a change of address, would like to add someone whom may be interested in receiving our newsletter, or would like your name removed, please fill out and return this form

NAME: _____ Add Name _____ Remove Name _____
 Address: _____ Address Change _____
 City/State/Zip: _____ Submit to: Centre County Conservation District
 414 Holmes Avenue Suite # 4
 Bellefonte, PA 16823

The newsletter and other district information is also on our website at www.co.centre.pa.us/conservation/index.htm



DIRT & GRAVEL ROADS

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Pennsylvania’s Dirt and Gravel Road Maintenance Program provides grant funding to eliminate stream pollution caused by runoff and sediment from unpaved roads. The program and its annual state-wide \$4 million apportionment for “environmentally sound maintenance” were enacted into law in April 1997. Each year, the State Conservation Commission allocates this “dedicated and earmarked funding”, based on identified need, to County Conservation Districts. Townships and other road-owning entities, after successful completion of required 2-day “Environmentally Sensitive Road Maintenance” training course, apply at local Conservation Districts for these maintenance funds to address identified pollution problems using environmentally sound road maintenance practices. Centre County has historically received approximately \$30,000.00 per year in grant allocations.

KEY FACTS about the Dirt and Gravel Road Maintenance Program

- Stresses site-specific, long-term solutions to prevent erosion and pollution, not “band-aid” fixes.
- Minimal administration; limited to 2% at the state level; limited to 10% at the local level.
- Emphasis on informed local control and environmental soundness puts decision-making at local level.
- Adherence to program values assured through central training, technical assistance, and quality control.
- Reduces pollution while promoting sustainable unpaved roads. “Chip-sealing” or paving is not funded.
- Over 17,000 miles of public unpaved road (forestry roads not included) have been inspected.
- Over 13,000 “worksites” where road runoff negatively impacts a stream are mapped and assessed.
- Computerized GIS system used for project tracking and central reporting with minimal paperwork.

<u>WORKSITES COMPLETED</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>1997 - 2006</u>
Pennsylvania	160	1630
Centre County	3	25

Aggregate Trends

The most notable trend in projects is the decrease in the amount of Driving Surface Aggregate (DSA) over the past several years. This is a result of both the increased price of aggregate, and the increased emphasis that is being placed on drainage work by many districts. Since DSA is now approved by PENNDOT for liquid fuels spending, this trend is likely to continue in the future, as many districts try to stretch their funding by focusing on drainage issues over aggregate. DSA is the only approved surface aggregate in the program, but is not required to be used on any project.

ENVIROTHON: ACHIEVEMENT AT IT'S BEST

The Centre County Conservation District sponsored the 23rd annual County Envirothon on May 9, 2007, at Bald Eagle State Park. Eleven teams from Penns Valley, Bald Eagle Area and State College Area high schools participated on a beautiful spring day. The Envirothon tests students' knowledge of the following five subject areas: Aquatic Ecology, Forestry, Soils, Land Use, Wildlife, and Alternative / Renewable Energy, the current environmental issue topic for 2007.

For the eighth consecutive year, a team from Bald Eagle Area high school captured the County Envirothon title. The "Accipiters" team from Bald Eagle Area high school scored 430 out of a possible 500 points. Team members Robert Burris, Max Besong, Trevor Cohen-Dodge, Ben Carlson and Shane Robinson also achieved the highest scores at each of the five testing stations. The advisor is Jade Thompson. The Penns Valley 1 team placed second with a score of 376 and the "Canoe Rockers" from State College placed third with a score of 347.

The Bald Eagle team represented Centre County at the Pennsylvania Envirothon on May 21 and 22 at Penn State University and placed 11th of the 65 county teams participating. They also achieved the high score of 92/100 at the Soils and Land Use station. Northern York high school (York County) won the Pennsylvania Envirothon championship and placed second of the 53 teams that participated in the Canon Envirothon at Geneva, New York in August.

CHESAPEAKE BAY and GROWING GREENER GRANTS

The Centre County Conservation District continues with Chesapeake Bay and Growing Greener grants, providing funding for the installation of Best Management Practices (BMPs), on county farms. The major issue that the District is addressing is stream restoration. We are working with both non-agricultural and agricultural sites. We continue to assist farmers with the installation of practices such as barnyard stabilization, waterline installations, grass waterways and roof runoff controls, but we are particularly interested in repairing eroded stream-banks and establishing riparian buffers. We were awarded \$150,000 grant from the Centre County Environmental Initiative Fund (Growing Greener) and \$24,000 from the Chesapeake Bay Program to assist landowners with the installation of best management practices.

The District is working in collaboration with many partners---we have formed a Centre County Stream Restoration Coalition. This coalition includes the USFWS, the Pa Fish and Boat Commission, the DEP, the Spring Creek Chapter of TU, PVCA, ClearWater, the Bald Eagle Watershed Association, Representative Hanna's office, Senator Corman's office, Western Pa Conservancy, and PSU.

The Centre County Conservation District is partnering with the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences at Penn State University. We are offering funding to farmers who are interested in planting a leguminous cover crop. Through our cover crop project, we are promoting the planting of legume cover crops. The use of these types of crops provides nitrogen to fields and allow farmers to reduce (or eliminate) nitrogen fertilizer application to corn fields. This crop treatment will be very useful in fields with high P index factors by providing a nitrogen source to corn fields that may not be able to apply manure under their Act 38 nutrient management plan.



MARK YOUR CALANDER

Calendar of Events

April

- 9.....Board Meeting – Willowbank Building 7:30 PM
- 18 & 19.....Tree Seedling Distribution – Grange Fairgrounds
- 22.....Earth Day
- 24.....Conservation District “Clean-up Day”

May

- 11.....Mother’s Day
- 14.....Centre County Envirothon – Bald Eagle State Park
- 14.....Board Meeting – Willowbank Building 7:30 PM
- 16.....CCCD Poster Contest Deadline
- 19 & 20.....PA Envirothon – Penn State University/Rock Springs
- 26.....Memorial Day – Office Closed

June

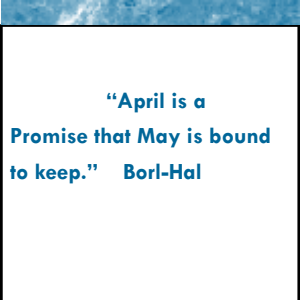
- 3-5.....Management Summit – Ramada Inn, State College
- 11.....Board Meeting – Willowbank Building 7:30 PM
- 15.....Father’s Day
- 30.....PACD Annual Poster Contest Deadline

July

- 4.....Independence Day – Office Closed
- 9.....Board Meeting – Willowbank Building 7:30 PM
- 9 & 10.....Outdoor Adventure Conservation Camp – Bald Eagle State Park
- 27-30.....PACD/SCC Joint Annual Conference – PennStater Conference Center

August

- 13.....Board Meeting – Willowbank Building 7:30 PM
- 19-21.....Ag Progress Days – Rock Springs
- 22-28.....Centre County Grange and Encampment Fair





WATERSHED SPECIALIST REPORT

Education Activities

The Watershed Specialist works closely with many Centre County schools. In the fall, I visited 5th grade classes in the State College School District to teach watershed education using the Enviroscape, a watershed model. I also participated in PSU's Cooperative Extension school programs at Laurel Haven Conservation Center and we took an active part in the Cooperative Extension Outdoor Adventure Conservation Camp at Bald Eagle State Park in July. Spring programs are traditionally scheduled with the Bellefonte Area School District and the Penns Valley School District. The District is currently working with the Young Scholars Charter School in State College to transform a drainage swale on their property into rain garden/wetlands.

The Watershed Specialist is always in charge of the Current Issue station at the local Envirothon. The 2007 Current Issue was Alternative/Renewable Energy.

Last year the District assisted with the following workshops: Watershed Issues at the Environmental Justice meeting, Porous Pavement Workshop in conjunction with PSU, Storm water/Rain Barrel workshop in conjunction with the BCWA and Clinton County, and a Cover Crop workshop in cooperation with PSU and Centre County Cooperative Extension. We are also working with the National Wildlife Federation on Climate Change issues. I serve on advisory boards for the following projects: Cooperative Extension's Natural Resources Advisory Committee, the State College Borough Water Authority Source Water Protection Plan, and the Bellefonte Central Rails to Trails, the Centre County Greenway and the Beech Creek Brick Town Trail. We assisted the Centre Region of Government with outreach efforts to promote a stream bank buffer ordinance. We are active members of the West Branch of the Susquehanna Restoration Initiative. We took part in the following outreach festivals; the American Woodcock Festival, Big Spring Day, the Moshannon Creek Festival, Penns Valley Crickfest, and Spring Creek Day.

Watershed Activities

The District supports the activities of five watershed associations, one conservancy and two monitoring groups in Centre County. The Beech Creek Watershed Association completed the feasibility study for the Brick Town Trail and they are conducting an AMD project on Contrary Run. The Moshannon Creek Watershed Coalition is continuing with assessments along the main stem and they conducted several successful outreach efforts. Penns Valley Conservation Association completed the restoration of the Muddy Paws wetland and continues to host an environmental coordinator in the Penns Valley schools. The newly formed Bald Eagle Watershed association secured a CWH grant to conduct an assessment of Wallace Run and a GG grant for start up activities. The Spring Creek Watershed Community hosted a series of speakers throughout the year, including a Commissioner's Candidates' Night.

We serve on the annual Clearwater Centre County Clean Up committee, helping to coordinate sites in various parts of the county. This past year, after losing DEP funding, the Centre County Senior Environmental Corps moved under the umbrella of ClearWater. The District will continue to provide support to this group as well as to the other monitoring group, the Spring Creek Water Resource Monitoring Project.

Stream Restoration Projects

The District was a partner in the PSU Sheep Farm restoration project sponsored by the Spring Creek chapter of TU. The Pa Fish and Boat Commission installed 9 log structures and a 100 foot mud sill in a section of Spring Creek. We were also involved in the Brown restoration project on Wallace Run. In June the District assisted USFWS in performing an emergency repair, and currently the DEP Department of Waterways and Engineering is completing a full restoration of that section of the stream. The District received \$120,000 of GG County Initiative funding to conduct stream restoration projects during this next year.



Nutrient Management / Ag. BMP Implementation

In 2007, the District received 4 Nutrient Management Plans (NMP) for review (1 CAO and 3 Volunteers). All 4 were approved by the District Board and are now in the process of being implemented. The District conducted 9 status reviews on farms with existing NMPs and responded to 4 complaints. One farm received cost share funding through the Nutrient Management Grant Program. The program is designed to provide assistance to Pennsylvania farmers with state approved nutrient management plans and to have plan identified Best Management Practices (BMPs) installed.

A farm located in Miles Township in the Elk Creek Watershed received \$44,968 through the Nutrient Management Grant Program for the installation of a concrete manure storage (68' x 8'), equipment access lane, roof runoff controls and underground outlets.



Miles Township Farm with new Manure Storage

In 2007, the District continued to install BMPs on 3 farms located in the Little Fishing Creek Watershed utilizing funds from a 319 grant awarded to the District in 2006. The District partnered with NRCS and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation on 2 of the farms to install over 10 acres of forested riparian area (8 acres enrolled into CREP) while protecting over 6,500 linear feet of

stream. Over 250 cows were removed from surface waters on these two farms. One of the farms still provides minimal access through stabilized stream crossings. Other BMPs installed include: grass & stone waterways, diversions, animal access lanes, pasture fence, stabilized heavy use areas, roof runoff controls, underground outlets, silage leachate collection and alternative watering systems.



Alternative watering system cost shared through CREP



Cattle access lane/stream crossing and tree plantings. Cost share provided by CREP.



In 2007, the District teamed with Penns Valley Conservation Association (PVCA) to install BMPs on farms located in the Penns Valley Watershed. Cost share funding for installing the BMPs were made possible by a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant awarded to PVCA. The District and PVCA will continue to partner on projects located in the Penns Valley region to help minimize non-point source pollutants from leaving area farms.



Pictured left is an example of a watering trough on top of reinforced stone pads installed on a farm in Miles Township

The watering troughs were installed to provide cattle with an alternative watering source. The water source is from a spring located on the farm. The Pa. Department of Environmental Protection will install stream bank fence and create a 35' buffer along a tributary to Elk Creek. The District hopes to install a BayScape within this buffer. BayScapes are environmentally-sound landscapes to benefit people, wildlife, and the Chesapeake Bay. BayScaping advocates an holistic approach to landscaping through principles inspired by relationships in the natural environment. At this site, we plan to plant fruit trees and berry shrubs that will be organically managed. The farmer values this idea because he sees this area remaining agriculturally productive.



Pictured left shows a cattle access lane adjacent to new tree & shrub plantings which run along a Penn Creek tributary. The tree plantings and fence along the left side of the cattle access lane where cost shared through CREP. The cattle access lane and fence along the right side of the lane where cost shared with PVCA's National Fish & Wildlife Foundation grant funds.



**Heavy Use Area
before stabilization**

**Heavy Use Area
after stabilization.
Cost share funds
provided by the
Districts 319 grant.**



“CONSERVATIONS POWER” POSTER CONTEST WINNERS/ 2007

3rd Place Winners

1st Place Winners:

- **Austin Besong**
Kindergarten– 1st grade
Mountaintop Elementary
- **Nicholas Feffer**
2nd—3rd Grade
State College/Home School
- **Elijah Colborn**
4th—6th Grade
Ferguson Twp Elementary.

2nd Place Winners:

- **Jacob Michael**
Kindergarten—1st grade
Mountain Top Elementary
- **Taylor Lucas**
2nd—3rd grade
Wingate Elementary
- **Bethany Bowser**
4th—6th grade
Marion Walker Elementary

- **Melody Soster**
Kindergarten—1st grade
Mountain Top Elementary
- **Jackie Feffer**
2nd—3rd grade
State College/Home School
- **Emily Kerstetter**
4th—6th grade
Marion Walker Elementary



**CENTRE COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

414 Holmes Avenue, Suite #4
Bellefonte, PA 16823

Phone: 814-355-6817
Fax: 814-355-8696
E-mail: RESWEITZ@CO.CENTRE.PA.US

Website:
www.co.centre.pa.us/conservation/index.htm



DISTRICT STAFF

Robert E. Sweitzer, District Manager
Sue Kauffman, Dept. Clerk III
John Wataha, Agriculture Conservation/
Nutrient Management Technician
Ann Donovan, Watershed Specialist/
Education Coordinator
Beth A. Hirt, CBP/NM Technician

Jim Coslo Jr., Resource Conservation
Supervisor

Mike Philippe, Resource Conservation
Coordinator II

Don Eligman, Resource Conservation
Coordinator

Bruce E. Jankura, Resource Conservation
Coordinator

Joy Teeter, Department Clerk I

Board of Directors

Donn Fetterolf, Chair
Cinda Corl, Vice-Chair
Steven G. Dershem, Commissioner
Tom Boldin
George Hildenbrandt
Martin Melville
James Walizer

**USDA-Natural Resource Conservation
Service (NRCS)**

(570) 726-3196 or (814) 355-2447
Scott D. Heckman, Supervisory District
Conservationist
Bryan Conklin, Engineering Technician
Daina Beckstrand, Biologist
Gwendolyn Crews, Soil Conservationist
Amanda Coleman, Program Assistant
Michael McDevitt, Soil Scientist

Centre County Conservation District
414 Holmes Avenue
Suite #4
Bellefonte, PA 16823

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
State College, PA
Permit No. 41



Printed on Recycled Paper