

CONSERVATION DISTRICT CELEBRATES AWARD WINNERS, LOCALLY GROWN FOOD

On November 9, 2010 the Greene County Conservation District (GCCD) hosted their annual conservation awards luncheon at the Greene County Career and Technology Center, Culinary Arts Department. This was celebrated with a meal prepared by the students featuring locally grown food. Beef, lamb, eggs, squash, tomatoes, celery, apples and potatoes were made into delightful mouth watering dishes. "Working with fresh local products will always turn out a great meal. Plus the students were able to learn about what is grown right here." said Dan Wagner, head of the Culinary Arts program.



The Cooperator of the Year was awarded to Jeanne Williams of Red Barn Farm, of Freeport Township. This is the first woman owned operation to win this honor. In 2005 she bought 7 meat goats and became a cooperator with the District. Today her herd has swelled to as many as 100 goats and she has been giving back to the land that has given so much to her, by installing a 70 acre rotational grazing system, 2800 ft of stream bank fencing, creating 2 acres of riparian buffer, 3 agricultural crossings, 4 spring developments, and 40 acres of woodlot exclusion areas to promote healthy woodlots. She also treated her winter feeding area with subsurface drains and an improved access road. She has developed an Act 38 nutrient management plan for her farm and has taken advantage of the state's Resource Enhancement and Protection tax credit program, the Greene County Conservation District mini-grant program, Partners for Fish and Wildlife fencing program and the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Environmental Quality Incentives Program. Jeanne was adamant that she could not have achieved this level of success without the support of Conservation District and NRCS staff or her husband and "chief engineer" Llew who was a Harley Davidson mechanic for 17yrs and currently is employed as a software engineer in Fairmont, WV.

Jeanne direct markets all of her products and supplied many of the items for the luncheon. She has diversified her production to include vegetables, laying hens and broilers, both of which are pastured and Llew is the maple syrup guy. He produces between 6- 10 gallons every year. Red Barn Farm Maple Syrup is used in Jeanne's baked goods that she sells at the farmer's market in Morgantown year-round. Jeanne commented "It is an honor to receive this award. Our natural resources are under assault on many fronts, water, air and soil, and I am glad that I can be proactive in this fight to preserve and manage these resources."

The Forest Conservationist award was given to James and Barbara Butler, Stath an De' Farm of Center Township by retired Service Forester Bill Wentzel. Jim and Barbara have been enrolled in the Forest Stewardship Program since 1999. In 2008 they updated their plan. They have implemented a Silvo-pasturing system utilizing their Scottish Highland cattle, grapevine cutting, crop tree thinning, and large tree and seedling plantings along a riparian area. Jim and Barbara open their property to scouts, FFA and church groups to learn from and enjoy the hiking trails and meditation venues.



Service awards were presented to Director Emeritus, J. Robert Rice (45 years), Fiscal Officer, Becky Salosky (30 years) and District Manager, Lisa Snider (10 years).

Karlie Hoy, of the Waynesburg FFA was recognized with the **Outstanding Conservation Speaker award** for winning the local FFA speaking contest. She took this speech to the state FFA competition where she finished in third place. Her parents Debbie and Murray Hoy accepted the award on her behalf; Karlie is currently a freshman at the University of Rochester studying chemistry.

Carmichaels High School Envirothon team was recognized for winning the county contest in the spring and representing Greene County in the state competition, finishing second. Alpha Natural Resources, Inc. provides scholarships to students on the 1st place county team. Lisa Snider, GCCD District Manager, reported that 90% of the students that receive a scholarship use it for higher education and 75% of those students pursue a degree in an environmental, agricultural or science based field.



A Special Recognition award was presented to Robert Born, Waynesburg FFA advisor, for 34 years of promoting agricultural education and the FFA to the youth of Greene County.

• For more information please contact Laurel Rush at 724-852-5278 •



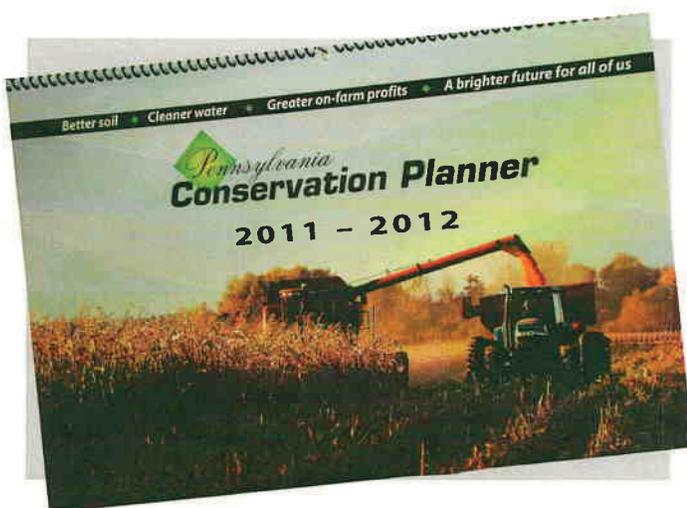
WATER QUALITY GRANTS UPDATE

By Julie Maxwell, Watershed Specialist

The District currently has three water quality related grants in different phases of project completeness. First we received an extension on the Whiteley Creek Streambank Restoration Growing Greener grant project to stabilize the banks and realign the stream channel using fish habitat enhancement structures on seven sites along a portion of Whiteley Creek in Game Land #223, partnering with the PA Game Commission and the PA Fish and Boat Commission. Some of the structures include root wad deflectors, mud sills, and log vane deflectors. The devices will not only help stabilize the streambank, reduce soil erosion downstream, and realign the stream channel, but will provide better habitat and hiding areas for fish. Whiteley Creek is a trout stocked fishery. This grant will place approximately \$97,000 of conservation practices on the ground.

Secondly, the Ruff Creek/Pumpkin Run Stream Restoration Growing Greener grant project is underway. The first of three projects, located in the Pumpkin Run watershed, is nearly complete. The second two projects, located on the main stem of Ruff Creek will hopefully be completed this year. This grant runs through June 2012 and will help to install over \$100,000 of best management practices to reduce non-point source pollution.

Finally a grant was applied for through DEP's Section 604(b) funds. The district received information about a Request for Proposals for watershed-based surface water quality assessment projects to be completed over the next two years. DEP was interested in water quality assessments in small single-stream watersheds that are more than 75% forested. Funding will be received on a reimbursement basis in the total amount of \$17,389 to cover costs of equipment, travel, labor, and supplies, and will be split into \$8,695 for each year of the project. The project will require sampling for water chemistry, macroinvertebrates, and habitat assessment, and summaries will be included in the DEP Water Quality Assessment Database and will be used in compiling Pennsylvania's Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report. It is likely that many of the 41 small watersheds to be assessed will be able to be upgraded to higher quality. Monitoring will begin this spring, and the project will be completed by the end of September, 2012.



CONSERVATION PLANNER

2011-2012 Pennsylvania Conservation Planner.

**Calling all producers!
Come to the office and get your
FREE CONSERVATION PLANNER**

This planner is full of helpful tips and reminders to keep your operation on track. There is plenty of space to keep notes and records of the daily activity on your farm.

CONSERVATION ACTIVITY PLANS

By Kevin Paul, NRCS Technician

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service continues to place emphasis upon proper maintenance and utilization of forest lands throughout the United States. Like cropland or livestock production, land that is managed as forest land is an integral part of any agricultural production system. The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) recognizes this importance by providing financial and technical assistance to help managers and owners of private, non-industrial forest land resolve resource concerns associated with the following priorities:

- Reduction of non-point source pollution, such as nutrients and sediment
- Conservation of ground and surface water resources
- Reduction of emissions, such as particulate matter, nitrous oxides, volatile organic compounds, and ozone precursors and reducers
- Reduction in soil erosion and sedimentation from unacceptable high levels
- Promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation

Private, non-industrial forest land is defined as rural land that has existing tree cover or is suitable for growing trees and is owned by any non-industrial private individual or private legal entity that has definite decision making authority over the land.

Another area of program emphasis involves the development of a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP), a conservation plan unique to animal feeding operations (AFO). AFO's are categorized as a lot or facility where animals have been or will be confined, fed, or maintained for a total of 45 days or more in a 12 month period; and where crops, vegetation, forage growth, or post harvest residues are not sustained in the normal growing season over any portion of the facility lot. CNMP's include a grouping of management activities and conservation practices which, when implemented as part of a conservation system, will help ensure that both production and natural resource protection goals are achieved. The development of a CNMP requires a comprehensive engineering and conservation planning resource assessment of current site conditions. Management options and structural alternatives are developed to address resource concerns identified during assessment. At minimum, a CNMP must address quality criteria to the sustainable level of soil erosion and water quality for the planning unit associated with the animal feeding operation. For more information on EQIP, other NRCS programs, or for additional assistance please contact the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Lemont Furnace Field Office at 724-627-5821, extension 3.

SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA WOODLAND OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Announcing the 2011 Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners Association program schedule. For more information on any of these events or to become a member please call President, Gay Thistle at 724-499-5190.

- **Tapping Maple Trees – Making Syrup**, February Field Trip, Date TBD, Please contact Maria Plantanida @ 412-241-2747 to sign up for this trip.
- **Considerations of Climate and Terrain for Tree Planting**, March 9, Meeting, 7 PM Bldg #10 Greene County Fairgrounds
- **Field Study of Varied Micro-Sites** (at Arlyn Perkey's Tree Farm), March 12, Field Trip, 1 PM, Meet at Bldg #10 Greene County Fairgrounds
- **Woodland Stream Studies**, May 11, Meeting at 7 PM 1st floor meeting room, Courthouse Square, 100 W. Beau St, Washington
- **Visit to a Woodland Stream**, May 14, Field Trip, 1 PM, site TBD,
- **Mysteries of the Forest Tour: Family Day in the Woods**, June 11, Tour, Meet 12:30 at Bldg #10 Greene County Fairgrounds
- **Tour of the Appalachian Hardwood Center**, July 9, Meet at 12:30PM at Bldg #10 Greene County Fairgrounds
- **So now you own a woodlot. What's Next?**, August 9, Field Trip, 1 PM, Site TBD
- **Deer Update and Charismatic Macro-Fauna in SW PA Woods: Foxes, Coyotes and Bears (oh my!),** September 7, Meeting 7 PM at Bldg #10 Greene County Fairgrounds
- **Recognizing the Signs of Macro-Fauna in your Woods**, September 10, Field Trip meet at Bldg #10 Greene County Fairgrounds
- **Family Picnic with Woodland Field Day**, Time and Place TBD
- **Options for Forest Land Gas Well Drilling**, November 9, Meeting at 7 PM 1st floor meeting room, Courthouse Square, 100 W. Beau St, Washington
- **Visit to Gas Well Forest Reclamation Sites**, November 12, Meet at 12:30PM at Bldg #10 Greene County Fairgrounds

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Greene County Conservation District

2010 Annual Report

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the District to commit to the protection, stewardship, and conservation of the County's natural resources to ensure a wise balance between the protection of the environment and the benefit of the landowners of the County. Over the past year, our staff and Board worked diligently and thoughtfully to promote a diverse range of natural resources within the County. It is our belief that conservation works best when local people living and working in the area work together to manage their natural resources collectively. Valuable partnerships are formed when diversity is brought into the conversation and decision-making process.

In 1956, the County of Greene created the Conservation District at the request of the local citizens interested in conservation mainly focused on farming practices. Over the years, the District has morphed into a well-rounded conservation-oriented organization that offers a wide variety of expertise and knowledge. Talk to any of the Directors who has served on the Board for any length of time and they will admit that over the past 10 years the District has become a clearinghouse for many environmental, farm, industrial, and homeowner questions. The District staff can answer questions related to permitting, offer guidance on farm planning and assist landowners with various environmentally related topics.

Our District would like to thank the County of Greene and those cooperating agencies that assist us with our programs and administration. Without the support of these entities, our programs would not be effective or efficient for the residents of the County.

ENVIROTHON 2010



Left to right- Samantha May; Team Advisor, Kevin Willis; Lucas Cumpston; Christine Broadwater; Robert Kowalewski; Kasey Osborne; Michelle Anderson, Alpha Natural Resources; District Director, James A. Cowell; and Associate Director, William Wentzel

This year marked the 23rd annual Greene County Envirothon - an environmental challenge of knowledge between the five area school districts. A total of eleven teams participated in this year's Envirothon held at Ryerson State Park on May 12, 2010. The special current issue topic was "Protection of Groundwater through Urban, Agricultural, and Environmental Planning." The competition consists of various means of testing the student's knowledge and understanding of the natural environment.

Carmichaels Team 1- Christine Broadwater, Kasey Osborne, Robert Kowalewski, Lucas Cumpston, Samantha May, and their advisor Kevin Willis took 1st place this year at the county competition and went on to the state competition.

This year's County Envirothon was funded through the Community Foundation of Greene County's Pennsylvania Education Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) Program. The event is organized each year by the Greene County Conservation District. This year the Conservation District was able to once again secure funds to award the competition winners each with a college scholarship of \$500 for each team member. The Conservation District would like to thank Alpha Natural Resources Coal Company for their donation to make this scholarship possible for the students. The Greene County Conservation District would like to thank everyone who participated and made this a successful event.

The 27th Pennsylvania State Envirothon took place on Wednesday, May 26th at PPL Montour Preserve, Danville, Montour County. Sixty-six teams participated in the State Envirothon. The Greene County team from Carmichaels placed second in the state with a total of 441 points out of 500. Each team member received a \$500 scholarship. They also had the highest score in the Wildlife station for the second consecutive year. This is the fifth year in a row that a team from Carmichaels placed in the top ten at the state competition.

District Programs CONSERVATION OUTREACH & EDUCATION EVENTS

Trees-to-Schools Program

On Arbor Day over 1500 seedlings were distributed to each elementary school district, K-5th graders. The District would like to give special thanks to the PA Game Commission Food and Cover Headquarter staff and the School District staff for their assistance with distribution of the seedlings to the students.

EROSION AND SEDIMENTATION PROGRAM

The Erosion and Sediment (E&S) program was delegated to the District by the Department of Environmental Protection. The program includes the review of Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Plans, inspections of earth disturbance sites, response to complaints, and issuance of Stream Encroachment Permits, ESCGP-1 permits, and NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) Permits.



2010 Chapter 102/105 & NPDES Program Accomplishments	
Plans Received & Reviewed	136
Inspections & Sites visited	164
NPDES Permits Issued	4
ESCGP-1	40
Chapter 105 General Permits Issued	
GP-2—Small docks and boat launching ramps	1
GP-3—Bank rehab/protection & gravel bar removal	9
GP-5—Utility line stream crossing	42
GP-6—Agricultural crossings and ramps	1
GP-7—Minor Road Crossings	11
GP-8—Temporary road crossings	22
GP-9—Agricultural activities	5
Review Fees	\$ 58,995
Accelerated Fees	\$ 12,500

This table summarizes the Districts E&S Accomplishments for 2010.

Dirt and Gravel Roads

Interest is growing in the Dirt & Gravel Roads Program as more municipalities have taken advantage of this program in the past several months. The primary conditions for qualification here are that the work site must be on a dirt and gravel road, and the site/road must be negatively impacting a waterway with road material.

During the 2010 cycle of the program Shoestring Road #639 at Browns Creek in Morris Township was completed. The project replaced twenty-one inadequate culvert pipes on this 1.7 mile stretch of road between Beulah Ridge and Andrew Road. Plans are also included to improve the ditches and remedy the crown of Shoestring Road.



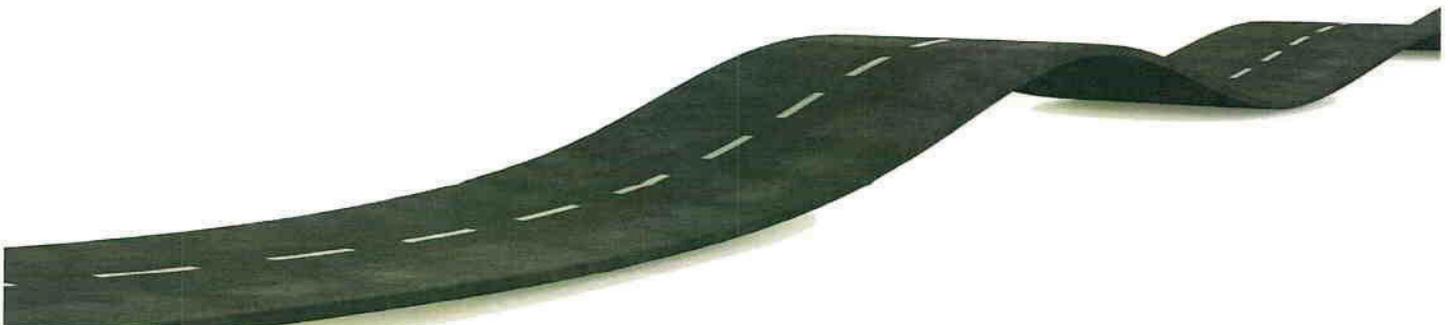
Before



After

Hartley Hill Road in Greene Township was completed this year. The project entailed installation of 8 cross drains and a through the bank pipe. The site was to be seeded mulched after the work was completed. The Township was hoping that drainage on the road would curb the excessive rutting of the road due to soft spots.

It is good to see our local municipalities taking advantage of the benefits of the Dirt & Gravel Roads Program.





Appalachian Grazing Conference Planning Committee

A sub-committee of the WV State Conservation Agency started this conference. Held every other year, the group is currently preparing to host their fifth conference on March 4-5 2011 in Morgantown WV. This committee is comprised of representatives from five states in the Appalachian region. (PA, OH, MD, VA, & WV) The committee approached Greene County directly to have representative on the committee. Currently Laurel Rush, Ag. Technician regularly participates in planning for the event, especially in the areas of speakers and publicity. JB Harrold, NRCS Grazing Specialist, also participates on the committee. The goal is to hold a conference that addresses the unique challenges of grazing in the Appalachian region.

Project Grass Coordinating Committee

The purpose of this committee is to promote improved pasture systems and rotational grazing systems for better forage production, quality, and utilization.

Four broad objectives have been identified for the committee:

1. Enhance Pennsylvania agriculture through better utilization of grasslands.
2. Improve the economic position of Pennsylvania farmers, particularly small farms.
3. Increase the amount of livestock production in the Commonwealth to increase energy efficiency and develop improved marketing capabilities for cattle, sheep, hay, and other livestock.
4. Achieve better utilization of land and water resources for improved environmental quality.

In 2010, one Solar Pump Project was installed for the Saurborn Farm in Whiteley Township. This was through a grant from Penn's Soil RC & D and coordinated through Project Grass.

GCCD Lime Spreader Rental Program

Applying lime to pasture and hay fields is one of the simplest management decisions to make. Increasing soil pH can increase forage yields and palatability, with relatively low cost to the producer. In 2008, the Board of Directors decided to purchase a 2 ton wet lime spreader to rent to producers. In 2010, the programs second year the lime spreader was rented to 4 producers spreading 280 tons of lime on pastures throughout Greene and Washington Counties. As livestock production in the region has transitioned into more grass, based rotational grazing systems the need for lime to help support quality forage production has become imperative but a producers ability to get lime where and when they need, it has been reduced. A spreader of this size is easier to use on steep ground and more maneuverable in smaller pasture paddocks. Our specific machine is equipped with surge brakes and a longer axle to provide better control and stability.

To rent the lime spreader you must complete the Lime Spreader Rental Agreement, provide proof of insurance, and pay a \$50 deposit. The standard rental period is 3 days and the final rental charge is based on total tons of lime spread. To receive your deposit back you must return the machine clean and undamaged.

District Cooperators

Most of the assistance the district provides to agricultural producers is voluntary. Four landowners with 428 acres enlisted as cooperators to request technical assistance on their farms in 2010. Currently three landowners have conservation plans under development by conservation district staff. The district's role is to conduct a site assessment to discuss the landowner's goals, assess resource needs and to visually inspect the operation before using Toolkit to map the operation and write a best management practice (BMP) implementation schedule/management plan. The landowner can also use this visit to request additional information on programs or practices that may be suited for their management style. Others enroll as cooperators to qualify for Farm Bill Programs through the USDA-NRCS.

GCCD Water Quality Mini-grant Program

The purpose of the Water Quality Mini-Grant Program is to supplement state and federal grant/ incentive programs or private funds specifically designated to off-set costs associated with the implementation/installation of Best Management Practices (BMP's) designed to prevent erosion, mitigate non-point source nutrient and sediment run-off, and generally improve downstream water quality. Funding for this program comes from the GCCD Clean Water Fund. In 2010, 1 mini-grant application was approved for \$1000 toward A spring development project. In 2010 two spring development projects and one stabilized access road project were completed on three farms.



Nutrient Management

The GCCD is delegated to administer the nutrient management program for Greene County. In 2009, three landowners received funding from the Plan Development Incentives Program (PDIP) to develop a nutrient management plan. This program has been inactive for several years due to lack of funding. This program is open to Concentrated Animal Operations and volunteer operations in Pennsylvania. PDIP funds plans based on operation size up to maximum funding amounts not to exceed 75% or \$1,500.

Also through the nutrient management program, one farm in the county was accepted into the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) CleanEast Program to develop a nutrient management plan. This program covered the whole northeast region. Currently the EPA is only funding applicants in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in Pennsylvania. This program provided free nutrient management plans to livestock and crop producers.

Through these funding sources and a Growing Greener Grant four new Act 38 nutrient management plans were developed and one plan was updated. This brings 1670.5 acres and 421 animal units under voluntary Act 38 compliance. No manure related complaints were received in 2010.

Easement Purchase Program

The Easement Purchase program was developed in 1988 to help slow the loss of prime farmland to non-agricultural uses. The program was formed by amending Act 43 of 1998 to include Section 914.1. Easement purchases enable state, county, and local governments to purchase conservation easements, sometimes called development rights, from owners of quality farmland. The first easements obtained in PA were purchased in 1989.

Fifty-seven participating county programs receive state funds for the purchase of agricultural conservation easements. Counties participating in the program have appointed agricultural land preservation boards with a state board created to oversee the program. The state board is responsible for distribution of state funds, approval, and monitoring of county programs and specific easement purchases.

Farm owners apply to the county program. Farm applications are ranked and then forwarded to the state board for approval after offers have been made. To date, more than 400,000 acres have been permanently protected. Pennsylvania leads the nation in farmland preservation.

In January of 2009 the Cree Farm, was officially preserved. This 108-acre dairy farm is located in Cumberland Township and is owned by William A Cree Jr. and Lura Ann Cree. They wanted to be part of this program to preserve their farm for their grandkids. This is Greene County's first preserved farm. In 2010, we received 3 applications. A 53 acre parcel located in Cumberland Township owned by the James and Pearl Willis Living Trust was the high ranking property. Currently this property is going through the encumbering process.

Resource Enhancement and Protection Program (REAP)

The Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Program allows farmers and businesses to earn tax credits in exchange for installing "Best Management Practices" (BMPs) on agricultural operations that will enhance farm production and protect natural resources. The program is administered by the State Conservation Commission (Commission) and the tax credits are awarded by the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue. Eligible applicants may receive between 50% and 75% of project costs as state tax credits for up to \$150,000 per agricultural operation. The amount of tax credit available to a recipient is dependent on the type of BMP implemented.

In 2010, three applicants from 2009 resubmitted their applications and one new application was submitted. All applications were approved in this round of funding. All the projects involved installing BMP's and some addressed Animal Concentration Areas.

Agricultural Security Areas (ASA)

The Bureau of Farmland Preservation administers the Agricultural Security Area, or ASA, program at the state level. ASAs are a tool for strengthening and protecting our quality farmland from the urbanization of rural areas.

It is voluntary for farmers/landowners. Petitions are submitted to township supervisors. ASA's are reviewed every seven years, however; new parcels of farmland may be added to an established ASA at any time. A minimum of 250 acres from among all the participating farmers is required. An ASA may include non-adjacent farmland parcels of at least ten acres or be able to produce \$2000 annually from the sale of agricultural products. Participants receive special consideration regarding:

- Local ordinances affecting farming activities.
- Nuisance complaints.
- And review of farmland condemnation by state and local government agencies.

An ASA qualifies land for consideration under the Easement Purchase Program at the landowner's request, if the ASA has at least 500 acres enrolled.

The benefits of enrollment are:

- Prerequisite for applying to the county farmland preservation program
- Protection against local nuisance ordinances related to farming activity
- Oversight in certain cases of eminent domain.

Greene County has 70 landowners with 9,252.47 acres enrolled in the ASA program in the following 6 townships: Cumberland, Center, Greene, Morgan, Washington and Wayne.

COOPERATING AGENCIES

Penn's Corner Resource Conservation and Development Council

Resource development and conservation councils were created out of the Federal Food and Agriculture Act of 1962. The purpose of this act was to expand opportunities for conservation districts, local units of government and individuals to improve their communities through assisting in the enhancement of social, economic and environmental well being. Penn's Corner RC & D was official recognized by the USDA on Dec 10, 1973 and currently has representatives from 8 Southwestern Pennsylvania counties. County Conservation Districts and County Commissioners appoint a representative and an alternate. Conservation District's also appoint a member-at-large.

Our Agricultural Technician serves as the conservation district alternate representative. Currently Laurel serves on the Agriculture committee and was named co-chair of the CORE 4 Conservation Calendar; a project that was sponsored by the Greene County Conservation District. The CORE4 calendar idea stemmed from the request of several graziers wanting a calendar to keep records on and to remind them when tasks needed to be accomplished. The final product is a 2 year conservation planner for Pennsylvania that is geared toward established producers to assist with recordkeeping and maintaining best management practices. This was accomplished through a calendar committee and multiple funding partners. This calendar was made available in November 2010 for distribution. Greene County also partnered with Penn's Corner to assist in the promotion of the Farm Bill Program - Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

Across Greene County, 19 private woodland owners were assisted in 2010, covering approximately 1700 acres. Each visit includes a site walkover with the landowner, plus data gathering, followed by a report explaining my observations, concerns, conclusions and recommendations.

Each forest owner is encouraged to have a complete Stewardship Plan prepared by a consultant forester. I examined over 50 yard or street trees at 6 varied locations, to assess health and maintenance needs. With NRCS, I helped locate and inspect 3 forest owner's EQIP conservation projects.

I conducted or assisted with 3 educational forestry demonstrations and programs in the county, serving over 150 people. These included the Greene County Envirothon, a "Tree Pest Problems" workshop for local gardeners (at the Greene Co Fair grounds), and "A History of Pa's Forests" plus "Stewardship Planning" for the Southwest Pennsylvania Woodland Owners Association. Over the winter, I worked with the snowmobile trail grooming team; there are over 120 miles of trail maintained across the Forbes. In spring, I serve as a fire program aircraft dispatcher for the southwest counties, at the Somerset County Airport.

Seed collection was severely curtailed this past year by drought conditions across the county. During the year, the DCNR Bureau of Forestry met with both Allegheny Highlands and Southwest Regional planning bodies to discuss area land management issues. In July, the Bureau of Forestry flew over Greene County to analyze the degree of actual insect defoliation. (Few areas west of Bedford County had significant leaf loss, so no treatment program was conducted by DCNR in Pennsylvania's southwest counties.)

Department of Natural Resources *Bureau of Forestry*

By Robert McBride, Service Forester

Erosion and Sedimentation Pollution Control Program

The Erosion and Sedimentation (E&S) Pollution Control Program is delegated to the Greene County Conservation District (GCCD) by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP). The purpose of the E&S program is that persons proposing or conducting earth disturbance activities develop, implement, and maintain Best Management Practices (BMP) that minimize the potential for accelerated erosion and sedimentation and manage post construction stormwater. The BMPs shall be undertaken to protect, maintain, reclaim, and restore water quality and the existing and designated uses of waters of the Commonwealth.

The E&S program includes review of the E&S plans, inspection of earth disturbance sites, responding to complaints, issuance of Stream Encroachment Permits, ESCGP-1 permits, and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits.

E&S plans are reviewed according to DEP guidelines to determine if they satisfy the Clean Streams Law and the adequacy of proposed BMPs based on rules and regulations from the Pennsylvania Code, Title 25, Chapters 102 and 105.

A written E&S plan is required to be on site at all times by any person conducting earth disturbance activity if the total disturbed area is over 5000 sq. ft. and less than 1 acre in size. An E&S plan review by the GCCD is not mandatory unless a municipality requires an approval from the District for permitting requirements or planning purposes. For projects smaller than 5000 sq. ft. in size, BMPs are still required and must be utilized to protect water quality, but no written plan is mandatory.

NPDES permits are required if the area of disturbance is one acre or greater over the life of the project. Applicants are required to explore non-discharge alternatives and meet riparian buffer requirements. If the site drains or is situated in a High Quality or Exceptional Value Watershed, an Individual NPDES permit is required. If the site is situated outside a Special Protection Watershed then a General NPDES permit is required. Both Individual and General NPDES permits require a Post Construction Stormwater Management Plan (PCSM). The PCSM is to provide BMPs that will manage any net increase in stormwater runoff volume after completion of the project. The PCSM is to be designed to eliminate or minimize point source discharges and to ultimately protect all aspects of the receiving surface water(s).

In the spring of 2009, the PA DEP became the sole entity responsible for the issuance of all oil and gas related permits as they relate to earth disturbance associated with exploration, production, processing, or treatment operation or transmission facilities. The GCCD remains the reviewing agency of permitting associated with interstate and/or intrastate transmission of oil and gas.

Chapter 105-Dam Safety and Waterway Management

Along with Chapter 102, the Conservation District is delegated to authorize work within a stream channel or wetland, associated with construction activities and/or agricultural activities, under Chapter 105. The purpose of Chapter 105 is to assure proper planning, design, construction, maintenance, and monitoring of water obstructions and encroachments. Thus preventing unreasonable interference with water flow and to protect navigation; with the purpose of protecting the natural resources, natural regime, carrying capacity of watercourses and conserve and protect the water quality. Chapter 105 programs ensure that proper permitting has been acquired for projects that are within a Special Protection Flood Hazard Area as delineated on the National Flood Insurance Program Mapping, within 50 feet from the top of stream bank, within 50 feet of a jurisdictional wetland, and /or within a stream channel that has a defined bed and bank.

Projects where permanent or temporary structures are being built or earth disturbance will take place, that are within the above mentioned special protection areas, require permitting and local municipal approvals. **The Conservation District has a direct role in Obstruction and Encroachment General Permits. These permits are needed when activity is within the stream or wetland itself or agricultural activities that are near streams or wetlands.** These permits are needed even if disturbance is minimal.

A Small Projects Permit involves work in a stream or floodplain that will have an insignificant impact on the safety and protection of life, health, property and the environment. A Joint Permit needs to be applied for when the total length of impact to one stream is greater than 500 linear feet and/or will significantly impact streams and/or wetlands. These permits may be obtained through the Southwest Regional Office of the Department of Environmental Protection.

**Contact the Conservation District to determine what type of permit you need.*

USDA program highlight.....

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is offered as a continuous signup opportunity. Applications are reviewed as funds are available, and financial assistance is offered to the highest ranking applicants. Producers interested in conservation program funding assistance should not wait until a formally announced ranking period to apply.

This program is administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and assists farming operations engaged in the following production systems. New and Beginning Farmers are encouraged to apply.

- For enhancing soil, water and related resources on agricultural land such as cropland, pasture, forest land; and on animal feeding operations.
- For practices that benefit soil, water, air, at risk species; reduce erosion and pollution
- PA targets Livestock, Grazing Lands, Cropland, Conversion to No Till, Wildlife Habitat, Nutrient Management, Pest Management, Cover Crops, CNMP Plan Development, Forestry, and Organic Farming (includes High Tunnel pilot option)
- Air Quality option for practices reducing PM2.5 or ozone precursors in counties not attaining EPA air quality standards
- New energy audit option for development of on-farm energy conservation plan
- \$300,000 limit on total payments from 2009 through 2014
- Payments for Organic operations up to \$20K/year; \$80K total
- Cutoff date for 2011 Organic Initiative option is March 4, 2011

For more information please contact the conservation district office at 724-852-5278 or on the web at www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov

USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

By Susan Funka-Petery, District Conservationist

Practices designed and installed include:

- 26,000 feet of fence
- 87 acres of prescribed grazing
- 47 acres of forest riparian buffer
- 3 agricultural stream crossings
- 11 livestock water facilities
- 1 solar pump system
- 1 heavy area use protection
- 1 roof runoff protection system
- 1 dam removed on Dunkard

Creek through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

NRCS Snapshot of 2010 Accomplishments in Greene County:

- 1,086 acres of soil and water conservation plans written
- 112 acres of cropland with conservation applied to improve soil quality
- 614 acres with conservation applied to improve water quality
- 520 acres of grazing and forest land with conservation applied
- 304 acres of wildlife habitat installed
- 9 acres of wetlands enhanced

Upcoming Events

March 4- 5, 2011,
Appalachian Grazing Conference, Morgantown WV,
www.grazeappalachia.org

March 15, 2011
NW Grazing Conference, Dubois, PA,
Call Headwaters RC & D 814-375-1372 ext 4

March 22-23, 2011,
Nutrient Management Certification Orientation
(Email: maucoin@state.pa.us) <http://panutrientmgmt.cas.psu.edu>)

April 30, 2011,
PASA Master Class at Red Barn Farm,
New Freeport, Greene County.
“Creative Conservation: Funding Conservation Practices
& Developing a Diversified Farm”, Leah Smith 412-365-2985 or
leah@pasafarming.org

Spotlight Event

PA Cleanways of Greene County
Electronics Only Collection
April 2, 2011
9 am – 2 pm
At the Greene County Fairgrounds
Collection Charge: Monitors \$5 each
TV's \$1/inch

SERVICES

USGS Topographic Maps

For sale at the District

Cost: \$6.00/quad

\$7.00/county

\$2.50 postage and handling

Lime Spreader Rental

2 Ton wet lime spreader available

Please call the office or check the
website for further information.

GCCD Water Quality Mini-Grant Program

This program enables Best Management Practices to be implemented on properties throughout Greene County, with the overall goal of improving water quality.

The following are examples of projects that will be considered for funding:

Stream stabilization, riparian buffer plantings, aquatic habitat enhancement structures, and agricultural conservation practices.

Individuals or Organizations may apply for grants of up to \$1000.00 to help offset project costs.

Please call the office or check the website for further information.

Becky's Recipe Box

Southwest White Chicken Chili

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 4 (4 ounce) skinless, boneless chicken breast halves, cut into cubes
- 4 teaspoons chili powder
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 medium green pepper, chopped
- 1 (10.75 ounce) can Campbell's® Condensed Cream of Chicken Soup (Regular or 98% Fat Free)
- 3/4 cup water
- 1 1/2 cups frozen whole kernel corn
- 2 (15 ounce) cans white kidney beans (cannellini), rinsed and drained
- 2 tablespoons shredded Cheddar cheese

Directions

1. Heat the oil in a 4-quart saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the chicken, chili powder, cumin, onion and pepper and cook until the chicken is cooked through and the vegetables are tender, stirring often.
2. Stir the soup, water, corn and beans in the saucepan and heat to a boil. Reduce the heat to low. Cover and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Sprinkle with the cheese.

From <http://allrecipes.com>

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Vacant, WNV Surveillance Monitor

COOPERATING AGENCIES

USDA Natural Resources Conservation
Service
Susan Funka-Petery, District
Conservationist

PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry
Robert McBride, Service Forester

PA DEP Field Representative
Chuck Kubasik

Penn's Corner RC & D
Sherene Hess

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