



Conservation Crier

Newsletter of the LANCASTER COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

ADMINISTRATOR'S CORNER

GRAND OPENING!

Conservation Foundation of Lancaster County



Many times you have been encouraged to stop by a new store, dealership or market to purchase the "special sale items" or to be eligible for the special prize drawing during the "Grand Opening". The "Grand Opening" for the Conservation Foundation of Lancaster County (CFLC) is a little different. Your investment in the CFLC does not buy you a tangible object, but will provide eligibility for future generations to secure the prize of a cleaner environment.

The Conservation Foundation of Lancaster County is a non-profit 501(c)(3) Foundation established by the Lancaster County Conservation District. The Mission of the Foundation strives to "promote, support, and sustain, the stewardship, education, and conservation activities undertaken by the Lancaster County Conservation District". The Foundation has filed as a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit with the IRS and will soon be able to issue charitable contribution receipts.

The 501(c)(3) status enables the Foundation to apply for some grants that the District cannot. Grant support along with individual and corporation contributions will be directed to farm conservation practices, streamside and watershed protection projects, and conservation education outreach to local schools and communities. I strongly encourage your consideration to support this effort.

You may support the Foundation in a variety of ways from a direct financial contribution to participating in forthcoming workshops. Your investment is a seed needed to grow the ideas, secure the future, and weather the elements facing the beauty and bounty of Lancaster County. For more information, phone 299-5361 x.5.

—Don McNutt, Administrator

Elsewhere in this issue...

- p2.** • Welcome New Staff
• Educator News to Use
- p3.** • Stream Monitoring In Her Own Words ~ Ashley Spotts
• 6th Annual Lancaster/Lebanon County Watershed Forum
- p3.** • Lancaster County WatershedWebsite
- p4.** • Updates from the Erosion and Sediment Control Department
• Why we need Buffers
• Calendar of Events
• Warwick Township Initiative

Conservation Planning

What is a Conservation Plan? For farmers, it is usually something you need, to receive something else you want. This could include technical assistance for a manure storage, a stream crossing, or a waterway. It could be farmland preservation funds, Farm Service Agency payments, or to comply with Pennsylvania's Clean Streams Law.

Listed above is not what a Conservation Plan is, but what it can help obtain. A Conservation Plan is a voluntary plan that when implemented will protect all resources on an operation. Some examples of resources are soil, water, plants, animals, and nutrients. The idea is that landowners, when given the ability to fully understand their resources, problems, and opportunities, will make wise decisions on how to manage and conserve them. The Conservation Plan is the documentation of the decisions a landowner makes about the resources on his or her land.

Conservation Plan:

a voluntary plan that when implemented will protect all resources on an operation.

The planning process starts with making a phone call to the Lancaster Conservation District, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), or a private agricultural consultant. The planning process should always be the same and most importantly does not work without the farmer's input. The planner should take inventory and evaluate resource concerns on the operation. Next, alternatives to protect the resources are developed and evaluated. The landowner makes the final decision on how to address the resource concerns based upon his or her current management and objectives for the future.

It is important to remember that the planner's objective is to protect the resources on the farm. Letting excessive erosion from a field continue will not be one of the alternatives presented. Once the plan is completed it is the landowner's plan. NRCS, the Lancaster County Conservation District, or a private agricultural consultant will be available to help with implementation at the landowner's request.

There are many benefits to developing and implementing a conservation plan. Current laws and regulations can require a landowner to obtain and implement a Conservation Plan. However, when a plan is already developed and implemented it can act as an insurance policy against complaints on a farming operation. Most importantly, implementing a conservation plan can give a landowner the satisfaction that they are increasing the long term productivity of the farm as well as protecting natural resources for future generations.

—Katie Hoberg, Ag Conservation Technician

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WELCOME!

Welcome New Staff

Kate Bresaw is a new Agriculture Conservation Technician serving Lancaster County. She has an undergraduate degree from The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, focusing in Sustainable Agriculture and a graduate degree from North Carolina State University in Extension Education and Agroecology. She moved to Lancaster County in 8th grade, but has spent the last ten years traveling across the United States. After five states in ten years, she decided that Lancaster County, Pennsylvania is the very best place in the country to live. She has come back home and brings Extension experience and a passion for diversified agriculture.



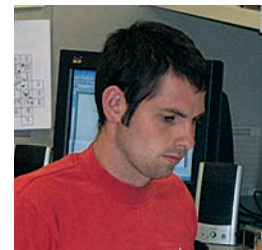
Kate Bresaw



Genevieve Christ

Genevieve Christ is the new Agricultural Conservation Technician for Drumore, East Drumore, Fulton, and Little Britain Townships. She is a 2008 graduate of the Pennsylvania State University, where she received a B.S. in Agricultural Science with minors in Agronomy and Animal Science. She enjoys the outdoors, cooking, working on the family farm in Cambria County and spending time with friends and family. Helping to get conservation on the ground has become her focus and priority.

Kent Himelright is a native of Lancaster County who recently joined the Conservation District as a new Erosion Control Technician. Kent is a May 2008 graduate of Penn State University where he majored in Wildlife and Fisheries Science and also received a minor in Biology. In past years, he has worked for the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, the Penn State fisheries lab, and Esbenshades Greenhouse. Kent enjoys most outdoor activities and is an avid Herp Hunter (amphibian enthusiast) in the spring.



Kent Himelright

Educator News to Use

New Program Guide

Out of your seat activities, outdoor activities, classroom activities, and hands on activities fill the *NEW* Education Program Guide. All aspects of the District's Education Programs are meant to address PA Environment and Ecology Standards. Many programs also touch on standards relating to history, reading, math, and writing.

Contact Sallie Gregory, Education Coordinator at 299-5361 x.117 or check out www.lancasterconservation.org to receive a copy of the Program Guide.

Senior High Envirothon

The Lancaster County Senior High Envirothon 2009 will be held April 30. This contest day involves teams of high school students in many study hours ahead of time. Envirothon topics include wildlife, forestry, soils, aquatics, and a current issue topic.

High School teachers who would like to advise a team for the 2009 Envirothon, contact Sallie Gregory, Education Coordinator at 299-5361 x.117 by **December 1** to insure you'll receive reference materials.



Warwick High School, 2008 Senior High Envirothon Champions.

By the Numbers: Children, Nature, and Outdoor Play

(Source: *Land & People*, Fall 2007)

- Estimated % of time today's children spend indoors: 90%
- Average daily hours children aged 8-10 spend watching television, playing video games, or using computers: 6-10 hours
- Drop in sales of children's bicycles, 2003-2004: 21 %
- Drop in Little League participation since 1997: 14 %
- Approximate decline since 1995 in proportion of children ages 7-11 who swim, fish, or play touch football: 33%
- % of parents in a 2006 survey citing television, computers, and video games as the main cause of their children's disinterest in outdoor play: 91%

—Sallie Gregory, *Education Coordinator*

STREAM MONITORING

In Her Own Words ~ Ashley Spotts

Stream monitoring takes place for about three weeks in March prior to opening of trout season, which has been moved to the last weekend in March. We need to get in and out of those streams in a timely manner prior to that opening day.

So for three weeks out of the year my car is filled to the absolute brim with 8 buckets, one garbage pail, five gallon container of ethanol, jars plenty for storing macroinvertebrates (or aquatic insects), splitters, surber nets, more than one pair of chest waders, a 100 meter tape, trapper gloves, neoprene gloves of all sizes, a Rubbermaid container filled with, paperwork, pens, and a ruler to name a few things.

This year turned out well, we had gorgeous weather and were able to acquire a few volunteers and college students to assist. There are fifteen sites in the Lancaster and Chester county regions with four streams being sampled. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) has been working on this project for approximately ten years. With the help of Stroud Water Research Center, we are comparing the differences between forested streams to streams that have had restoration work to areas that still allow livestock complete access to the water. Restoration work such as streambank fences and planting native trees and shrubs to help with the reforestation process was funded either through CBF programs or by the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).

At each monitoring site, the same 100-meter section is sampled each year. A meter tape is laid out as close to the edge of the stream as possible. This can be tricky especially if there is multiflora rose in a section, you need to figure how to get through, under, or around the rose while sticking as close to the stream as possible. After the tape is stretched the pool and riffle sections of the stream are recorded.

We use a computer generated random number table and arbitrarily select thirty-two sampling sites. We select sixteen riffle and sixteen pool sites to sample. We have eight buckets, four pool buckets, and four riffles buckets. Each bucket will end up having four samples.



Stream Monitoring Snapshot.

A sample includes all the aquatic insects like stone flies, caddisflies, crayfish, salamanders, or even a minnow or two that are collected in the surber net after we scrub each rock and disturb the substrate. There is a metal 12" x 12" square attached to the net that is the sample area. We begin downstream and work our way up towards the 100-meter mark.

After we have collected the thirty-two samples, we then begin the splitting process. Using a splitter, which is a large 12" diameter pipe about three feet in height with a screen attached at the bottom, each bucket is gently poured so as not to poke holes into the screen in the splitter and then is evenly distributed across the bottom of the screen. The top portion of the pipe is removed and a divider is used to section the screen into four quarters. The section positioned above the arrow drawn on the bottom part of the splitter is emptied into a jar and will be sent to Stroud Water Research Center for identification. We then dump the other portions from the splitter back into the stream as well as any crayfish, salamanders, or fish that may have ended up in the bucket.

The monitoring sites are all different and unique. As we encounter people in our travels, it provides a great opportunity to educate and share the reasons for and the process of stream monitoring. Although, stream monitoring is over for another year we'll be back in spring.

*—Ashley Spotts, Stream Buffer Specialist
Chesapeake Bay Foundation*

Lancaster County Watershed Website

The next time you are surfing the web be sure to check out the New and Improved Lancaster County Watershed Website! (www.lancasterwatersheds.org) The site, which has been up and running since 2006, was recently updated to make it more user friendly and include additional information that county residents have requested. One of the newest features on the site is the water monitoring database page. Local volunteers that sample Lancaster County streams and creeks now have the ability to input their data into this database. This data can then be viewed by all and compared to show improvements over time. We strongly encourage anyone with water monitoring data to use the site to house their data. Check out this new updated site for upcoming volunteer opportunities, timely funding options, special events, local watershed plans, information on nonprofit volunteer organizations, and educational resources. Let us know what you think of the updated site.

6th Annual Lancaster/Lebanon County Watershed Forum

SAVE THE DATE - Saturday October 25th (9 AM-Noon) for the Annual Lancaster/Lebanon County Watershed Forum. This annual event brings watershed volunteers, municipalities, residents, water authorities, students, and teachers together from both counties to share ideas and learn about ways they can become better watershed stewards. This year's Forum will take place in Lebanon County at the Quentin UCC Church (lower level) at the intersection of Routes 419 & 72. Brochures and more information on this year's Forum will be distributed in the coming month. Continue to check the Lancaster County Watershed Website (www.lancasterwatersheds.org) for registration information.



*—Matt Kofroth,
Watershed Specialist*

Updates from the Erosion and Sediment Control Department

“As the present now, will later be past...for the times, they are a changing.” Bob Dylan wrote these famous lyrics in 1963 and yes, the times are once again changing. In November, our country will once again elect a new leader, and our new leader will sign into law new policies and regulations. The times are also changing in the Chapter 102, 105 and National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) programs.

In early September, PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) held their annual conference to discuss changes to the Erosion and Sediment (E&S) Control and Dam Safety regulations. Much of the information discussed is still in draft form, one thing is certain; the winds of change are blowing strong across these programs.

DEP, along with the County Conservation Districts, is working on draft versions of Chapter 102 and a new version of the Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Manual. The new regulations will include many new items, such as Post-Construction Stormwater Management language but will also include familiar language such as the “5000 square feet” rule currently in place for earth disturbance activities. The new E&S manual will have updated Best Management Practices and better details.

Draft versions of the regulations will be submitted for both Conservation District and public comment prior to taking effect. Don’t expect to see new versions any time soon though, as the new drafts are at least 1-2 years away.

One permit you can expect to see is a new version of the Pennsylvania General Permit, currently PAG-2. PAG-2 is basically the state’s permit delegation agreement with EPA to execute the NPDES permit program. When you see NPDES permits with the number PAG2(00360123), that’s what the PAG2 is referring to. Pennsylvania’s PAG-2 officially expired in December 2007, but the state was granted an extension through December 7, 2008. DEP is being required to complete the program updates and implement the new permit by December 7. The public will be informed of any changes by DEP once PAG is finalized. New versions of the NPDES permit application for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction Activities are also expected in the near future.

So as the crisp, cool air of fall and the colorful foliage arrives, it does seem that the times, they are a changing.

—Rebecca Buchanan, Erosion and Sedimentation Acting Program Manager

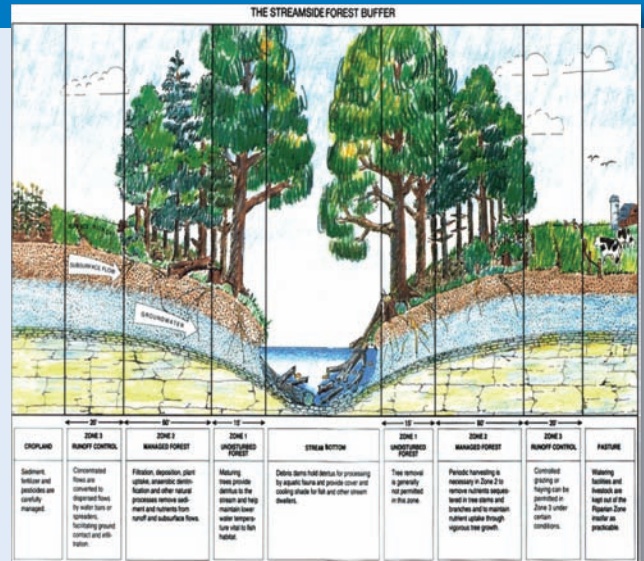


Calendar of Events October—December 2008

October 1, 2008	LCCD Board Meeting—7:30 PM
October 13, 2008	Columbus Day Holiday—Office Closed
October 25, 2008	Lancaster/Lebanon County Watershed Forum
November 5, 2008	LCCD Board Meeting—1:00 PM
November 11, 2008	Veterans Day Holiday—Office Closed
November 27, 2008	Thanksgiving Holiday—Office Closed
November 28, 2008	LCCD Holiday—Office Closed
December 3, 2008	LCCD Board Meeting—7:30 PM
December 25, 2008	Christmas Holiday
January 1, 2008	New Year’s Holiday—Office Closed



WHY WE NEED BUFFERS



Benefits...

- Reduce flood damage • Protects drinking water
- Storm water damage • Filter pollutants
- Reduce stream bank erosion • Cool waters for healthier streams
- Provides habitat • Increase property value

Without forested buffers it is not possible to have a cleaner Chesapeake Bay. There are many organizations working towards cleaning and reforesting the 1,500 miles of streams and more than 4,000 acres of wetland in Pennsylvania. Without these improvements we will have an unhealthy environment and streams. The Stroud Water Research center and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) are working together to help improve the waters of the commonwealth. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is also doing their part by offering the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to landowners to help improve local streams and wetlands. If you are interested in finding out more information about this program and other programs please contact your local NRCS office, 299-5361 x.3.

—Heather Conley, Soil Conservationist, NRCS

Warwick Township Initiative

Of the 7,004 acres in Warwick Township, about 55 % is in agricultural use. The township is motivating each farm landowner to have a conservation plan created or updated. Each conservation plan is provided at no cost through grant support from the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network, a collaboration of non-profit foundations.

A team of partners including the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network, Lancaster County Conservation District, USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service, Team Ag, and Warwick Township have worked together to reach all farms in Warwick Township. To date over 75% of the farms in Warwick Township now have an up to date conservation plan. Lancaster County, PA has been known as the Garden Spot of the World for centuries. Through partnerships and planning, the soils of Lancaster County can continue to be the most productive non-irrigated land. Likewise, the waters leading to the Chesapeake Bay will illustrate the care and responsibility from the stewards upstream.

—Sallie Gregory, Education Coordinator