



Conservation Crier

Newsletter of the LANCASTER COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

ADMINISTRATOR'S CORNER

"Planning to Win"

You may have heard the expression "Make a plan and work your plan; those who fail to plan, plan to fail". This expression is often incorporated into a business plan for reaching more clients or selling more products. For the District, it has similar meaning in reaching out to more customers and promoting the idea of conservation. Conservation is quickly becoming part of the urban culture dialog as everyone is becoming aware that they are part of the solution to improving local water quality. What is the District's plan to win? It is called the 2015 Strategic Plan.

The 2015 Strategic Plan of the District was passed by the Board of Directors in January 2010, and contains many specific goals and targets. From time to time the plan is reviewed to assure the road we are traveling will result in arriving at our intended destination. This year the District will dedicate a major portion of the Annual Planning Meeting for a review of the 2015 Strategic Plan. The Annual Planning Meeting will be held on January 14, 2013. We are now at the mid-point of the six year effort with 2010, 2011 and 2012 behind us and 2013, 2014 and 2015 awaiting us. Program Managers will provide a review of the areas within the plan for which they have responsibility and may suggest possible adjustments and course corrections in order to not only meet the goals but, as in typical Lancaster County fashion, to excel above and beyond the goals. The Board of Directors will consider the information and adjust the plan as needed.

—Don McNutt, Administrator



A view of the sediment damage looking downstream of the dam onto the adjacent property. Sediment filled the stream and the homeowner's yard.

The Past Changes Present Stream

As I write this article, just days after the eastern seaboard was pounded by Sandy's hurricane strength winds, extreme surf conditions and heavy rainfall, it's hard to believe that just a year ago Lancaster County was dealing with cleanup from another tropical system, Irene, and the Halloween snowstorm. After the 2011 storms, the Lancaster County Conservation District became involved with several cleanup projects, some of which are now just beginning construction. One project is in Clay Township, at the (former) Indian Run dam.

The Indian Run Dam was an old historic stone dam on private property in Clay Township. The dam was 14 feet high, 120 feet wide and backed approximately 3 miles of stream. The dam was damaged by storms in the summer of 2011 and became unsafe. As a result of the dam being breached, the stream began to head-cut, dumping loads of sediment onto the downstream properties and into the Indian Run watershed. Every time the water levels came up, the mud flowed.

As a result of the storm damage in the fall, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) opened up a series of grants, through the Emergency Watershed Protection Projects (EWP) program. The sediment loading and damage to the watershed qualified the Indian Run Dam for EWP money for a stream restoration project. Construction began in October 2012 (just prior to Hurricane Sandy) and fared well during the storm, thanks to the quick work and detailed attention to the project by the site contractors, Flyway Excavating, Lititz.

Often, people have questions regarding the Erosion and Sediment Controls (E&S) used for stream restoration projects. People get confused because it looks like there is nothing required and equipment is "just allowed to dig in the creek".

As a general practice, equipment is never allowed to work directly in the stream channel, unless absolutely necessary. Equipment is usually placed on the side of the stream channel and

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FREE 2013 Calendar



The generosity of the Alcoa Foundation has provided funding for the design of a Free 2013 Calendar. Each month features elements of a watershed with a link to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Please contact the Conservation District at 299-5361 x.5 with your name and mailing address if you'd like a copy of this unique calendar.

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Rob Weaver, *Soil Conservationist*

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Staff Recognition and Director Remembrance

The Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD)/State Conservation Commission (SCC) Joint Annual Conference was held July 9-11, 2012 in Scranton, PA.

At the PACD/SCC Awards Luncheon, Gerald Heistand, Business Manager, was recognized with a Conservation District Employee Service Award for thirty years of service to the Lancaster County Conservation District. This PACD award recognizes conservation district employees for their years of dedication to conserving Pennsylvania's natural resources. Congratulations Gerald!

At the PACD Memorial Luncheon, fourteen individuals were remembered for their dedication to conservation and their efforts to preserve our natural resources for future generations. Ronald L. Meck (1949-2012), a former Lancaster County Conservation District Director, was among those remembered. Ron served on our Board of Directors for eight years (1996-2003), and then continued his service to the District as an Associate Director. Ron Meck was a friend to conservation, and will be greatly missed.

—Paula Harnish, *Administrative Secretary*



10th Anniversary Watershed Forum

The 10th Annual Lancaster/Lebanon County Watershed Forum was once again a big success. Despite one speaker not being able to attend due to Hurricane Sandy, the event went off without a hitch. Attendance was up with over 75 folks participating in the morning event.

As usual, the Forum provides time for networking and folks took advantage of opportunities throughout the event. The Integrated Water Resource Plan presentation showed folks what the county should be striving toward to improve water quality and quantity goals. Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems were explained in laymen's terms so that all could understand stormwater and its critical role within the Chesapeake Bay cleanup efforts.

Finally, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation presentation highlighted the tremendous strides made in cleaning up the bay over the last decade and what work still remains as we move this endeavor forward. Every year the Forum seems to get better, and this year was no exception. This event would not have happened if not for the generous donations from the Lancaster County Clean Water Consortium, Flyway Excavating, the Hershey Company, and Octoraro Native Plant Nursery.

—Matt Kofroth, *Watershed Specialist*



MANURE MANAGEMENT WORKSHOPS

Contact the Conservation District office at 299-5361 x.5 to find out more information about upcoming manure management workshops in 2013.

Schools + Conservation = A Bright Future

Junior Envirothon

Lancaster County teachers for grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 can connect your students to the outdoors through the Lancaster County Junior Envirothon 2013. The contest will be held **April 30 and May 1** at Lancaster County Central Park. The study focus will be Backyard Conservation. For more information regarding registration please contact Sallie Gregory at 299-5361 x.117.

Senior High Envirothon

Senior High Teachers please mark your calendar, the Lancaster County Senior High Envirothon 2013 will be held **Thursday, May 2** at Lancaster County Central Park. 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.

Teachers if your high school has not previously competed and would like to, please contact Sallie Gregory, Education Coordinator at 299-5361 x.117 by **December 1** to insure you'll receive reference materials.

Youth Conservation School

2013 Date Saver for teens ages 14-16, Lancaster County Youth Conservation School will be held July 21-27. Find an application at www.lancasterconservation.org starting January 2013. Don't miss this 7 day ed-venture.

—Sallie Gregory, Education Coordinator

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View looking downstream from just above where the dam had been, early October 2012.

reaches along the banks to do the excavation work. Excavated material is stockpiled in a safe area and is often immediately hauled off site (to an approved location) or has appropriate E&S controls installed around the stockpile location. Stabilization (erosion control matting, seeding and mulching) is a huge part of restoration projects. The faster we can “green” up the site, the less potential for erosion during construction. Staging (sequence of construction) is also important. In restoration projects, work is usually limited to small sections and that area of work is completed before moving on to the next. Staging helps to limit the amount of exposed soil at any given time. The end result of restoration projects is hopefully to provide a better environmental situation than before the project was first started.

In the case of the Indian Run Dam, the banks were graded back; stabilized and large amounts of accumulated sediment were removed from the system. For the Indian Run Dam, EWP was money well spent.

—Rebecca Buchanan, Erosion Control Program Manager



SPREADING THE LOVE:

MANURE APPLICATION IN FALL & WINTER

A moment of awareness along any tree-lined street or Lancaster County vista will reveal what the wind has been whispering for weeks. We're living in a sea of oranges, yellows, and reds, and the morning frost is coating the shadows like a dark crystal. The seasons are changing, and for our food-producing neighbors, this means crop-year 2012 is drawing to a close. Fall harvest is nearly in, cover crop is planted, and it is time to feed next year's crop. Feeding next year's crop in Lancaster County often means hauling manure to crop fields so that the nutrients in the manure may be used to improve crop production. At the Lancaster County Conservation District, it means a clear increase in the number of phone calls from concerned citizens. The District takes each call seriously; however, with a bit of basic planning, the District understands that manure can be an excellent and environmentally responsible source of fertility.

What constitutes basic planning? Every farm in Lancaster County that produces or applies manure should have a site-specific nutrient management plan (NMP) or manure management plan (MMP) that addresses any potential environmental problems associated with the application and storage of manure. The NMP or MMP will call for appropriate times, application rates, and sites to apply manure. Application times should consider the nutritional needs of the crop as well as available manure storage on the farm. Application rates should be based on the nutritional needs of the crop and soil fertility. Application sites, particularly during the winter, should consider soil type, land slope, and distance to surface water. The NMP or MMP may also include precautionary measures where additional environmental risk may be evident.

The precautionary measures in the plan could include the establishment of a cover crop prior to fall or winter manure application. A cover crop is living vegetation grown during times of the year when the crop field would otherwise be bare, usually for the purpose of reducing soil erosion, increasing organic matter, encouraging nitrogen fixation, and/or improving nutrient cycle efficiency. In this case the cover crop serves multiple purposes: 1) it captures the nutrients in fall or winter-applied manure more effectively so that they are readily available to the following year's crop, 2) it covers the soil and reduces soil erosion, and 3) it reduces the amount of nutrient leaching and runoff. Other precautionary measures should include appropriate setbacks from surface water, wetlands, drainage inlets, and wells.

With the implementation of these measures, a flexible but site-specific NMP or MMP, and appropriate caution, manure can be applied in fall and winter to fertilize agricultural crops while protecting natural resources. For more information about manure application on the farm, why it is used, and how to use it effectively and responsibly, contact the Lancaster County Conservation District at 717-299-5361 x.5. Happy harvest time!

—Kate Bresaw, Ag Conservation Technician

Conservation District Annual Banquet 2012



WCO Derek Daly, WCO Dennis Warfel, Education Specialist Bert Myers, Land Management Coord. Linda Swank, and PA Fish and Boat Comm. Volunteer Sam Consylman

Conservation efforts throughout Lancaster County were recognized at the Annual Banquet of the Lancaster County Conservation District. The District is pleased to recognize conservation making a difference for the residents of Lancaster County.

The Lancaster County Conservation District recognized the volunteer members of the Northern Lancaster Game and Fish Protective Association work crew with the Conservation School Service Award.

Members of the Northern Lancaster County Game and Fish Protective Association volunteer their time to maintain the club grounds and prepare the facility for the Lancaster County Youth Conservation School's use during the program held in July. Their efforts help the school to establish an outdoor classroom for teens ages 14-16 each summer.



Members of the Northern Lancaster Co. Game & Fish Protective Assoc. work crew

Sam Consylman, a PA Fish and Boat Commission volunteer, received the Conservation Educator Award for his many years of volunteerism in Lancaster County helping youth see the value of good water quality in their backyard. He has dedicated time to provide outstanding learning experiences for students at the Youth Intervention Center in the field and in the classroom.

The PA Game Commission working in Lancaster County received the Conservation Agency Award for their commitment in cooperating and collaborating with the Conservation District during activities and events such as the Envirothons, Teacher Training Courses, and Youth Conservation School.

Greg Wilson and Bob Kutz were honored for their many years of work to improve streams in a number of watersheds in Lancaster County. Both members of the Donegal Trout Unlimited, Bob and Greg have gone above and beyond the definition of volunteer. Their passion for fly-fishing and commitment to making streams healthier is a brilliant role model for others.

Jay Snyder was recognized with the Conservation Service Award for 14 years of service on multiple levels. Jay is currently serving in a County Commissioner appointed position as a Public Director on the Lancaster County Conservation District Board. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the Conservation



Tony Luongo, Zoning Officer; Brent Lied, Becker Engineering; Jay Snyder, and Greg Wilson

Foundation of Lancaster County, a 501c3 organization that supports the mission of the Conservation District. Within his capacity on the Foundation Jay has also volunteered to serve as the Treasurer of the Lancaster County Clean Water Consortium, a sub-committee of the Foundation.

The Lancaster County Conservation District presented the 2012 Conservation of Natural Resources Award to East Cocalico Township and Becker Engineering. The purpose for the award is to showcase the positive things that are being done by those working in the industry, and to publicly recognize the efforts of the industry.

East Cocalico Township and their engineering firm, Becker Engineering, were recognized for their cooperation in environmental resource planning and permit review coordination. Both have been key in preserving, conserving and promoting the natural resources of Lancaster County and within East Cocalico Township over the years.

The Lancaster County Conservation District presented the 2012 Outstanding Cooperator Award to Robert and Ruth Fox. This distinction is given to farm operations that have a well-developed working relationship with the District, and have demonstrated a commitment to conserving the natural resources on their farm.

Located in Clay, in Clay Township, the farm has been in the Fox family since 1960. Bob's father Richard began working with the District in 1963 by developing a Conservation Plan for the farm. Bob and Ruth have since developed their own plan after taking over the farm in 1998. They have installed a wide variety of conservation practices on their farm, many around the same time as their dairy expansion in 2006. The Best Management Practices installed include a manure storage, diversion, grassed waterway, multiple stream crossings with stream bank fencing, barnyard runoff controls, and roof runoff structures. The farm practices no-till and cover cropping. The preserved farm includes 70 Registered Holsteins, 126 acres of cropland, and 30 acres of pasture. Aside from implementing practices, the family also opens their farm to the Youth Conservation School students each year to install stream improvements on Segloch Run, in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission.

The District looks forward to celebrating citizens connected to conservation in 2013. The banquet will be held March 21, 2013. Contact the District for more information.



Robert and Ruth Fox, Outstanding Cooperator Award Recipients

Forget the Alphabet Soup, I'll Take the Meat and Potatoes

EQIP, CBWI, CREP, CRP, CSP, WRP, AMA... the variety of programs offered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the acronyms used for them is enough to make my head spin, but the simple fact is that the core mission of NRCS has not changed all that much since the agency was started over 75 years ago as the Soil Conservation Service (here we go again, SCS) as the response to the devastation to farmland during the Dust Bowl. Although we now also consider other resources such as water, air, wildlife, plants and the human communities that depend on the land, conserving the soil resources of this great land is still at the center of our service.

Many of you have probably seen the demonstration that uses an apple to represent the earth as a way to show just how much we depend on the soil for our sustenance (See: <http://www.farmland.org/images/flash/apple.swf>) . A quarter of the apple is cut out to represent the portion of the earth that is dry land with the rest thrown away. The quarter is then halved to demonstrate that only an eighth of the earth is arable land. The eighth is peeled and the peel is held up to represent the topsoil which is all that stands between the world's population and starvation. Makes you realize how critical your role is as a Steward of the land is, doesn't it?

The primary tool that NRCS uses to help landowners conserve the soil is a Conservation Plan which is simply the record of a farmer's decisions on how to manage his or her land to protect the natural resources for current and future generations. Recently, a producer who is making some conservation minded improvements to his farm relayed to me a discussion he had with a neighbor who had asked "What are they (NRCS) making you do on your farm?" His answer was "Nothing, everything they (NRCS) are helping us to do benefits my family." That really sums up the whole process. We know that as Soil Conservationists we will never know



your land as well as you do, nor understand everything about your operation; but we can use our experience to help you identify areas where you have an opportunity to improve your farm by protecting the natural resources. In the end though, it is your choice of what gets done and when. Our job is to provide the advice and technical resources you need to make a plan and implement it.

This fall and winter is a great time to contact us and schedule a visit to your farm to start the planning process. If you have a Conservation Plan but don't know if you need an updated plan, here are a few signs that your plan is out of date:

1. Grandpa had a plan, but no one seems to know where it is.
2. You have gullies, manure runs off of your barnyard or you have water quality issues at your well.
3. Grandma found that old plan, but you can't remember the last time some of the crops listed were grown on the farm.

The key is anytime significant changes have been made to your operation, you should consider updating your plan to reflect the changes.

Give us a call at 717-299-5361 x. 3. We are here to help, remember that natural resource conservation begins and ends with you!

—Bob Livingston, NRCS Soil Conservationist

Grant Benefits the Little Conestoga

The Conservation Foundation of Lancaster County and the Lancaster County Clean Water Consortium were awarded a National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Chesapeake Bay Stewardship grant for the Little Conestoga Watershed. The grant, titled "The Little Conestoga Watershed Partnership: A Community Watershed Approach to Stormwater Management" will involve Conservation District staff for education and outreach, conservation planning, and project management of the grant.

The Little Conestoga Partnership is a dynamic, locally-led partnership that will assist municipalities and suburban/urban landowners with innovative, cost-effective tools and approaches to achieve and maintain reductions in stormwater pollution. This project will serve as a model for a collaborative, integrated watershed approach to stormwater in PA to achieve local and Chesapeake Bay water quality goals by: embracing Lancaster County's agricultural heritage as a model; strategically employing incentives to reduce stormwater pollution; adopting local measures to promote green infrastructure; and demonstrating local, watershed based financing mechanism for municipalities to cost effectively achieve reductions.

—Matt Kofroth, Watershed Specialist



Little Conestoga Watershed and Grant Partnership



Lancaster County Conservation District
1383 Arcadia Rd Rm 200
Lancaster PA 17601-3149

2- Year “Environment of a Healthy Horse” Calendar Available

Coming soon to a tack shop near you...or a 4-H Club near you... or a County Conservation District near you.... **The 2013/2014 “Environment of a Healthy Horse” calendar!** This calendar will be available to all those who own equine, have a boarding stable, or receive lessons or training on horseback.

The calendar will be full-color, glossy and chock full of information on:

- Healthy horse tips from a Lancaster County Equine Veterinary practice
- Pasture Management Tips
- Winter and Summer Coat Care
- Trailer Safety Considerations
- Manure Management Requirements
- Fly Minimization Tips
- Emergency Preparedness at home and on the road with horses
- Municipal Zoning Considerations when owning horses
- Cost Share Funds Available to Equine Operations
- Manure Storage and Composting Tips
- Plus many more varied topics

The 2-year calendar will be available late 2012 and is FREE. It will be distributed to Lancaster County tack shops, Lancaster and Lebanon County 4-H Club members, and will be available from the Lancaster County Conservation District. Please contact Shelly Dehoff at shelly.dehoff@gmail.com or 717-880-0848 for more information.

—Shelly Dehoff, Ombudsman



COMING SOON
TO A PLACE NEAR YOU!

