



MILESTONES



LANCASTER COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

2017 Annual Report



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Income

County Funding Income	258,514.39
Non-Lapsing Program Funding	1,356,061.48
Grant Administration Income	222,353.13
Interest Income	22,149.96
Fee Income	523,562.70
Sales Income	47,096.83
Activity Income	18,175.99
Grant Income	706,173.58
Total Income	3,154,088.06

Expense

Employee Salary and Wages	1,484,620.55
Employee Benefits	486,709.26
Travel Expenses	31,094.00
Vehicle Purchases	29,716.00
Meeting Expenses	14,222.48
Supplies	17,218.64
Communication Costs	23,572.93
Postage and Meter Rental	9,563.33
Office Rent	85,812.32
Equipment and IT Support	28,618.78
Administrative	40,190.17
Miscellaneous	375.61
New Cubicle/Office Renovations	42,063.57
District Activities	53,203.08
BMP/Grant Projects	592,487.55
Total Expenses	2,939,468.27

2017 Net Change in Cash Assets

General Operations & Reserve	119,255.08
E&S Department	-30,625.47
District Activities	9,271.17
Grants Fund	116,719.01
Net Change	214,619.79

"Land, then, is not merely soil:
it is a fountain of energy
flowing through a circuit
of soils, plants, and animals."

— Aldo Leopold

MILESTONES



FOR THE PAST 3 YEARS DISTRICT STAFF ALONG WITH NRCS STAFF HAVE TEAMED UP TO PLANT RIPARIAN BUFFERS IN LANCASTER COUNTY.

The idea of measuring time or location with a milestone marker was first used by road builders in the Roman Empire. Measuring distance and offering directions, milestones are still a part of our daily lives. Although some of the county's original milestones still exist, today modern markers can blink on a smartphone or sit at eye level near a road sign. The task of a milestone remains the same: to let you see where you traveled from and to provide a direction to the future.

Open the pages of our Annual Report and you'll find milestones within all departments of the Conservation District and our federal partner, NRCS. These milestones reflect where we've been, where we are, and where we're headed. Get ready for a scenic tour with plenty of points of interest on a journey of conservation milestones.

—Dan Heller, Board Chairperson



Lancaster County Conservation District Board of Directors

*Pictured Left to Right: Standing – Robert Shearer (Vice Chair), County Commissioner Craig Lehman, Sonia Wasco, Herb Kreider
Seated – Jay Snyder, Roger Rohrer, Daniel Heller (18 Chair), Ken Meck (17 Chair)
Absent from picture – Richard Shellenberger, Donald Robinson (Director Emeritus)*



Lancaster County Conservation District Associate Directors

*Pictured Left to Right: Frank Burkhart, Robert Wagner, along with District Administrator, Chris Thompson
Absent from picture – Darrell Becker, Gregory Strausser, Kent Weaver, Lisa Graybeal, and Ernest Orr*

EROSION AND SEDIMENTATION

Where We've Been

2017 was a year of transition for the Lancaster County Conservation District Erosion and Sedimentation (E&S) Department. In order to make room for the further expansion of other departments at the Conservation District, the E&S Department expanded across the hall from the main Conservation District office to Room 223 in the Farm and Home Center. The move included designing the new office layout for the seven members of the E&S team as well as relocating and organizing all the E&S, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and Chapter 105 permits and plan files.

PracticeKeeper II electronic database that the E&S Department utilizes to track and store all plan information, was adopted by PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to allow for statewide use of the system in order to be able to track and report E&S, Ag and Watershed Best Management Practices (BMP) that have been installed throughout Pennsylvania. The statewide adoption of the system resulted in the release of a new version of the database, PracticeKeeper III. The new platform has a more user-friendly mapping system that allows each county to view other projects going on in the state.

Where We Are

The E&S Department remained fully staffed throughout 2017, enabling additional time to be devoted to conducting field inspections of active construction projects. A total of 1,172 site inspections were conducted in 2017, which was the most inspections conducted since 2010. In contrast, 2014 and 2016 were years where staff time was heavily devoted to training new technicians, with an average of 800 inspections each year. Development throughout the county followed a steady pattern of growth, reflected by plan submissions for review. A total of 181 NPDES Permits were approved in 2017. Two-thirds of the plans approved by the Conservation District were for commercial and industrial development. Expansions of agricultural operations were included in this category. The majority of the remaining NPDES permits approved this year were for residential development. In fall 2017, Evan Martin, Assistant E&S Department Manager, became CPESC certified. Evan joined Nevin Greiner and Nate Kurtz who are also Certified Professionals in Erosion and Sediment Control.

On December 7, 2017, PAG-02 General NPDES Permit for stormwater discharges associated with construction activities was set to expire. Prior to the expiration date it was renewed on a short term basis for 2 years to allow PA DEP time to revise the PAG-02 for satisfying Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirements.

Where We're Going

In 2018, the E&S Department will continue outreach efforts to municipalities, contractors, developers, and the general public to reinforce the Chapter 102 and 105 programs. The E&S Department expects trends to roughly match the previous year. In the coming year, the E&S Department will continue to conduct inspections on the many construction projects throughout the county including of the active pipeline projects affecting the county, Mariner East II, Atlantic Sunrise, and Rock Springs.

—James Frick, Erosion Control Technician



Pooler Forge – Erosion Control methods in place during construction and the methods transformed at the completion of the project.



Land Use Type	Number of NPDES Permits Approved
Commercial/ Industrial	122
Residential	52
Borrow/ Disposal	2
PennDOT/Road Construction	2
Institutional	1
Recreation	2
Total	181

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of Inspections	1267	1006	895	921	781	1102	802	1172

AGRICULTURE

Where have we been?

The Lancaster County Conservation District opened its doors in 1950, equipped with a relatively small number of employees and a large amount of work ahead of them. As the years went by, information and technology developed allowing the District to provide further assistance to Lancaster County farmers. One of the first major milestones occurred in 1972, when the Clean Water Act was established. This act required that all farms have an Agriculture Erosion and Sedimentation Conservation Plan and Manure Management Plan. Assisting farmers in designing and writing these plans was a major driving force for the District from the beginning. Hundreds of plans have been developed and modified for farms in the county to reflect changes in ownership and crop or animal production. Many farms have had several plans developed over the years to address different items such as: farm expansions/reductions, modifications to crop rotation, tillage methods and changes in plan requirements. In order to be sure current requirements are reflected in all plans on file, updates to plans developed prior to 2006 should be made.

Where we are now?

2017 was a great year for the District Agriculture (Ag) staff! The Ag staff completed 45 Conservation Plans for a total of 2,036 acres and 146 best management practices (BMP) designs. We also implemented 160 BMP across the county, and completed 97 Act 38 Nutrient Management Plan reviews. The Ag Compliance team also completed their first full year of farm visits, totaling 302 farms visited.

The District's overall efforts have been strengthened by the addition of five new technicians to the office. These new technicians attended nutrient management trainings, and as a result they have completed their exam and are on track to becoming nutrient management certified.

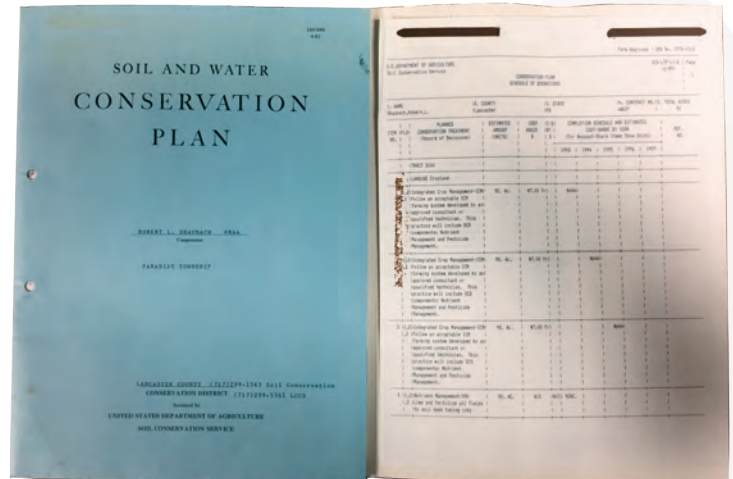
Bay Compliance Inspections

Quarter	1st Qtr 16-17	2nd Qtr 16-17	3rd Qtr 16-17	4th Qtr 16-17	1st Qtr 17-18	2nd Qtr 17-18
Number of Inspections	18	83	61	144	46	93

Where are we going?

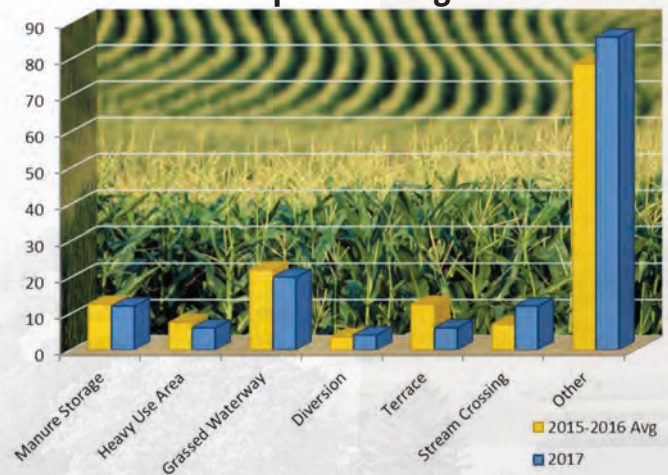
The Ag staff is hoping for a great year in 2018! A growing number of Act 38 plan reviews are anticipated over the next several years due to changes in the Standard Animal Weights used by the State Conservation Commission that will become effective October 1, 2019. Staff are aware there are farm operations slightly below the current threshold of 2.0 Animal Equivalent Units per acre, which will subsequently be affected by these weight changes and could become regulated by Act 38 Concentrated Animal Operations guidelines. With these anticipated changes there could be a 50% or greater increase in the number of Act 38 plans in the county.

—Adam Hartz, Ag Eng Tech Specialist

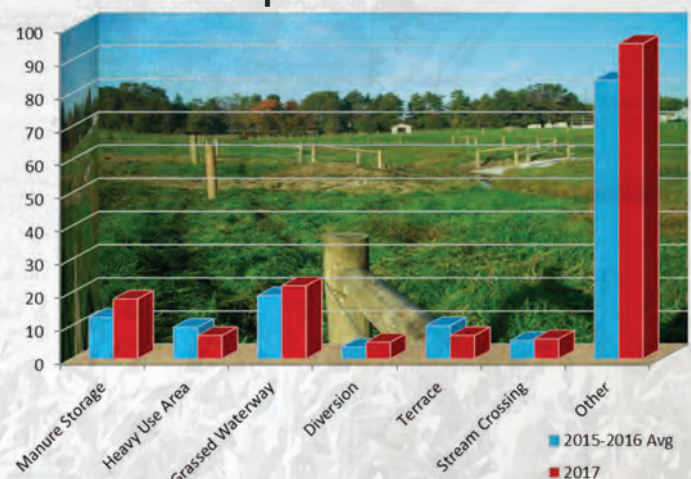


An historic Ag Erosion and Sedimentation Conservation Plan.

Completed Designs



Implemented BMP's



WATERSHED PROGRAM

2016 was one of the busiest years for the Conservation District's Watershed Program on implementing stream restoration work throughout the county, and 2017 was a continuation of that good work with even more stream work completed. 2016 saw 4 stream projects completed and 2017 saw 5 completed.

One large scale stream restoration project was completed this year through funding provided by the Conservation Fund to the Millcreek Preservation Association. The Conservation District's Watershed Specialist acted as project coordinator for this project in support of the all-volunteer watershed association. The project was along the Mill Creek on the border of Leacock and Upper Leacock Townships. This project was completed on several Plain Sect farms within the Mill Creek watershed. Unstable failing stream banks were targeted for restoration work, along with the creation of in-stream aquatic habitat. To complete the project a riparian buffer of 35 ft. was established within the new streambank fencing area. The project totaled more than 3,800 linear feet of stream work, nearly 7,500 ft. of streambank fencing was installed, and over 6 acres of riparian buffer was installed on an impaired stream section.

In addition to this large scale project 4 "smaller" stream restoration projects were completed through funding provided to the District from the Exelon Corporation. One project was along the East Branch of the



Mill Creek before

Recent stream restoration projects



Mill Creek after



East Branch
Octoraro
Creek Before

Recent stream restoration projects



East Branch
Octoraro
Creek After

Octoraro Creek in Sadsbury Township on a local horse farm. The other was along Fishing Creek in Drumore Township in a municipal park. A third project involved a small unnamed tributary to Mill Creek on property owned by two producer farmers and a local business in Earl Township. The final project, a high quality stream in southern Fulton Township, Peters Creek, had work completed on it to improve bank stability issues and a lack of aquatic habitat. All projects involved reshaping fragile or failing stream banks, installing in-stream fish habitat improvement devices, and then planting at least 35 foot riparian buffer around the stream system to complete the project. These four projects totaled more than 5,200 linear feet of stream work, over 1,800 linear ft. of stream bank fencing, and over 8.5 acres of riparian buffer implemented on impaired stream reaches.

Over 2,500 native trees and shrubs were planted along these stream projects which only added to the overall benefit of the projects. Five stream projects may not seem like a lot; however for a small watershed department this puts a dent in the county's nearly 700 miles of impaired waterways. Throw in the countless educational programs conducted throughout the year, the many watershed meetings coordinated through the Watershed Specialist, and numerous water monitoring activities carried out, and one can see all the good work happening in the county. All of these efforts were geared toward improving not only local water quality but also the overall water quality in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

—Matt Kofroth, Watershed Specialist

LOW VOLUME ROAD PROGRAM



Peters Creek Road before (left) and after

For 20 years the PA Dirt & Gravel / Low Volume Road Program has provided assistance to municipalities to maintain roadways that parallel local waterways. Change can be good and the Dirt & Gravel/Low Volume Road Program found this out in 2017. The Low Volume Road program requires any entity applying for Low Volume Road funding to validate that a road is truly low volume, meaning it has less than 500 motorized vehicles on it per day on average. In order to verify a road meets the description, an applicant must conduct a traffic count on the road. This can be done a number of ways but the traffic count can only be conducted from March 1 - Thanksgiving. In the past, Low Volume Road applications were typically due in early March which was problematic for acquiring traffic count data. To alleviate this issue the Dirt & Gravel/Low Volume Road Quality Assurance Board, who oversees the Lancaster County Dirt & Gravel/Low Volume Road Programs, rotated when Dirt & Gravel Road applications and Low Volume Road applications were accepted.

There were two Low Volume Road funding rounds in March and September 2017, and no Dirt & Gravel Road funding opportunities. Although Dirt & Gravel Road projects were not received during this time, projects funded in previous years continued forward with installation. Moving forward Dirt & Gravel Road applications will be accepted in March 2018 and Low Volume Road applications in September 2018.

Lancaster County's Dirt & Gravel and Low Volume Road Programs are helping municipalities implement significant countywide Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance Projects that *are* improving roadways and local water quality for the better. Look for this to continue well into the future.

—Matt Kofroth, Program Administrator

Low Volume Road Projects Funded in March 2017

<i>Municipality</i>	<i>Road</i>	<i>Awarded</i>
Rapho	Bricker Road	\$ 4,327.80
City of Lancaster	Shelley Road	\$ 80,000.00
Conestoga	Stone Hill Road	\$ 13,802.50
Lititz Borough	North Lane B	\$ 13,755.00
Fulton	Goat Hill Road	\$ 20,000.00
Lititz Borough	Blackberry Lane	\$ 14,890.00
Christiana Borough	Broad Street	\$ 22,630.59
Lititz Borough	North Lane A	\$ 13,000.00
Rapho	Cold Springs Road	\$ 60,000.00
Earl	Snyder Road	\$ 20,000.00

Low Volume Road Projects Funded in September 2017

Lititz Borough	North Lane	\$ 47,385.00
Drumore	Scalpy Hollow Road	\$ 40,000.00
East Drumore	Locust Lane	\$ 13,404.40
Conestoga	Rineer Road	\$ 8,039.30
Fulton	Cherry Hill/Rigby Roads	\$ 5,000.00
Lancaster Township	Spring Hill Road	\$ 60,000.00
TOTAL		\$ 436,234.59

The 43rd Annual Lancaster County Conservation District Tree Seedling Sale included 560 orders for 24,727 plants and trees. A team of Conservation District staff and Natural Resources Conservation Service staff along with several volunteers filled each order. Hosted at the Farm and Home Center, several perennials and trees that didn't appear on the order form were offered for sale the day of pick up. Free compost was made available to customers courtesy of Manheim Township composting.

Eight local Watershed Associations participated in the sale as a fundraiser for their individual groups. Over \$500 was refunded to these associations. Manheim FFA and Manor FFA also participated this year as a fundraiser for their chapters, earning back 20% of all sales. Nearly \$300 was refunded to their chapters. A motivated student at Donegal High School also coordinated a school order in support of the sale.

The heritage of the annual tree seedling sale remains the hallmark of the program to encourage county residents to plant trees today and provide a benefit to future generations.

—Sallie Gregory and Matt Kofroth, Co-Chairs

TREE SEEDLING SALE



PLAIN SECT OUTREACH

150

Farm Visits
(most related to manure management plans)

63

Manure Management Plans Completed

21

Farmers Used the No-Till Transplanter

40

Meetings with Information Display

2

Days Staffing Educational Display at 2017 Horse Progress Days, Leola

1

Annual ELANCO H2O Day for Students
(helped plan & participated)

2017 marked the 10th anniversary of the employment of Lancaster County Conservation District's Plain Sect Outreach (PSO) Coordinator. Although the basic farm regulations have changed little in the last ten years enforcement has changed. Many farmers had Agriculture Erosion & Sedimentation Plans completed by the Conservation District during this time period however some producers decided to wait for enforcement. Enforcement has led to an outreach opportunity to complete Manure Management Plans with farmers. This is a great opportunity to educate farmers one-on-one on the responsible use of manure generated on their farms.



Horse Progress Days came to Lancaster County June 30-July 1, 2017. This event attracted 15,000 people each day to view the latest horse drawn farm equipment. Horse Progress Days included field demonstrations of equipment from manure

spreading & tilling to harvest, all pulled by Lancaster County's finest teams of horses and mules. There were also demonstrations of various produce equipment, including a no-till transplanter. The PSO Coordinator, Dennis Eby, designed a display area for conservation related partners that included USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Penn State Extension, and Lancaster County Conservation District. This area included a tent with displays, a soil pit, the PSU no-till transplanter, and the NRCS rainfall simulator. Although the weather was extremely hot and humid, many people stopped by to hear the soil presentation in the soil pit, see the rainfall simulator in action, and pick up conservation brochures.



Education continues to be the key to putting more conservation practices on farms throughout Lancaster County. Education happens at various farmer meetings, one-on-one manure plan visits, creating brochures, and other venues that spread the good news about CONSERVATION of our natural resources.



Dennis helped plan and participated in the first annual Drinking Water Day sponsored by the ELANCO Source Water Protection Collaborative and held at the Terre Hill Park. This event was for the sixth graders at Blue Ball & Brecknock

Elementary Schools and included students from four one room Plain Sect schools. Groups of children got to visit various stations to learn about the ways to help improve the quality of drinking water in the community.



This was the third season that Dennis coordinated the no-till transplanter program funded by a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation - Altria. The program provided a no-till transplanter for planting no-till tobacco

and a few acres of no-till pumpkins. This successful program has resulted in 5 similar transplanters in the fields during the 2017 planting season with maybe as many as 5 more planned for 2018 season. No-till tobacco acreages have increased substantially in Lancaster County since this new style planter was launched in 2015. Several farmers have successfully modified their conventional planters for no-till.

—Dennis Eby, Plain Sect Outreach Coordinator

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

Where We Were

The team of District staff and cooperating agencies created the Lancaster County Conservation District Education program in 1996. In the years that immediately followed, the program cultivated a network of schools and teachers interlaced with District led programs: Envirothons and Youth Conservation School. Strands branched from that base to include District publications and new connections with partnering agencies and projects for the residents of Lancaster County.

Where We Are

Sallie Gregory, Education Coordinator, led efforts in 2017 to build and expand on the original milestones in Conservation Education. The District Education program included 7,748 participants who attended 223 programs. Presentations addressed the PA Science/Technology, and Environment and Ecology Standards featuring natural resources, watersheds, water conservation, and soil.

Amy Kochel, District Intern, and Sallie introduced 70 teachers to watershed concepts as part of the final year of a 3 year Department of Education grant in collaboration with the Lancaster Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13. They also partnered with Matt Kofroth, Watershed Specialist, to offer instruction during a Lebanon Valley College teacher focused graduate course about waterways chemistry. Both summer projects highlighted the resources the Conservation District is able to share with educators in the county.

The Lancaster County Envirothons program successfully expanded to include the first annual Middle School Envirothon in 2017. Sallie collaborated with Mary Ann Schlegel, Naturalist – Lancaster County Parks and Recreation, District staff, and volunteers to plan the event. Six school districts participated forming 21 teams of 105 students. The program was well received and linked the Junior Envirothon for elementary students to the well-established Senior High Envirothon.

21 Students graduated from the 39th year of the Lancaster County Youth Conservation School. During the week students constructed a tree nursery lean to and planted trees for the nursery. Traveling on a field trip to Rohrer's Quarry, a wetland, and an expanded tour of Indian Echo Cavern, students developed a better understanding of the bedrock layers in the area. This background knowledge was used by students in their final presentations about pipeline construction.

Where We Are Going

The Education program adapts and evolves based on new educational standards, new environmental and educational research, and new opportunities. The future needs to include strategies to incorporate changing technology while helping youth connect to and appreciate the outdoors and the natural resources we all depend upon.

—Sallie Gregory, Education Coordinator



Amy Kochel, Intern, and Sallie Gregory, District Educator, present a stream study at Poole Forge.



Students participate in the 1st annual Middle School Envirothon.



Conservation School students on a wild edible plant walk.

OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

2017 was the 15th year the Lancaster County Conservation District (LCCD) hosted the PA Agricultural Ombudsman for Eastern PA.

Where we were:

- 2000** PA Ag Ombudsman Program Started; originally the ombudsman was an employee of PennAg Industries.
- 2002** Ombudsman Program became part of the Lancaster County Conservation District; with oversight by Berks and Chester CDs too. Shelly Dehoff was hired to fill this position.
- 2002-2004** Shelly was encouraged to grow the program well beyond Southeastern PA.
- 2005** State Conservation Commission agreed to fund an additional Ombudsman position to cover Western PA.
- 2005-present** Ombudsman from Eastern and Western PA collaborate on projects, sessions and yearly goals; however, the nature and number of conflicts/opportunities vary greatly from either side of the state due to differences in population density and diversity.



Facilitating presentation about Ag Terrorism/Safety Planning.

The emphasis of the program has been to build bridges and create connections that allow parties experiencing conflict to find common ground and work toward better relationships with each other. The program budget provided outreach/training to farmers, municipalities, and Conservation Districts and was an effective tool to promote good neighbor relations.

Where we are:

As budgets have gotten tighter over the years, the Ombudsman Program no longer fully funded the program. Eastern and Western PA programs had to expand funding sources. This increased Shelly's responsibilities to other programs and focus, while decreasing the time devoted to proactive efforts to minimize conflicts at the urban/rural interface. Shelly's priority remains responding to farmer frustrations, neighborhood conflicts, fly complaint response, assisting with Agriculture, Communities, and Rural Environment (ACRE) ordinance review requests, and other municipal issues, but the proactive outreach has lessened greatly. Shelly spends more time creating tools for agricultural environmental regulations outreach; conducting farm best management practices (BMP) verification visits for different programs; providing plan writing workshop opportunities; and providing project management for other ag-related groups such as coordinating the 2nd annual Ag Week.

The program is still effective and continues to make an impact with farmers, neighbor relations, municipalities and conservation/natural resource agencies/partners in the state.

Where we are going:

The future of the PA Ag Ombudsman Program will depend on direct funding being available, and options for alternative funding that provides work that is complementary to the overall mission and purpose of the Ombudsman Program. However, the NEED for an ombudsman-type position will never go away. As more and more people:

- are GENERATIONS away from growing up on a farm and have no idea about the realities and necessities of farming;
- have no idea about farming, but want to regulate it without understanding the impacts or ramifications and unintended consequences;
- receive misguided and inaccurate information from their mobile devices, which tarnishes how people think about modern farming;
- are less and less tolerant of something they do not understand.

There will be a need for someone to

- listen while they vent
- educate and explain common agricultural practices
- proactively debunk myths and urban legends
- explain regulations and what is acceptable and what is not acceptable for farmers to do
- facilitate building bridges and mending fences
- provide guidance to farmers about where they may need to "clean up their act" too

—Shelly Dehoff, PA Ombudsman

"HELPING PEOPLE HELP THE LAND" since 1935

Since its formation in 1935 as the Soil Conservation Service, the mission of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has been simple and unwavering - provide educational, technical and financial resources to farmers and private landowners to aid them with conservation efforts on their land. We work with our customers to provide one-on-one, voluntary and flexible assistance to manage the natural resources on their land and to ensure productive lands in harmony with a healthy environment.

CONSERVATION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

We've all heard the phrase "Conservation Pays" and while I believe most conservationists would certainly agree, there's no doubt that establishing and maintaining conservation practices on one's land doesn't come for free. As the economic environment of agriculture ebbs and flows like any industry, the goal of NRCS's conservation financial assistance programs is to provide a financial incentive to landowners to ease some of the potential economic burdens that may arise when implementing conservation practices on their operations.

\$10 million

Dollars in financial assistance obligated to 181 farmers and private landowners in Lancaster County since 2014.



Grazing & Soil Health Field Day
Jeff B Stoltzfus, Jr. Farm

CONTRACT OBLIGATIONS					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
ALL NRCS PROGRAMS	\$1,291,386.00	\$2,146,743.00	\$3,032,577.00	\$3,637,616.00	TBD

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
ALL NRCS PROGRAMS	\$2,192,330.00	\$1,783,112.00	\$1,605,043.00	\$2,350,184.00	(as of Jan 2018) \$1,221,849.48

"There is no virtue in planning merely for the sake of planning. Unless plans can be translated into action, planning becomes a profitless exercise."

-Hugh Hammond Bennett

CONSERVATION PRACTICE IMPLEMENTATION

In this era of regulation and compliance, as conservationists, we must keep in mind that resource improvements are only truly gained when a plan is put into action. NRCS conservationists, technicians, and engineers count our successes in the number of returning and new customers we work with each year to implement conservation practices and "get conservation on the ground". On average each year, since 2014, NRCS has provided technical assistance to farmers and private landowners to implement conservation practices that improve soil and water quality on approximately 10,000 acres.

COMMON CONSERVATION PRACTICES INSTALLED IN LANCASTER COUNTY				
	2014	2015	2016	2017
Waste Storage Facilities (no.)	12	11	13	24
Waste Transfer Systems (no.)	23	20	11	23
Grassed Waterways (ac.)	13	18	18	18
Terrace Systems (ft.)	16,400	16,500	32,900	22,600



Horse Progress Days

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Our goal as NRCS conservationists is not only to provide technical and financial assistance to farmers and private landowners within the county, but to also be an educational resource to our community. We want to engage our customers and promote a culture of conservation and stewardship that is shared beyond the one-on-one relationships we have with them. There's no better salesperson of conservation than a farmer talking to another farmer about their experiences. We hope to encourage our customers to become conservation leaders within their communities, further advancing the rate of conservation implementation within the county.

CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM



Newly installed riparian buffer.

Where we were:

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) started in 2000 in Lancaster County and surrounding counties in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The CREP is part of the largest private land conservation program in the US. Federal funds supplemented with non-federal funds address high priority conservation concerns at the state level. Farmers who are part of the program are paid an annual rental rate in exchange for removing environmentally sensitive land out of production.

The program was extremely popular right-off-the-bat. The waiting list for the county expanded well over a year for some farmers and landowners. Initially the program did not include maintenance requirements, grasses and riparian buffers started to fail. The need for mowing and herbicide to maintain the integrity of the practices was not immediately recognized as the program began.

As this need became more evident in the bay watershed more people, agencies, nonprofit groups began to work together to implement the program. They asked for additional funding for maintenance. New maintenance requirements were included in the next round of the program funding.

In 2005, the program reached a short lull in new signups and buffers. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Stroud Water Research Center started to promote buffers and funding for best management practices on the farm when enrolling land into the CREP program. These opportunities sparked a renaissance in the program. Additional new components like live-staking and direct seeding were added to the riparian buffer practice.

As the Chesapeake Bay Foundation Streambuffer Specialist and native of Lancaster County working throughout the county, Ashley Spotts recognizes the value of the land and that people can be hesitant when it comes to installing a buffer. Ashley believes these buffers should not be seen as throwaway areas but instead areas to be used, enjoyed, and appreciated. Over the years she has planned view-sheds within a buffer to be maintained or enhanced. She's worked with landowners to plant edible species or species beneficial to wildlife. Flowering trees or trees that have a colorful leaves in the fall have been encouraged in buffers. Most importantly, buffers are not to be planted and forgotten. Ashley

recommends plants that make a riparian area attractive and beneficial for both wildlife and people from the beginning. Buffers at times can be a hard sell; it is common sense to plant these areas so they are beneficial for the landowner, terrestrial, and aquatic wildlife.

Where we are:

There are currently 276 CREP buffer contracts for a total of 1,307 acres. This past year alone, Ashley completed 24 CREP plans adding a total of 108 acres of new buffers in the county.

Looking forward, there are 14 landowners signed up for CREP plans in 2018. The farmers and landowners vary in experience, interest in plants, and reasons for the buffer. Ashley works with landowners who want to enroll in the CREP riparian buffer program to attract more migratory birds to their farm, install pollinator habitat, and for herd health reasons. There are a few landowners who have Ash trees that are starting to die because of the Emerald Ash borer. They will want to install a buffer along their streams to be proactive and to get additional trees in place before the Ash are gone.

Where we are going:

Landowners and farmers throughout the county continue to contact the Farm Service Agency office to sign up for the program on a regular basis. Funding for buffers has hit an all-time high. Agencies and nonprofit organizations around the state are becoming involved in buffers. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Keystone Tree Initiative is a new partnership to help install 10 million trees in the Bay watershed by 2025. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources have two newly implemented grants to install riparian buffers. Lancaster County Conservation District has been installing buffers through different sources of funding for years. Likewise, watershed groups have been obtaining grants to work on riparian buffer projects.

Looking back on milestones over the year, riparian buffers are even more popular now than ever. They are being used for wildlife and pollinator habitats, landowners are planting edibles for themselves,

buffers are showy with spring flowers, and striking in the fall with leaf color. If you have a stream running through your property we hope that you take advantage of one of the many programs out there to install a buffer on your farm.

—Ashley Spotts, CBF Streambuffer Specialist



A persimmon tree flourishes in a riparian buffer.



Conservation Foundation of Lancaster County

Board Member Updates

MEMBER	POSITION	TERM
Jay Snyder	President	12/31/2017
Kent Gardner	Vice-President; Recording Secretary	12/31/2019
Darrell Becker	Treasurer	12/31/2017
Cory Rathman		12/31/2019
Roger Rohrer		12/31/2017
Fritz Schroeder		12/31/2017
Rob Barley		12/31/2017
Kenneth Rutt		12/31/2017
Bill Belden		12/31/2017
Jeff Shue		12/31/2018
Heather Valudes		12/31/2019
Herb Kreider		12/31/2018
Bradford Clubb		12/31/2019
Matthew Mack		12/31/2019
Victor DeSantis		12/31/2020

Financial Report

Total Foundation Assets 1/1/2017 \$193,275.24

Income

Grants Received	\$361,517.00
Gifts & Donations	\$5,690.99
Fees Generated	\$19,810.00
Administrative Income	\$5,000.91
Fundraising Income	\$9,276.00
Program Income	\$615.00

Expenses

Project Dollars Expended	\$313,865.29
Administrative Expense	\$4,636.68
Consulting Expense	\$13,010.00
Sponsorship Expense	\$5,000.00
Fundraising Expense	\$6,898.65
Program Expense	\$5,943.87

Total Foundation Assets 12/31/17 \$245,830.65



Ephrata Township rain garden.



Youth Conservation School supported by Foundation.

PROJECTS /GRANTS HIGHLIGHTS:

Pequea Creek Watershed Association Grant for the Big Beaver-Esh Project

Grant received from Williams Transco Atlantic Sunrise Project – Environmental Stewardship Program. The stream restoration project was completed and consisted of a 2500 lineal feet of 35 foot riparian buffer planting and grading of the streambank. The final stages of planting in late spring included 3500 live stakes and 1000 containerized seedlings.

Fishing Creek Grant for the Fishing Creek Watershed

Grant received from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). The collaborative partnership was developed to pursue 100% stream exclusion of livestock in the Fishing Creek Watershed. The Foundation portion of the grant which is ongoing will focus on contracting with the District to review and approve the conservation plans and then to provide coordination and funding for livestock exclusion fencing along Fishing Creek. It is anticipated that streambank fencing will begin in 2018.

Career Pathways for Agriculture Equipment Service Technicians Grant

Grant received from the Steinman Foundation. The grant is ongoing to help to develop an apprentice program for high school graduates interested in the agriculture equipment field. A kick-off meeting was held in May 2017 with Scott Sheely, PA Department of Agriculture. Curriculum for the Apprenticeship Program was completed. Assessments are currently being written.

STEM Education Takes Root Outdoors Project

Grant received in 2017 from the Atlantic Sunrise Community Program. The goal of the proposal which will take place in 2018 includes Lancaster County students working together to analyze stream health and capture water quality data. The collection of information will be processed by students to be published in a classroom resource for Lancaster County schools regarding local waterways and watersheds.



Conestoga Country Club wet meadow planting.

Extraordinary Give Project

Grant received from the Lancaster County Community Foundation. 52 Donors participated in Lancaster County's Largest Day of Giving, the Extraordinary Give. Donations of \$3,425.00 supported the Lancaster County Envirothons and the 40th anniversary of the Lancaster County Youth Conservation School.



West Lamerter Twp stormwater basin retrofit.

AFFILIATE HIGHLIGHTS



Stormwater mini-grant completed project in Denver Borough.

Lancaster County Clean Water Consortium

Refined the Goals, Mission and Vision statements.

Sponsor of Lancaster County Water Week.

Hosted 2nd annual golf tournament during Water Week raising \$2,377.35 for the Stormwater Mini Grant program.

2017 Stormwater Mini-Grant was awarded to Ephrata Borough in the amount of \$10,000.

Developed a Homeowner's Operation & Maintenance Guide for Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP).

Held 4 Municipal Notice of Intent (NOI) training workshops –January to April for the NOI application and requirements, calculating loads, BMP selection process, and Pollution Reduction Plans (PRP) plans.

Held Back to Basics Training for municipal officials.

Held Engineers Roundtable to discuss various stormwater topics.

Participated in the Chiques Creek NFWF Grant – Ag, Residential, Municipal Teams.

Co-sponsor of Inspection & Maintenance of BMP Workshop in October with the Chesapeake Stormwater Network.

Participated in the Chiques Creek Watershed Expo

Sponsor of the 2017 Native Plants in the Landscape Conference.

Clean Water Partners

Secured a \$280,000 2-year grant from the Keith Campbell Foundation for a Coordinator position for the Clean Water Partners.

Secured a \$750,000 3-year PA In The Balance- Lancaster Focused grant from NFWF to create and implement the framework for a countywide clean water campaign.

Held 3 public meetings to generate and build community awareness and engagement in the initiative.

Advertised the coordinator position and hired a coordinator in January of 2018.



Curb bump outs designed in Lititz Borough.

Board of Directors

Daniel C. Heller, *Chairman*
Robert Shearer, *Vice Chairman*
Herb Kreider
Kenneth Meck
Roger Rohrer
Richard Shellenberger
Jay Snyder
Sonia Wasco
Craig Lehman, *County Commissioner*
Donald M. Robinson, *Dir. Emeritus*

Associate Directors

Darrell Becker
Frank R. Burkhart
Lisa A. Graybeal
Ernest M. Orr, Jr.
Gregory Strausser
Robert E. Wagner
Kent Weaver, *Treasurer*

District Advisors

John Beiler
James E. Hershey
Matthew J. Mack
David D. Miller
Kenneth M. Rutt
Kathleen V. Schreiber
Deb Seibert
Alfred Wanner Jr.
Matthew Young
Cynthia Zawrotuk

Lancaster County Conservation District Staff

Administration

Christopher Thompson, *Administrator*
Gerald Heistand, *Business Manager*
Paula Harnish, *Administrative Secretary*
Kim Dugan, *Sec./Receptionist*
Holly Shaub, *Sec./Receptionist*

Erosion and Sedimentation

Nate Kurtz, *Department Manager*
Nevin Greiner, *Resource Conservationist*
Samantha Gordon, *Erosion Control Tech*
Evan Martin, *Erosion Control Tech*
Emily Broich, *Erosion Control Tech*
Jim Fricke, *Erosion Control Tech*
Suzanne Kopp, *E & S Secretary*

Clean Water Partners

Allyson Ladley Gibson, *Coordinator*

Agriculture

Jeff Hill, *Ag. Program Manager*
Kevin Seibert, *Ag Compliance Coordinator*
James Saltsman, *Ag Eng Tech Spec*
Adam Hartz, *Ag Eng Tech Spec*
Kent Bitting, *Professional Engineer*
Kate Bresaw, *Ag Compliance Insp*
Justin Furnia, *Ag Compliance Insp*
Nicholas Biondi, *Ag Conservation Tech*
Greg Heigel, *Ag Conservation Tech*
Kevin Lutz, *Ag Conservation Tech*
Steven Reiff, *Ag Conservation Tech*
Maddie Klein, *Ag Conservation Tech*
Eric Knoll, *Ag Conservation Tech*
Brittany Smith, *Ag Conservation Tech*
Nathaniel Straw, *Ag Conservation Tech*
Dennis Eby, *Plain Sect Outreach*

Watershed and Education

Shelly Dehoff, *PA Ag. Ombudsman*
Sallie Gregory, *Education Coordinator*
Matthew Kofroth, *Watershed Specialist*

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Heather Grove, *District Conservationist*
Kefeni Kejela, *Soil Conservation/District Conservationist*
Axel Morales, *Soil Conservation Tech*
Gary Ballina, *Civil Engineering Tech*
Dayanna Estades, *Soil Conservationist*
Mark Myers, *Soil Conservationist*
Sally Barnes, *Soil Conservation Tech*
Josef Corso, *Soil Conservation Trainee*
Ashley Spotts, *Streambuffer Specialist-CBF*
Jeff Sholly, *TAG Engineer*
Jenna Emore, *Wildlife Biologist, Pheasants Forever*

Vision Statement

The Lancaster County Conservation District will be the premiere conservation organization regarded by all citizens as a leader in the innovative stewardship of our natural resources. We will be a source of up-to-date technical assistance to address environmental concerns and a central clearinghouse providing credible, current information and education regarding the environment. We will coordinate environmental protection for future generations while encouraging profitable business enterprises.

The mission

of the Lancaster County Conservation District is to focus on the **stewardship** of land, water, and other natural resources; to make all citizens **aware** of the interrelationships between human activities and the natural environment; to provide **assistance** for current efforts in natural resource conservation; to develop and implement **programs** which promote the stewardship of natural resources; and to enlist and coordinate help from public and private sources in accomplishing this mission.



LANCASTER COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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