

# Then a Spark, Today a Legacy

1950 - 2025



LANCASTER COUNTY  
**Conservation District**

**2025 Annual Report**

# Leadership Letter

- Sonia Wasco, Chairperson of the District Board of Directors  
- Chris Thompson, District Manager

2025 was filled with memories about 75 years of conservation work across Lancaster County. The Board of Directors and staff recognized February 24, 1950, on February 24, 2025, reflecting on the date when the Lancaster County Commissioners approved the Lancaster County Conservation District to serve the entire county. With this, the 75th anniversary year was underway. The anniversary was a part of all aspects of the District in 2025. This report is filled with program happenings and several celebrations, including the Gala hosted in September 2025.

Our title of the Annual Report, Then a Spark, Today a Legacy, ties to our roots in 1950, when volunteer directors who served on the early board of directors cultivated outreach to farmers, planting the seed of a mission that grew and blossomed into the innovative and ardent Conservation District of today. From Ag Compliance to Practice Keeper to Plain Sect Outreach to the Lancaster County Watershed Report Card, the Lancaster County Conservation District continues to build a stewardship heritage now for tomorrow.



## Directors

*Front Row – Left to Right –*  
Sonia Wasco, Chairperson,  
Bob Wagner, Director Emeritus

*Back Row – Left to Right –*  
Herb Kreider, Gordon Hoover

*Absent from Photo – Commissioner*  
Ray D'Agostino, Kent Weaver,  
Geoffrey Rohrer, Roger Rohrer,  
Deryk Shaw Jr.

## Associate Directors

*Front Row – Left to Right –*  
Phillip Dunn, Jenny Engle

*Second Row – Left to Right –*  
Kyle Solyak, Dan Zimmerman,  
Greg Strausser

*Third Row – Left to Right –*  
Robert Shearer, Dale Herr Jr.

*Absent from Photo –*  
Frank Burkhart, Jay Snyder,  
Daniel Heller



LANCASTER COUNTY  
Conservation District

# Lancaster County Conservation District 2025 Financial Report

Income	2025	2024
County Funding Income	295,000.00	295,000.00
Non-Lapsing Program Funding	2,122,114.68	1,955,827.67
Grant Administration Income	752,830.79	1,070,750.08
Fee Income	810,054.04	980,964.98
Interest Income	814,029.21	666,285.11
Sales Income	37,282.75	39,029.66
Activity Income	16,489.21	13,330.00
Other Income	80,215.04	57,979.50
Grant Income	11,829,849.95	12,130,315.00
Total Income	16,757,865.67	17,209,482.04

Expense	2025	2024
Employee Salary and Wages	3,027,594.18	2,772,764.03
Employee Benefits	771,848.02	739,642.72
Travel Expenses	59,008.43	51,799.04
Meeting Expenses	22,532.72	23,129.00
Supplies	17,934.16	18,413.14
Postage and Meter Rental	4,913.76	4,366.97
Office Rent	108,613.91	108,613.92
IT support & Communication	33,329.55	37,960.70
Services-HR, Audit, Payroll, 457	57,123.47	60,563.81
Consulting, Insurance, Membership	17,134.09	39,776.17
Equipment & maintenance	30,489.27	33,360.32
District Activities	56,617.22	55,615.61
Miscellaneous	1,188.97	466.00
BMP/Grant Projects	11,194,630.71	9,121,695.66
Total Expenses	15,402,958.46	13,068,167.09

2025 Net Change in Cash Assets	2025	2024
General Operations & Reserve	206,964.42	620,692.63
E&S Department	45,790.45	268,329.84
District Activities	3,182.39	-934.09
Grant Funds	1,098,969.95	1,184,534.24
Net Change	1,354,907.21	2,072,622.62

## District Administration



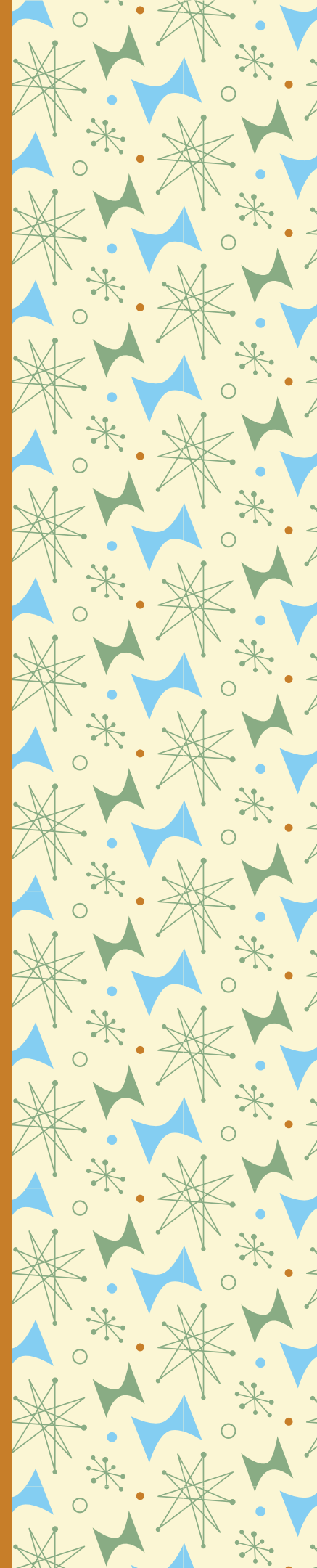
Chris Thompson  
(District Manager)



Matt Kofroth  
(Assistant District Manager)



Stacey Meyer  
(Finance Manager)



# Watershed Program:

-Grace Chamberlain



Muddy Creek Stream Restoration Project

Reviewing the past year feels a bit like flipping through a well-worn scrapbook from the fabulous 1950s—full of bold ideas, a *can-do spirit*, and steady progress, along with plenty of *elbow grease*. The collective three-member Watershed team put their shoulders to the wheel, met challenges with *good old-fashioned know-how*, and chalked up some *real swell* accomplishments along the way.

A stream restoration project in Brecknock Township marked the start of 2025. The project was along Muddy Creek in the Conestoga River Watershed and resulted in approximately 2,220 feet of restored streambanks with bank stabilization and installation of in-stream habitat structures.

The project restored the angled streambank and water flow away from the streambank in a section of Muddy Creek and connected a Plain Sect community through environmental stewardship. The landowner was eager to learn more about conservation and to share what he learned about in-stream habitat structures with his community. He demonstrated care for the land, his community's well-being, and future generations. By restoring the stream that runs through his farm, he is protecting clean water, rebuilding wildlife habitat, and reducing erosion that once carried soil away from neighboring fields.

After construction was complete, a riparian buffer was planted over two days. Local Plain Sect students assisted on the first day, and Stone Independent School students finished planting on the second day. A total of 650 trees (almost 3.5 acres) were planted with the help of over 50 volunteers! This riparian buffer will help disperse flood waters, reduce erosion, capture nutrients and pollutants, and stabilize stream banks.

## Summer highlight: Alvin Fisher

In summer 2025, the Watershed Program completed a restoration project that had been in the works since 2021. The stream restoration project took place on Eshleman Run, a tributary to the Pequea Creek, and successfully restored 1,699 feet of streambank. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation will plant a 2.7-acre buffer in Spring 2026.

This project presented a great opportunity to complete another project within the Clean Water Partners' Delisting Catchment. The project demonstrates that creating contiguous riparian habitat and prioritizing restoration work speeds the delisting of a waterbody from the Impaired Stream List. When restoration efforts are coordinated across the entire watershed, improvements in one reach—such as reduced erosion, improved habitat, or better water quality—are reinforced. Water quality sampling is also ongoing in this watershed to monitor the effects of the rapid stream delisting strategy. This project has generated a lot of interest in the area, connecting additional segments of Eshleman Run and Londonland Run to the recently completed restoration project. It is also upstream of a stream restoration project completed in 2016.



**Watershed Department**  
From left to right -  
Grace Chamberlain,  
Amanda Goldsmith,  
Tyler Keefer

## 2025 WATERSHED PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Projects Completed	7
Miles of Stream Restored	8,289 feet (1.57 mi)
Acres of Riparian Buffers Planted	9.05 acres
Feet of Streambank Fencing Installed	7,350 feet
Stream Crossings Installed	4
Permit & Designs Completed	7
Water Quality Monitoring Units Installed	15
Total Grant Dollars in Watershed Program	\$2,370,000

## Fall highlight: Waterfall Retreat

The Watershed Program collaborated with East Lampeter Township, David/Miller Associates, and a private landowner this fall to restore a section of an unnamed tributary to Mill Creek that runs through Flory Park. Significant land development found upstream along Lincoln Highway and an improperly angled bridge led to increased stormwater flows and eroded stream banks.

Working alongside community partners strengthened the district's work and made the process more effective and rewarding, with each partner bringing unique expertise, perspectives, and energy to the project. As a bonus, East Lampeter Township received MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) credits for implementing stream stabilization and restoration practices. At the conclusion of the project, stream banks were stabilized, available habitat for aquatic organisms increased, and much-needed floodplain relief had been created. The township will be working with the private landowner to plant a riparian buffer in the spring of 2026.

The Watershed Program believes with confidence that 2025 was a full year's work the 1950s way—with determination, teamwork, and plenty of *roll-up-your-sleeves spirit*. With some long days and big milestones, it was a year defined by *hustle and heart*.



## Dirt & Gravel/Low Volume Road Program

– Tyler Keefer



This report is written with a nod to the radio sounds of the 1950s with song titles and release dates listed.

From the LCCD (Lancaster County Conservation District) Studios, a message from the fine folks at the Dirt and Gravel / Low Volume Road (DGLVR) program. This year there were plenty of Moments to Remember (1955), and partnerships with municipalities, Because Of You (1951), the DGLVR program completed six snazzy road projects in five different townships.

Elizabeth, Rapho, Lancaster City, Martic, and

Conestoga townships all had roads go from Rags to Riches (1953) this year.

Chances Are (1957), residents wouldn't believe that the Low Volume Road program granted over \$385,000 on projects, with the Dirt and Gravel Road program providing over \$240,000! And to the projects that are still working towards completion, don't fret, I Hear You Knocking (1955). There are four more projects that are in various stages of development, with more to come in 2026.

Back in March of this year, Tyler Keefer, DGLVR Coordinator might have been seen Standing On The Corner (1956) at municipal buildings as he facilitated several outreach meetings throughout the county. He counted it an honor to speak at the meeting and share all about what the District's programs have to offer, and Sincerely (1955) hopes attendees learned something new.

The good news is, the DGLVR program will be Searchin' (1957) for more excellent projects to fund throughout the county. The Dirt & Gravel program was allocated \$100,000 for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, with the Low Volume Road program being allotted \$271,605. Just Walking In The Rain (1956) and noticing drainage issues, reach out to the Conservation District.

So, whether pesky Autumn Leaves (1955) clog crosspipes, or a municipality is dumping Sixteen Tons (1955) of stone on the same road each year, consider the DGLVR program as an option to improve roads and ultimately waterways too.



### 2025 Dirt and Gravel / Low Volume Road Program Projects

Road	Township	DG / LV	\$ Amount	Status
Johnson Mill Lane #3	Rapho	DG	37,308.00	Pre-Construction
Pumping Station	Elizabeth	DG	154,000.00	Finalizing
Johnson Mill Lane #2	Rapho	DG	39,601.00	Complete
Whispering Pine	Rapho	DG	46,884.16	Complete
Spangler Road	Rapho	LV	25,960.00	Pre-Construction
Mill Road	Earl	LV	47,869.00	Pre-Construction
Sunnyside Road	Rapho	LV	23,561.00	Construction
W Fulton	Lancaster City	LV	183,900.80	Finalizing
Wendy Drive	Martic	LV	63,500.00	Finalizing
Brenner Hollow Rd	Conestoga	LV	138,160.00	Finalizing

# Data & Analysis

- Noelle Cudney, Colin Wiest, Pam Wise

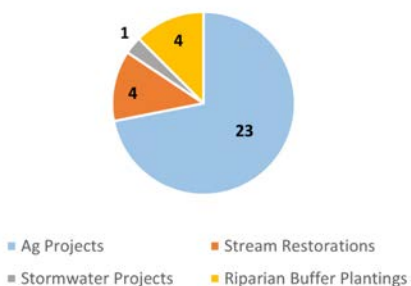


**Data Coordinator** - Many of Lancaster County's waterways are currently impaired by excess sediment and nutrients. To evaluate watershed conditions, a collaborative team of *cool cat* experts developed a *nifty* Watershed Report Card to synthesize complex environmental data into accessible scores for stakeholders and the public. Sub-watersheds were assessed across six categories, varying from water quality parameters, urban areas, and agricultural practices. Scores were classified from Very Poor to Excellent based on percentage thresholds. Lancaster County scored a rating of Fair and should strive to make improvements in the Water Quality category. Data were compiled from multiple partner organizations and agencies, with noted variability in data availability, watershed size, and designated stream uses. This report card establishes a baseline for future assessments and supports Lancaster County's ongoing Delisting Strategy, which targets impaired waterways through focused conservation and restoration efforts. Updates to the Report Card will occur every five years to track progress towards water quality. See the District's website to read the Water Report Card!

**Best Management Practice Verification Coordinator** - In 2025 The BMP verification Coordinator verified best management practices (BMPs) on approximately 105 farms across Lancaster County, totaling an estimated 1,500 BMPs! Some of the highlights from 2025 consisted of meeting *cool cat* operators across the county, inspecting BMPs during all types of weather conditions, and inspecting the BMPs of farms that take conservation seriously. The coordinator enjoyed seeing how new projects conserve our natural resources and improve farm operations while also benefiting wildlife. This year, he was also able to conduct construction inspections of 3 ARPA-funded (American Rescue Plan Act) projects and 5 CAP-funded (Countywide Action Plan) projects, with hopes of seeing more in the future.

**Grants Management Coordinator** - In 2025, the CAP (Countywide Action Plan) Projects approved in 2024 were *boss* and created a *blast* to conservation efforts in 2025. These *nifty* improvements to seven local streams in six different watersheds were made possible with just over two million dollars of PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 2024 CAP Grants awarded to seven individual projects throughout Lancaster County. These stream restorations, buffer plantings, and wetland restorations will all help to improve the overall health of the streams, which will also result in a positive impact on the Chesapeake Bay. The total acreage of floodplain and wetland restoration would be equal to the square footage of seven football fields! The streambank and shoreline protection encompasses over three miles of streambank. There were also 31 new CAP projects awarded over six million dollars of funding from the DEP 2025 CAP Grant that include BMPs ranging from stream restorations and buffers to manure management and other Agricultural BMPs. These projects started moving forward through the design and bidding phases, with a few starting construction in late December. CAP will be going gangbusters in 2026! Stay tuned!

2025 CAP Funding Project Types



## Data and Analysis

From left to right -  
Pam Wise, Noelle Cudney,  
and Colin Wiest




2024 Project BMP Instance Practice	Total	Unit
Streambank & Shoreline Protection	16373	Feet
Mudsill	1,885	Feet
Vane	8	QTY
Cross Vane	19	QTY
Stream Crossing	3	QTY
Riparian Forest Buffer	9.2	Acres
Floodplain Restoration	8.4	Acres
Wetland Restoration	5	Acres
Fence	3,181	Feet

Streams and Watersheds Impacted by CAP Projects installed in 2025.	
Stream	Watershed
Dellinger Run	Chiques Creek Watershed
Cedar Creek	Conestoga River Watershed
Little Chiques	Little Chiques Watershed
Conoy Creek	Conoy Watershed
Lititz Run	Conestoga River Watershed
Indian Spring Run	Pequea Watershed
Goods Run	Pequea Watershed

A total of 1885 feet of mudsills were installed in the Denlinger Run Project.





# Lancaster County Watershed Report Card 2025

### What is a Watershed Report Card?

Like a school report card, a **watershed report card** follows the same premise - providing a performance-driven grade that reflects the status, or health, of a watershed/sub-watershed. They often integrate and incorporate complex information, and distill this information into simplified scores that can be easily communicated to stakeholders and the public.

Due to the information included in these analyses, report cards enhance research, monitoring, and management efforts in watersheds. They can lead to new insights that may not have been apparent without the synthesis of multiple information sources. Report cards can also help accelerate management and community responses by identifying areas where restoration or remedial efforts are needed most. In addition, these assessments provide accountability and focus by measuring the success of ongoing and existing restoration efforts.

The goal of the Lancaster County Watershed Report Card is to assess the health of the County's watersheds through a variety of indicators to further communicate Lancaster's progress towards better water quality for the community and for the wildlife. With this report card serving as the baseline document, the goal of the Report Card Committee is to produce a Lancaster County Watershed Report Card about every 5 years following the publishing of the first report.

### Scoring & Data Availability

Each category within the sub-watersheds were scored by a percentage and then assigned a color and descriptive score based on the gradient to the right. These categories are then averaged to get an overall sub-watershed report card score. These colors should convey the intensity and urgency of action required from the categories - for example, a score of Very Poor in the Riparian Zone category should indicate that action to improve this score be taken urgently and regularly. Consequently, a score of Excellent, while marking the category scored very high, does not mean it is time to be lax in efforts. The need to maintain these high scores is imperative through additional conservation strategies.

It is worth noting that there are limitations to some of the data sources and values based on sampling location and availability of data. These should also be considered in these limitations throughout different watersheds and sub-watersheds. The differences in sample size and temporal availability is also an important part of this story, so the need for more monitoring and data collection becomes increasingly sought after. By comparing sub-watersheds that do not have as many values as other sub-watersheds, we can identify areas in need of more monitoring. Additionally, scores only reflect data from Lancaster County in Pennsylvania. We acknowledge that watershed boundaries may cross over county and state lines, however, calculations were only considered using Lancaster County data for this watershed report card.

To learn more about the data and scoring methodology used in this report card, please see our [Data Compilation Document](#).

#### Overview

Creating the Lancaster Watershed Report Card involves the Lancaster County Conservation District (CCD) and the Lancaster County Conservation District (CCD) and the Lancaster County Conservation District (CCD). The CCD is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to protecting and improving the water quality of the Lancaster County watersheds. The CCD is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to protecting and improving the water quality of the Lancaster County watersheds. The CCD is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to protecting and improving the water quality of the Lancaster County watersheds.

#### Conestoga Average Watershed Score

The overall watershed score for the entire Conestoga River watershed is **Good**. This score was calculated by averaging the individual sub-watershed scores. The Conestoga River watershed is a large watershed that covers a significant portion of Lancaster County. The watershed is divided into several sub-watersheds, each of which is scored individually. The scores for each sub-watershed are then averaged to determine the overall watershed score.

#### Lower Conestoga

The Lower Conestoga sub-watershed received a score of **Fair**. This score was calculated by averaging the individual sub-watershed scores. The Lower Conestoga sub-watershed is a sub-watershed of the Conestoga River watershed. It covers a significant portion of the watershed and is home to several sub-watersheds. The scores for each sub-watershed are then averaged to determine the overall sub-watershed score.

#### Lititz Run

The Lititz Run sub-watershed received a score of **Good**. This score was calculated by averaging the individual sub-watershed scores. The Lititz Run sub-watershed is a sub-watershed of the Conestoga River watershed. It covers a significant portion of the watershed and is home to several sub-watersheds. The scores for each sub-watershed are then averaged to determine the overall sub-watershed score.

#### MMI Creek

The MMI Creek sub-watershed received a score of **Fair**. This score was calculated by averaging the individual sub-watershed scores. The MMI Creek sub-watershed is a sub-watershed of the Conestoga River watershed. It covers a significant portion of the watershed and is home to several sub-watersheds. The scores for each sub-watershed are then averaged to determine the overall sub-watershed score.

#### Middle Conestoga

The Middle Conestoga sub-watershed received a score of **Fair**. This score was calculated by averaging the individual sub-watershed scores. The Middle Conestoga sub-watershed is a sub-watershed of the Conestoga River watershed. It covers a significant portion of the watershed and is home to several sub-watersheds. The scores for each sub-watershed are then averaged to determine the overall sub-watershed score.



# Erosion and Sedimentation Program

- Ava Lang



The Lancaster County Conservation District predates the 25 Pa. Code Chapter 102 regulations governing Erosion and Sediment (E&S) Control by approximately 25 years. Even before the development of Chapter 102 regulations for E&S Control, the District was on the stick and devised procedures for the prevention of erosion alongside contractors in 1967. In 1970, the brand-new changes to the PA Clean Streams Law were truly the cat's pajamas. The act clarified that sediment from erosion is a pollutant and property owners could be held responsible for discharge, even facing penalties. That year, the Lancaster County Planning Commission and the District signed a memorandum of understanding delegating the District to review certain development plans. By 1973, the District was reviewing E&S Control Plan applications for earthmoving activities of 25 acres or more with oversight from the Department of Environmental Resources.

Now 53 years later, the E&S Program continues to review plans, process permits, and complete inspections. At the beginning of 2025, E&S staff processed remaining permit renewals for the 2024 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) PAG-02 Permit cycle. One thing that hasn't changed in 75 years is outreach. In March, E&S staff participated in county-wide outreach events at 4 different municipal buildings to educate township staff and officials on Chapter 102 requirements. The newest Resource Conservationist, Ava Lang, joined the district in July and made it to fat city. By the end of 2025, permittees had to get with it as new requirements, such as Qualified Visual Site Inspectors, Stormwater Control Measure Certification Forms, and Annual Reports, were implemented for the PAG-02 Permit. The program has certainly become more complex throughout its 50-year lifespan.

Look at these numbers because the E&S staff was really cooking with gas this year. The E&S program received 190 plan submissions in 2025. The team brought in the bread with fees for service totaling \$681,185, and reviewed projects totaling over 3,100 acres of proposed earth disturbance. Throughout the year, staff dedicated significant time and expertise to reviewing plan submissions, resulting in the issuance of over 358 NPDES Permits, including renewals and amendments. In addition to plan reviews, technical staff completed almost 460 site inspections and acknowledged 116 Notices of Termination. E&S staff executed one formal enforcement action for violations of Chapter 102, no sweat.

2025 Chapter 102 Activity	
Total NPDES Submissions	190
Total Disturbed Acres	3138
PAG-02 Permits Issued	358
Individual Permits Issued	33
Erosion Control Permit Issued	1
Total Complaints Received	121
Total Site Inspections	459
Non-Permitted E&S Plan Submissions	145
NOTs Acknowledged	116
Enforcement Actions	1
Total Fees for Services	\$681,185.00
Total NPDES Permit Filing Fees	\$115,000.00

Anyone looking for a new gig? The E&S program plans to fill a new Resource Conservationist position in a jiffy during the first quarter of 2026. Adding another cool cat to the team will provide the opportunity for more routine inspections, faster turnaround for plan reviews, and staff to pursue beneficial professional development opportunities. The team has come a long way from their humble beginnings at the District with 1 employee nearly 40 years ago. In 2026, the department will include 10 employees and be ready to take on a new year. Don't flip your wig, but another program update to look forward to in early 2026 is digital submissions!



## Erosion and Sedimentation

Back row, left to right: Adam Stern, Eric Hout, Ryan Riebling

Front row, left to right: Kaylyn Silvio, Morgan Regan, Chelsea McKenzie, Ava Lang, Shannon Erdman, Alex Flurry

# Ombudsman Program

– Shelly Dehoff



Shelly Dehoff

It's groovy when we can all just get along. But the wet rag is that people don't always do that. They get on the horn to the PA Agricultural Ombudsman in eastern PA with a bone to pick about a neighbor and expect the Ombudsman to make it all nifty. The PA Agricultural Ombudsman in eastern PA works with farmers, communities, municipalities, and other entities to assist communication flow. The Ombudsman serves as a network facilitator providing connectivity, research, and communications in many situations. This role involves listening to diverse points of view, explaining modern agriculture, and helping farmers and neighbors navigate communications. The PA Ag Ombudsman Program handles public relations, education, and conflict management related to agriculture.

PA Agricultural Ombudsman's efforts to invest in a community's future include responding to 21 fly complaints from 9 counties to educate about fly control techniques around farms and residences. There were four odor complaints from 4 counties. The Ombudsman handled 8 farmer-neighbor circumstances and researched answers in 5 different complaint situations. There were 5 different non-farm residents and municipality issues related to livestock, poultry, or small animals where advice or ordinance guidance was provided. ACRE (Agriculture, Communities and Rural Environment) advice and research from a non-legal standpoint occurred several times in 2025, including at the PA State Associations of Township Supervisors (PSATS) meetings.



The Ombudsman administered and promoted the Manure Injection Program, supervising two grants the Conservation District held to encourage manure injection instead of traditional surface application. Thirty incentive payment applications and invoices from farmers were processed with grant funding. Over 2,200 acres were entered in the state best management practices tracking system, PracticeKeeper, recording manure injection as a conservation effort, providing water quality

improvement credits by farmers in Lancaster County. Efforts in 2025 included planning two educational workshops for farmers about manure injection to be held in early 2026.

The statewide PA Agricultural Ombudsman Program serves all Conservation Districts in PA and is partially funded by the State Conservation Commission. While the Ombudsman role was the top priority, additional support was contributed to several other programs that fund this District position. Additional funding sources created additional goals and priorities. The Ombudsman is subcontracted with the Lancaster County Agriculture Council to provide administrative assistance and event planning.

The Eastern PA Ag Ombudsman was also subcontracted as the Agricultural Planning Specialist for the South-Central Task Force (SCTF). Focus included emergency and safety preparation for farmers and agricultural businesses, and building bridges with law enforcement, first responders, and the agricultural industry. Hosting monthly Ag Subcommittee meetings for a rich, diverse group of agricultural and emergency management experts was key. Offering educational sessions and training was a high priority. The role of this position strengthens relationships with the agricultural food sectors, first responders, emergency management at the county and state levels, and state agency decision makers when livestock and poultry are involved.

Forming relationships when "skies are blue" makes responses smoother than when "skies are grey" in emergency and crisis response. 2025 saw continued relationships built between the SCTF Agriculture subcommittee and the Lancaster County Amish Safety Committee, which is committed to advancing safety inside and outside of the county to fellow Amish and other entities.



# Agriculture Program

- Lauren Brodbar



## Agriculture:

The 1950s were full of excitement, new possibilities, and bold beginnings. Disneyland opened in July of 1955, promising excitement and a whole new way for people to experience the real magic of Disney. The Polio vaccine was proven to be effective, forever changing the health of our nation. J.D Sallinger wrote *Catcher in the Rye*, which became popular with teenagers during the decade when teenagers developed a distinct identity and established themselves as an important demographic for the first time. Like the bold beginnings of the 1950s, the Agriculture (Ag) Program at the Conservation District was also full of excitement, new possibilities, and bold beginnings in 2025.

The Agriculture Program floored it over the past year, while they had a ball with their continued work to conserve our natural resources of Lancaster County. Word from the bird is that the Ag Techs completed over 300 status reviews of Act 38 Nutrient Management Plans (NMP) and reviewed 115 Act 38 Nutrient Management Plans. The entirety of the Ag Program planned 2,580 acres in Agriculture Erosion and Sedimentation Plans (Ag E&S), and developed 47 Manure Management Plans (MMP). The program continues to offer Ag Plan Reimbursement to farmers through two programs: the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation District (PACD) Ag Plan Reimbursement Program and the Reeser's Run Initiative in partnership with Capital Resource Conservation and Development.

## Compliance:

The Agriculture Compliance team burned rubber at the start of their inspection schedule on July 1st for the Chesapeake Bay Program. After that date, they completed 106 Phase I Bay Inspections, with 3 Phase II inspections. 13 of those inspections were referred to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). In addition, 42 township stormwater waiver verifications were completed. While participating in the program, staff completed onsite visits to ensure that landowners had the required Agriculture Erosion & Sediment Plans (Ag E&S Plans), and Manure Management Plans (MMP). Anyone applying manure or agricultural wastewater is required to have an MMP. However, if a landowner already has an Act 38 Nutrient Management Plan, they are meeting the requirement.

## Engineering:

The Agriculture Engineering Department is on cloud 9 with what they accomplished in 2025. Word from the bird is that 111 neat Best Management Practices (BMPs) were designed, and 95 of them were implemented. The cool cats in this department were able to allocate a lot of bread for these projects that were received from grants. This year, \$4,567,572.87 was allocated for 34 projects through the Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP). Of the 34 projects, 25 were completed, and \$3,846,209.61 has been distributed. The Conservation Excellence Program (CEG) allocated \$408,939.94 towards 6 projects, 7 of which were completed, and \$338,617.80 was distributed. The get-up-and-go attitude of the District engineers helped them to cover a lot of turf throughout the county while implementing BMPs.





## Plain Sect

The Plain Sect Outreach Program continues to be led by the peachy keen Greg Heigel, Ag Conservation Technician. For the last three years, he's been in the groove working with the plain sect community. The start of 2025 was comparable to the work from other years. Greg continues to attend PSU Pesticide meetings throughout the winter, for a total of 23 farmer/grower meetings. At those meetings, Greg handed out a series of pamphlets and information, such as manure handling and plan requirements. He also led a small group to develop a new PA Dutch Conservation brochure. Through a lot of debate, Amish leadership recognized the need for this type of literature and worked with the District to create the brochure. He also spent time working closely with an Amish liaison in the southern end of the county to get many plain sect farmers to implement the necessary MMPs and Ag E&S Plans. Greg attended the annual ELANCO Terre Hill Water Day that hosted over 150 plain sect students. At that meeting, he was able to discuss the importance of conservation with the next generation of the plain sect community. While Greg rounded out his fourth year as the District's representative for the numerous plain sect communities, he reflected on working with some of the same folks each year, while expanding his reach into the future of plain sect communities.

## Agriculture

*Back row, left to right:* Patrick Kidd, Morgan Brough, Jason Reuter, Kevin Seibert, Matt Schavnis, Tristan Conrad

*Middle row, left to right:* Kevin Lutz, Greg Heigel, Emma Riebling, Grace Wisely, Holly Shaub, Lauren Brodbar, Samantha Adams, Kent Bitting

*Front row, left to right:* Adam Hartz, Gary Ballina, Josh Pullen, Jim Saltsman  
Absent from photo: Brady Bosworth



# Conservation Education

– Sallie Gregory



Sallie Gregory

Education was rooted in the Lancaster County Conservation District from the start. In 1950, education was provided by volunteer directors, face-to-face and phone calls with neighboring farmers. The Conservation Law was passed in Pennsylvania on May 15, 1945, to establish county conservation districts. The goal of education was to manage soil, water, and related natural resources. This goal is the bedrock of learning that has grown beyond farmers during the 75-year history to reach all Lancaster County residents.

3,902 Participants attended 63 educational programs provided by the District Education program. Two professional development trainings for educators were presented to 45 teachers. The anniversary year included 8 education displays featuring historical connections and promotion of district programs.

## Lancaster Outdoor Learning Network Initiative (OLNI)

30 Teachers dressed in summer threads and called first dibs to have the chance to participate in the 6th cohort of the Lancaster OLNI teacher professional development three-day program in June. The leadership team that planned the training included teachers and partnering local resource organizations. Grants from Sierra Club Lancaster and Lancaster County Agriculture Council supported the program. The Arconic Foundation provided overall grant support. Funding from the Arconic Foundation featured additional support to participants with small grants that teachers could apply for to improve outdoor learning locations on school grounds or student field studies to local streams. Grants were approved and provided to Ephrata Middle School, Kissel Hill Elementary School, and Bucher Elementary School.



## Lancaster County Envirothon Program

The Lancaster County Envirothon Program reached students in grades 3-12, along with parents and teacher advisors. The Lancaster County Senior High Envirothon was held on April 30. 80 Students participated, representing 6 high schools in 16 teams. Elizabethtown Area High School won the county event and represented Lancaster County at the state Envirothon near Johnstown. The team of seniors placed 23rd at the state Envirothon. The Junior Envirothon took place on May 14. 230 Elementary students participated on 46 teams representing 13 schools. First-place awards by grade level were presented to the Doe Run Elementary School third grade, the Centerville Elementary School fourth grade, the Treasures of Grace 5th grade team, and the Montessori Academy of Lancaster 6th grade. This event will be remembered for dedicated students competing through spring rain showers. The following day, the Middle School Envirothon was held on May 15. Manheim Township Middle School placed first. Four middle schools were represented, with 12 teams participating that included 60 students. The academic contest is made possible a cooperative effort with leadership from the Lancaster County Conservation District and partnering agencies that included: the PA Game Commission, the PA Fish and Boat Commission, the USDA



Elizabethtown Area High School

Natural Resources Conservation Service, the PA Bureau of Forestry, the Lancaster Conservancy, the Lancaster County Environmental Center, the PA Department of Environmental Protection, individual and corporate donors, and several volunteers.

## Lancaster County Youth Conservation School

The Lancaster County Youth Conservation School was held July 20-25, 2025. This unique program is a cooperative effort of the Lancaster County Conservation District and the Federated Sportsmen of Lancaster County. The 46th class of students participated in a week-long program held at the Northern Lancaster County Game and Fish Protective Association (NLGCFPA) located at 180 Forest Rd, Denver. 14 Conservation District staff were on site supporting the program. 41 Instructors met with students during the week and provided hands-on learning regarding 36 topics that related to conservation. 11 Sportsmen clubs and community organizations sponsored students to attend. 23 Students graduated from the program with a total of 1,257 graduates since 1979. 19 Volunteers gave time and talents in support of students and programming during the week. A parent's thank note received after the week at Conservation School expressed the impact of the program. *Please pass along our thankfulness and gratitude for the opportunity for our two boys and their opportunity to experience this school. They had an absolutely amazing experience. The plethora of events/teachings/activities each day allowed the students to experience all kinds of opportunities for learning. There was so much they got to experience this week that we as parents couldn't have provided, so we're so thankful for all they were exposed to and know this makes them well-rounded in life.*

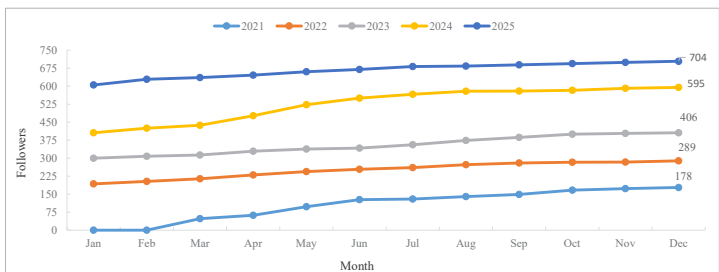
In 75 years, learning never stops from roots in the era of Sock-Hops to today's NOW generation; an awareness of the value in natural resource conservation continues to grow.



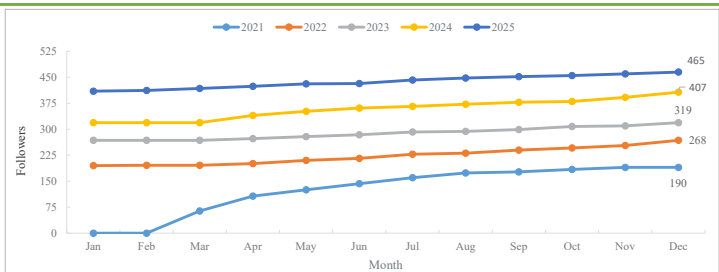
## 2025 Social Media Report

### Followers

#### Facebook Followers



#### Instagram Followers



In 75 years, communications have changed from rotary phones and drop-by visits of the 1950s. Today, the District's reach includes social media, bulk email marketing, and communications, along with traditional phone calls and tried and trusted in-person visits.

# 51st Tree Seedling Sale

– Amanda Goldsmith

The 51st Lancaster County Conservation District Annual Tree Seedling Sale took place in April 2025 as an event to meet customers coming into the Farm and Center and provide their pre-paid order of tree seedlings and plants. Staff packaged and organized 510 orders, totaling over 12,000 plants and trees, that were then planted throughout the Commonwealth. Online ordering through a Square account was popular and efficient for customers, with over half of orders placed online. In addition to a diverse selection of bare root tree seedlings and perennials, two varieties of apple trees were offered at the sale, as well as asparagus and fig trees. Packs of tree seedlings sold as wild berry or wildlife packs were very popular and helped to expedite packing orders. Manheim Township donated compost to the sale, continuing a 25-year partnership.

As the largest fundraiser for District projects, the Tree Sale's total sales were nearly \$40,000, and \$7,537.90 profit. Two FFA chapters participated, helping to raise funds along with four local Watershed Associations. Each of these participating organizations received a 20% refund of sales for their groups, with a total of \$280.10 refunded. \$206 was donated to the Lancaster County Youth Conservation School in the fourth year of the Total Round Up program, where customers could round up their total to donate additional support to the District's field school program. Special thanks to the District staff, directors, and associate directors who were part of the prep, packing, and clean-up to make the event a success. The support truly makes the event possible, and the dividends will go on for generations.



# 75th Anniversary Gala

Thursday, September 25, 2025, a crowd of over 155 gathered at Moonstone Manor near Elizabethtown to celebrate 75 years of conservation efforts in Lancaster County. Guests checked in at the historic barn, where they picked up a nametag to network and took time to explore more than a dozen poster displays illustrating historical highlights, along with state and federal legislative citation recognition, and thank you posters for the sponsors who supported the event.

Beautiful décor led guests down a path to the elegant pavilion lit with thousands of lights on a cloudy night next to the Conewago Creek. In the pavilion, staff decorated



Attendees reflected on the People, Partners, Projects, and Programs of the District over 75 years.

tables with lanterns, candles, and fall leaves, inviting guests to reconnect and enjoy delicious hors d'oeuvres and make-your-own food stations.

Jim Saltsman led an invocation before the program. Dan Lynch led the program as the MC host. Commissioner D'Agostino also shared remarks and presented a citation on behalf of the Lancaster County Commissioners.

Dan introduced four areas reflecting on 75 years: the people, the partners, the programs, and the projects that shaped the Conservation District. Presenters included: Sonia Wasco, Chris Thompson, Jill Whitcomb, Doug Wolfgang, Don McNutt, Jim Caldwell, Matt Kofroth, and Dan Zimmerman.

PA Secretary of Agriculture, Russ Redding's closing presentation connected to the District's mission and the Diamond Jubilee. The evening ended with a toast by Chris Thompson, recognizing the past and looking to the future.

Commissioner D'Agostino presents a 75th Anniversary citation to the Lancaster County Conservation District.



Over 25 photos were submitted in a 75th Anniversary Photo Contest reminiscent of a similar contest in the 1970s.

District staff attended the Gala.



# Banquet Celebrates Conservation

The Lancaster County Conservation District recognized outstanding efforts in natural resource conservation recently at the District's 72nd Awards Banquet at the Farm and Home Center, Lancaster.



Gordon Hoover, District Director, left, presents an aerial farm photo to the Wanner Farm representatives who received the 2025 Outstanding Cooperator Award.



Herb Kreider, District Director, left, and Chris Thompson, right, are pictured with Sharon Campbell on behalf of the Campbell Foundation, accepting the Conservation Partnership Award recognizing their trusted partnership with the District for more than 18 years.



Mr. Oberholtzer, representing Mt Joy Township, accepts the Building Industry Resource Conservation Award from Kent Weaver, District Director. The township was recognized for its work as a strong conservation partner and collaborator, a proactive protector of Lancaster County watersheds, and a trusted community resource.



Geoffrey Rohrer, District Director, left, recognized John and Allison Zechman with the Watershed Volunteer Award for their monitoring work on Climber's Run.



Mike King, accepted the Watershed Volunteer Award from Geoffrey Rohrer, District Director, right. Mike worked in collaboration with the Zechman's monitoring Climper's Run.

For his volunteerism and dedicated work in support of the Youth Conservation School, James Zimmerman, president of the Northern Lancaster County Game and Fish Protective Association accepted the school's Service Award from Sonia Wasco, District Board Chairperson.



James Hovan, teacher at Conestoga Valley High School, gratefully accepted the Conservation Educator Award from Deryk Shaw Jr, District Director. Mr. Hovan's innovative teaching includes a Freight Farm hydroponics growing experience for students and water quality work on local streams that includes students supporting District installation of riparian buffers.

We share our gratitude and appreciation to the generous sponsors, donors, and conservation partners whose support enabled the 75th Anniversary year to be filled with memories at events, projects, and the year-end Gala. You have made a difference, and we thank you for a wonderful year!

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

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# Conservation Foundation of Lancaster County 2025

## Income

Grants Received .....	2,575,361.93
Gifts & Donations.....	16,500.00
ExtraGive.....	8,455.91
Fees Generated .....	6,400.00
Administrative Income.....	402,936.78
Fundraising Income .....	51,055.00
Program Income .....	0.00
Interest Income.....	15,925.49
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$ 3,076,635.11</b>

## Expenses

Grant Expenses.....	2,175,136.44
Operating Expenses.....	607,794.95
Extraordinary Give .....	8,455.91
Sponsorship Expense.....	1,250.00
Fundraising Expense .....	18,523.49
Other Expenses .....	0.00
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$ 2,811,160.79</b>



Stream restoration project completed on Indian Run. Sponsored by a NFWF grant to the Little Conestoga Watershed Alliance.

The Conservation Foundation of Lancaster County (the Foundation) is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. The Foundation was founded to support the work of the Conservation District, and has defined the mission as “*The Conservation Foundation of Lancaster County, a fundraising and grant-managing organization, supports and strengthens the stewardship, education, and conservation activities provided by the Lancaster County Conservation District and other like-minded organizations*”.

The Foundation is not staffed and is assisted by District staff to complete its work. Assistance with paying grant invoices is provided by Stacey Hertz, District Finance Manager. Matt Kofroth, Assistant District Manager, supports Foundation Board member communications, meeting facilitation, and overall liaison services between District staff and the Foundation Board and officers.

2025 continued with bi-monthly Executive Committee meetings between the bi-monthly full Board meetings. 2025 focused heavily on revisiting and editing policies and Board responsibilities, core values, and recruitment efforts for additional Foundation Board members.

The Foundation administers:

- 11 Grants supporting Lancaster County Conservation District
- 23 Grants supporting Lancaster Clean Water Partners



## Lancaster Clean Water Partners

*An LLC within the Conservation Foundation  
of Lancaster County and Lancaster County  
Conservation District employees.*

**-Kenn Bennett**

In 2025, Lancaster Clean Water Partners (the Partners) continued to advance its mission of achieving *clean and clear water across Lancaster County by 2040* by updating its Common Agenda to reflect evolving priorities and strategies for watershed restoration and community engagement. The revised Common Agenda, released in mid-2025, expanded collaborative approaches through shared implementation plans and cross-cutting strategies that emphasize stronger partner networks, broader community involvement, and accelerated project implementation across priority watersheds. This renewed strategic framework builds on nearly six years of work under the Lancaster Countywide Action Plan (CAP), reinforcing sustained action toward nutrient and sediment reduction goals.

The Partners facilitated measurable progress and local investment, managing the Lancaster Clean Water Fund within the Lancaster County Community Foundation. The Lancaster Clean Water Fund supported 11 projects in 2025 that featured education, restoration, and conservation projects across the county, including initiatives like mobile stream education by the Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper Association, stormwater management at Climbers Run Nature Center, documentary storytelling on the Conestoga River, and watershed restoration planning with the Cocalico Creek Watershed Association. These efforts reflect a diverse group of nonprofit and community-led partners advancing clean water solutions on the ground. In addition, state and local partners — including Lancaster Clean Water Partners leaders — celebrated major progress on the Blue Green Connector Project along Little Conestoga Creek, which has restored floodplain habitat, removed legacy sediment, and reduced nutrient loads with millions in state investment.

New partnerships and expanded community engagement were also notable in 2025. The updated Common Agenda explicitly calls for broadening the network to include non-traditional stakeholders and those with lived experiences, strengthening partner communication, and equipping communities with tools for meaningful clean water engagement. By the end of 2025, there were 83 partner organizations. These developments demonstrate how Lancaster Clean Water Partners continues to cultivate a dynamic, inclusive coalition working at multiple scales to protect and restore local waterways throughout the county.



## MISSION STATEMENT

To promote the stewardship of natural resources for Lancaster County and beyond.

## VISION STATEMENT

The Lancaster County Conservation District will be a respected leader of conservation efforts in the county, trusted to engage and guide the community through proactive education, advocacy, and the administration of innovative stewardship principles.

## DISTRICT PHILOSOPHY

The Lancaster County Conservation District operates under the philosophy that the best way to advance the cause of conservation is to educate local citizens to become better environmental stewards. By building partnerships, providing technical assistance, and sharing information, we strive to achieve environmental compliance using common sense to build a culture of responsible stewardship.

### Lancaster County Conservation District

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LANCASTER COUNTY  
**Conservation District**