



JEFFERSON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT



2014 ANNUAL REPORT

The Mission of the Jefferson County Conservation District is to preserve natural resources and protect/promote the health, safety and general welfare of the people of Jefferson County and to provide technical services to improve resource management for the benefit of farmers and urban residents.

ABOUT US

The county was declared a District by the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners in October, 1946, in accordance with the provisions of the “Soil Conservation Law” of 1945, Act 217, of the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The Jefferson County Conservation District was formed at the request of farmers and others in the county who were interested in the conservation of soil and water resources and land use planning.

The District is a subdivision of state government and is administered by a seven-member Board of Directors. The current District Board is composed of three farmer directors, three urban directors, and one County Commissioner. In 2014 there were five full-time staff members.

The County Conservation District, through delegation agreements with the PA Department of Environmental Protection and the PA Department of Agriculture, administers many environmental programs in Jefferson County. The Conservation District also provides administrative duties for the Jefferson County Sewage Association and the Greater Jefferson Area Council of Governments. The following information will highlight the District’s programs and activities in 2014.



2014 Board of Directors

Chairman – Herb Landes
Vice-Chairman – Porter Duvall
Secretary/Treasurer – Allen Campbell
Commissioner – Paul Corbin
Public Director – Tom McFarland
Farmer Director – Theresa Shick
Farmer Director – Terry Shields

Check Out our “New Website” – Access forms/permit applications/contact information!
Keep up to date on upcoming events and programs. Find answers to your questions. All this and more at jeffersonconservation.com



PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Funding for District staff and programs comes from several sources. The State Conservation Commission receives funding from the Department of Environmental Protection and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture for technical assistance and staff funding. Jefferson County and the Jefferson County Sewage Association also provide funding for staff and administrative expenses.

CHAPTER 102/NPDES

The Erosion and Sediment (E&S) Pollution Control Program operates under a delegation agreement with PADEP, Pennsylvania Code Title 25, Chapter 102 of the Pennsylvania Clean Streams Law. At the local level, the Conservation District is responsible for specific program activities enforcing Chapter 102 and controlling erosion and sediment control for all types of earthmoving activities. Through combined efforts to ensure water quality standards and minimize sediment pollution to the Waters of the Commonwealth, in 2014 the Conservation District:

- Reviewed 27 E&S Control Plans for Chapter 102 Compliance.
- Conducted 40 site inspections in an effort to obtain voluntary compliance.
- Recommended 2 Individual NPDES Permits to DEP to be issued.
- Issued 4 General NPDES Permits.

Sites that will disturb over one acre of land are required to obtain an “NPDES Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction Activities.” This permit requires a detailed plan to address both sediment and erosion during construction and the long-term impacts of stormwater from the site after construction. Several types of activities such as road maintenance, timbering and agricultural plowing and tillage are exempt from this permit but need to meet other requirements including having a written plan to control erosion from the site. In some cases, other types of permits may be required and this must be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Although agricultural plowing and tillage operations are exempt from obtaining permits for these activities, it is important to realize that this exemption does not include the construction of buildings and other support facilities on the farm. These types of earth disturbances are subject to the same permitting requirements as any off-farm activity.

CHAPTER 105 – DAM SAFETY AND ENCROACHMENTS ACT

This state delegated program provides oversight of work in and around streams, wetlands and other bodies of water that has a potential to impact water quality, increase flooding or degrade riparian habitat. The District registers PA DEP General Permits, which authorize certain types of work including: Fish Habitat Enhancement; Small Docks & Boat Ramps; Streambank Stabilization; Utility Line or Minor Road Crossings of streams or wetlands.

16 General Permits for water obstructions and encroachments were acknowledged. 17 Chapter 105-related complaints were investigated. Information and technical assistance is available concerning permit and other requirements associated with Chapter 105 Regulations.

ACT 167 – STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The Jefferson County Conservation District has entered into working agreements with 25 Municipalities in Jefferson County to implement the Jefferson County Act 167 Stormwater Management Plan by providing assistance to these Municipalities with enforcement of their Stormwater Ordinances. In 2014, 199 stormwater plans were reviewed by either Conservation District staff or Geo-Tech Engineering for compliance with the municipal ordinance.

DIRT, GRAVEL AND LOW VOLUME ROAD MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

Pennsylvania's Dirt and Gravel Road Program was an innovative effort to fund "environmentally sound" maintenance of unpaved roadways that have been identified as sources of dust and sediment pollution. Signed into law in April 1997 as Section 9106 of the PA Vehicle Code, the program is based on the principle that informed local control is the most effective way to stop pollution. The program created a dedicated, non-lapsing fund (5 million each year, state wide) to provide moneys to local road maintenance by way of streamlined appropriations to local communities for use by local road maintenance entities under the auspices of a local Quality Assurance Board (QAB).



PA Act 89 of 2013, commonly known as the PA Transportation Funding Bill, made significant changes to Pennsylvania's Dirt and Gravel Road Program. Most significantly: The amount of funding through the PA State Conservation Commission for work on unpaved roads was increased from \$4 million to \$20 million annually. An additional \$8 million was made available to expand program work onto paved "low volume roads" (LVRs) that have an average daily traffic of less than 500 vehicles per day.



The amount of funding through the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for work on unpaved roads was increased from \$1 million to \$7 million annually.

The DGLVR Program funds are appropriated directly to the State Conservation Commission. The Commission then allocates funds to County Conservation Districts based on a formula developed taking into consideration items such as; number of dirt, gravel and low volume roads in the county, number of identified worksites, stream classifications, etc.

Local municipalities and state agencies that maintain dirt, gravel and low volume roads are eligible to receive funding. However, to be eligible for the program, the participant must first attend a two-day training session for "Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance of Dirt and Gravel Roads".

Applications for project funding will be accepted by the Conservation District in the spring of 2015. District staff is available for assistance with identifying project sites and completing the application for funding.

AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Erosion & Sedimentation Control Plan (Ag E&S Plan)

A written Ag E&S Plan is required of all farms that plow and/or till (including no-till) more than 5,000 ft² and/or have animal concentration areas that disturb more than 5,000 ft². The Ag E&S Plan must include best management practices (BMPs) to control accelerated erosion and sedimentation. A Conservation Plan, often prepared by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), may substitute for an Ag E&S Plan as long as it meets state (PA Chapter 102 – Erosion & Sediment Control) regulations.

Manure Management Plan (MMP)

A written Manure Management Plan is required of all farms that have animals and/or land apply manure that don't have a current Nutrient Management Plan. The MMP addresses the following to control nutrient pollution: manure application setbacks from environmentally sensitive areas (streams, lakes, ponds, drinking water sources, sinkholes), the condition of animal concentration areas and pastures, manure storage and stacking areas, and maximum manure application rates that can be applied.

A Manure Management Workshop was held on February 4th at the Jefferson County Conservation District to assist farmers in the development of these plans.

Nutrient Management Plans (NMP)

A Nutrient Management Plan is required under the Nutrient Management Act (Act 38) for farms with more than 2.0 Animal Equivalent Units (AEUs) per acre suitable for the application of manure and at least 8 AEUs. (Note: An AEU is 1,000 lbs. of animal weight on an annualized basis. An NMP is also required for farms having more than >1,000,000 lbs. of animal weight, regardless of acreage. These plans must be written by a Certified Nutrient Management Specialist as they are much more in depth than a MMP.

Five NMPs were approved by the JCCD Board of Directors, one NMP was developed for a volunteer in the program, and six status reviews of NMP holders were completed on farms.

Agricultural Complaints

Three agricultural complaints were investigated regarding soil and manure management.

REAP PROGRAM

The Resource Enhancement And Protection Program is a tax-credit program in which farmers can earn tax credits for implementing best management practices on their farm. This year, the District helped farmers apply for a little over \$87,400 in tax credits for practices that improve soil and manure management, and protect water quality in their watershed.

WATERSHED RESTORATION

SUGAR CAMP RUN DISCHARGE TREATMENT SYSTEM

Phase IV of the Sugar Camp Run Discharge as a Municipal Water Supply was completed in 2014. Funding provided through a grant from The Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST) was used to construct a treatment system to treat 1,500 gpm of mine water from Sugar Camp Run in Sykesville Borough for commercial use. The Conservation District is working with Winner Water Services, LLC and the US Office of Surface Mines to construct a series of wetlands to further treat the mine water for potable uses. This Phase of the project is being funded by a Commonwealth Finance Authority grant. An Operation and Maintenance Trust will also be created using grant funds.



Sugar Camp Run Discharge



Maclstrom Oxidizer Treatment System

CONIFER DISCHARGE TREATMENT SYSTEM

The original Conifer Treatment System was built in 1998. A project to regrade the limestone in the ALD, and fill a portion of the settling pond with limestone to create a large limestone bed (FeAlMn bed pronounced Fel-al-men) was completed in July, 2011. The Conservation District has entered into a Working Agreement with the Redbank Creek Watershed Trust to provide continued monitoring and maintenance on the system.



SYKESVILLE FLOOD CONTROL FACILITY

The PA Local Flood Protection Project located in Sykesville Borough was rated as unacceptable by the US Army Corps of Engineers' Pittsburgh District. An unacceptable rating places the project in an inactive status for the Corps Rehabilitation and Inspection Program. This Program provides Federal rehabilitation assistance for damages to the project as a result of a high water event. Funding from this grant will allow the Conservation District to coordinate with the Borough to complete work needed to rehabilitate areas of the Project which are noted in the inspection report.

NORTHFORK WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

The North Fork Watershed Association (NFWA) continued in their goal to protect and preserve the North Fork Watershed. This is done through community-based education, outreach, and implementation of a comprehensive plan to monitor the water quality of North Fork, by conducting bi-annual water sampling and annual macro-invertebrate sampling.



MILL CREEK COALITION OF CLARION AND JEFFERSON COUNTIES

The Mill Creek Coalition of Clarion and Jefferson Counties (MCC) came into existence in 1990 after a fall conference held at Clarion University focused on the restoration of Mill Creek from the effects of AMD. Its first AMD treatment system (Howe Bridge Site) was constructed in late 1991. Over the past 24 years, the Coalition and its state, federal, non-governmental organizations and other partners have plugged two abandoned gas wells and treated nearly two dozen AMD sites via the construction of passive treatment systems. Along with other accomplishments, over 40 sites have been improved, resulting in less AMD flowing into the watershed.



In 2014, the Coalition continued to pursue funding opportunities to maintain or improve the effectiveness of their present passive treatment systems. Work was done to refurbish the Orcutt-Smail site, becoming Mill Creek's first active treatment site. DEP has accepted responsibility for operation and maintenance.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

JEFFERSON-CLARION COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL ENVIROTHON

The 2014 Jefferson-Clarion County High School competition was held at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds, on May 6, 2014. This year's Envirothon included 12 teams from 6 schools from Jefferson and Clarion Counties. Redbank High School won 1st place and represented Clarion County at the State Envirothon. Finishing 2nd was Jefferson County's Punxsutawney High School who represented Jefferson County at the State Envirothon Competition at Susquehanna University and PPL Montour Preserve in Selinsgrove, PA.



1st Place Winners – Redbank “Team A” High School



2nd Place Winners – Punxsutawney “Team A” High School

BROCKWAY ELEMENTARY FIELD DAY

Over 100 students from Brockway Area School District converged on Clear Creek State Park for their Annual Sixth Grade Field Day arranged by the PA Game Commission. Throughout the day the students learned about their environment. Representatives from the Conservation District presented information on poisonous plant identification including poison ivy and poison hemlock. Other topics included tree and plant identification, firearms and hunting safety, fishing skills and fish identification.



A special presentation was given by the PAGC. Included in the presentation was a tranquilized bear. A tag was placed in its ear so that the bear could be tracked for research.

C.G. JOHNSON ELEMENTARY ENVIROTHON

A total of 120 students from 4 classrooms participated in the 18th Annual 4th & 5th Grade Envirothon. First Place went to Mrs. Statler's class. There were activities in the areas of Wetlands, Invasive Species, Water, Deer, and Waste Management. Each station included an instructional period where the students listened to a presentation and completed a short quiz on what they learned.

Mrs. Statler's Fifth Grade – 1st Place



Mrs. Bailey's Fifth Grade – 2nd Place



PUNXSUTAWNEY HIGH SCHOOL FIELD DAYS

Two Field Days were held for Punxsutawney High School students to learn about the watershed where they live. The curriculum included identification of macroinvertebrates, stream mapping, and testing the chemical and physical parameters of Jackson Run, which flows into Cloe Dam. This annual event allows students to compare the changes in Jackson Run from year to year.



FARM SAFETY DAYS

In May, 350 second grade students from schools in Jefferson County attended Farm Safety Days, sponsored by Penn State Extension, at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds. Students rotated to presentations on Gun Safety, Hidden Hazards, Smoking Education, Dog Safety, 911 Presentations, Poisonous Plants, Emergency Whistles and many more. Special presentations by Keystone Elk and Unilec (Safety Program) were enjoyed by the group.



NORTHWEST PA GRAZING CONFERENCE

The 17th Annual Northwest PA Grazing Conference entitled, "Economics & Grazing", was held on March 13, 2014 at the Zion Church in Clarion, PA. The Grazing Conference is sponsored by agencies including Headwaters RC&D Council & Charitable Trust, NRCS, Clearfield and Jefferson County Conservation Districts, Penn State Extension, Foundations for PA Watersheds, and PA Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative. Over 200 attendees listened to presentations by speakers including Gerald Fry, Bovine Grass Geneticist, Jeff McCutcheon, OH State Extension Educator, Russ Wilson, Forest County, and Jim Henry, Keystone Beef Marketing Network.

MANURE MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

A Manure Management Workshop was held on February 4th at the Jefferson County Conservation District. Topics of discussion included an overview of agricultural erosion & sedimentation regulations, writing a manure management plan, and the Resource Enhancement And Protection (REAP) Program. Financial support for the workshop was provided by the PA Department of Environmental Protection through the Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant and the Clean Water Fund.



4-H PRESENTATIONS

The 4-H program requires members to complete training on Good Production Practices. In 2014, one of the practices required to be addressed was manure management. Presentations on preventing manure pollution in watersheds were provided for members of the 4-H on February 1st, March 8th, and April 19th using the Enviroscape, a watershed model that demonstrates how pollution can enter waterways.



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