



CLINTON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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2015 ANNUAL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

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Mission Statement: *The Conservation District provides quality leadership, education, and service for the stewardship and conservation of the county's natural resources.*



Robbie Weaver, from Sugar Valley Rural Charter School was presented an Outstanding Environmental Educator Award

2015 Board of Directors:

Charles Dotterer, Chairman
Paul Courter, Vice Chairman
Jeff Snyder, Commissioner
Larry Butler, Treasurer
Ralph Harnishfeger
Ron Brungart
James Harbach
William Hunter
James H. Maguire/Coreena Meyer

Associate Directors:

James P. Webb, Jr. **Philip Courter**
Stewart Ramm **Coreena Meyer**
Robert Bowman **Elam Stoltzfus, Jr**
Tom Shervinskic

The Clinton County Conservation District

was organized by the County Commissioners in December 1946. We are a sub-division of state government, supported by the Clinton County Commissioners. We provide technical and educational assistance to the public on proper management of our natural resources (specifically soil & water) and interpretation of environmental related regulations. We are guided by a local Board of nine Directors nominated by local organizations. We administer the following state programs within our County:
Ch. 102 Erosion & Sediment Pollution Control,
Ch. 105 Stream Encroachment General Permits,
(NPDES) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permits
Chesapeake Bay Financial & Technical Assistance,
Act 38 Nutrient Management Regulations,
Municipal Dirt & Gravel and Paved Low Volume Road Environmental Maintenance Program



2015 Conservation District Staff, left—right
Mary Ann Bower, Scott Koser, Lisa Blazure, Susie Peters,
Lexis Butler, and Robbie Fulton

2015 Conservation District Staff:

Mary Ann Bower, District Manager
Lexis Butler, Resource Conservationist
Robbie Fulton, Resource Technician
Scott Koser, Watershed Specialist & Education Coordinator
Lisa Blazure, Agricultural Resource Conservationist
Susie Peters, Program Assistant & Board Secretary

Funding support for Conservation District programs in 2015 was provided by:

Clinton County Commissioners, \$161,330;
PA State Conservation Commission & DEP, \$125,235;
Chesapeake Bay Technical and Grant Programs \$64,382;
Watershed Specialist Program, \$24,421;
Dirt & Gravel Roads Municipal Program, \$126,259;
Program Fees, Permits and Workshop fees, \$42,472;
PUC Gas Well Fund, \$56,818;
Donations and Sales, (benefits education programs) \$13,994;
State, Federal & Other Special Project Grants, \$19,142.

Resource Conservationist **Lexis Butler** and Resource Technician **Robbie Fulton** conducted the following **Technical Activities in 2015**

- **119** Erosion & Sediment Pollution Control (E&SPC) plans reviewed with **260** acres disturbed, which included:
 - ♦ 62 Residential Projects
 - ♦ 7 Government Projects—PADOT, State, Municipal, Water, Sewer
 - ♦ 19 Commercial/Industrial/Gas Related, Subdivision or Other Projects
 - ♦ 18 Agricultural Projects,
 - ♦ 2 Timber Harvest Projects
 - ♦ 11 Stream Work Projects
 - **12** National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) or ESCGP-1 Permits
 - **23** Stream Encroachment General Permits Acknowledged
 - **54** Earthmoving Inspections
 - **48** Complaints Investigated
 - **405** Technical Assistance Services Provided
- Total: 657** individuals were provided technical assistance, training, or services on earthmoving or stream related activities.



Before and after of an improved stream crossing and stream habitat project in Fishing Creek completed with our partners from the Northcentral PA Conservancy, PA Fish And Boat Comm., and DEP.

Lisa Blazure, Agricultural Resource Conservationist and **Robbie Fulton**, Resource Technician provided the following:

Chesapeake Bay Program: In 2015, we assisted 32 farmers with Manure Management Plans and Agricultural Erosion & Sediment Pollution Control Plans. We provided technical assistance to 72 other people for best management practices and other program information. We conducted 100 farm visits to inform farmers about state requirements, and also promoted soil health management practices. The District received a \$198,313 Growing Greener Grant to implement farm and stream practices in the Fishing Creek Watershed.

In 2015, our **No-Till Drill** was made available to 31 local farmers, with **469 acres planted**.

Nutrient Management (Act 38) Program: In 2015, we provided technical assistance to 39 people and distributed soil test kits to 45 people. We conducted 8 Nutrient Management plan reviews/approvals and 13 annual status reviews.

Education Programs, Awards, Sponsorships, and Scholarships:

- **2015 W. Max Bossert Conservation Award** recipients were: Bucktail High- **Tristan Schelb**; Sugar Valley Rural Charter School- **Davia Dorman**; Central Mountain High- **Dakota Rauch**
- **2015 Rich Ramm Memorial Scholarship** was awarded to **Ryan Rupert** of Beech Creek who received \$1300 toward his PSU Ag Extension and Education degree. *Applications for 2016 are due May 6th for this year's agricultural scholarship.*
- **2015 (30th) County Envirothon** Winning team was "Tsuga Canadensis" Team from Sugar Valley Rural Charter High School, with advisors Robbie Weaver & Chuck Bechdel, who competed at the 32nd annual State Envirothon at University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. The First, Second and Third place team members each received an Envirothon Monetary Award—Congratulations!

In 2015, we provided **14** soil and water education activities to over 6,000 county youth and adults by providing a variety of outreach or **conservation and education programs**.



Amy Lucas, from Robb Elementary, won the PA Association of Conservation Districts statewide award for her Poster Contest entry about local pollinators.

Dirt and Gravel Roads Program for Municipalities:

In 2015, **\$103,918** of funding was provided to **Gallagher, Lamar, and Woodward Townships** for completed projects on **8,842 feet of road**. **2015 saw an increase in funding which are now available for use on Paved Low Volume Roads also.** This program's goal is to prevent sediment from entering our streams by using proper environmental maintenance techniques on critical or damaged areas. A total of **89,633** feet of road has been improved with **\$482,703** in funds spent on **43** County Dirt & Gravel Road or Paved Low Volume Road projects since 1999.

Federal, State, and Other Special Project Grant Money of \$144,601 spent in 2015, along with local matching funds, equals more than \$4.21 million spent on local conservation and water quality improvement projects overall in Clinton County over the last 15 years.!

Watershed Specialist and Education Coordinator Scott Koser conducted the following watershed restoration activities in 2015:

- ♦ Completed stream restoration work on Fishing Creek. In total: ten log vanes were installed to create fish habitat and stabilize the stream banks to prevent erosion, a 140 foot livestock crossing was installed to reduce nutrient and sediment impacts to the stream, and over 6000 feet of streambank fencing was installed to provide a 35 foot buffer that limits livestock access and impacts to the stream.
- Assisted the Kettle Creek Watershed Association, the PA Fish and Boat Commission, and Trout Unlimited to complete a fish habitat improvement/bank stabilization project on Kettle Creek in Cross Fork where approximately 100' of modified muddill cribbing was rebuilt and vertically eroded streambanks were regraded and stabilized
- Completed biological and chemical water sampling within the Tangascootack watershed for AMD recovery progress.
- Assisted the Sugar Valley, Kettle Creek, and Beech Creek Watershed Associations with several grants and programs to restore and enhance Clinton County streams.

Students from the Conservation Summer Camp learn about their environment through various hands-on activities.



Showing Great Improvement—Tangascootack (Scootack) Creek

In 1952, the PA Fish Commission's State Fish Warden George Cross wrote a letter to Chief Fish Culturist C.R. Buller stating that Tangascootack Creek was lost as a trout stream because of activities relating to coal and clay mining. He wrote that pools where plenty of fish existed were now barren. The following year the stream was removed from the stocking list because it would not support trout due to acid mine pollution. Mining ceased in the watershed in the mid 1980's. The pollution created from the mining continued to affect the Tangascootack area, but the restoration of streams impacted by mining was soon to begin. In 1998, the Conservation District and its many partners, too numerous to mention here, began working to fix the problem and bring fish and other aquatic life back to the stream. Six treatment systems have been constructed by the District and its partners that have improved the stream's water quality. Tangascootack Creek was added to the PA Fish and Boat Commission's list of streams that support natural reproduction of trout in February 2016. Tributaries that did not support fish life, now are capable of doing so. Biological and chemical data show the stream has improved greatly since the late 1990's. The District and partners will continue to work toward removing the stream from the list of impaired streams. We have reversed the impacts observed years ago. Time and the persistence of conservation partners dedicated to fixing the problem has improved the stream to a state that can now support life. Below are photos of a recently constructed treatment system and fish collected during a recent survey of the stream.



Trees—2015 was our 38th Annual Tree Sale, selling approximately 4,000 trees: evergreens, hardwoods and fruit trees. Proceeds from tree seedling sales are used to fund various educational programs, such as school booklets and field days. April is tree planting month in Pennsylvania, and for several good reasons: temperatures are usually moderate and soils are moist for ideal planting conditions.

Trees provide food and homes for wildlife, and their roots hold the soil in place to reduce erosion. They also are a renewable resource that can be used to heat our homes and the wood can produce a large variety of useful products. Trees beautify our landscapes and give our homes shade in the summer and shelter from winter winds. Planting trees is an investment in the future. Contact us if you are interested in planting tree seedlings.



Put a little life in your future, plant a tree!