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# CLINTON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

Winter/Spring 2016

## Managers Note - *Mary Ann Bower, District Manager*

Welcome to 2016! Which projects and programs will our office be focusing on this year? Probably many. In 2015, we were involved in numerous projects, which included stream restorations and gravel road improvements. The Conservation District is the local contact for many county residents, landowners, municipalities, and the farming community. We are involved in a variety of programs, from reviewing erosion and sediment pollution control plans for construction projects; providing technical assistance to landowners on environmental regulations; assisting and coordinating stream improvement projects; funding assistance to local municipalities for the Dirt & Gravel and Low Volume Road program; providing education programs to students and adults; assisting local watershed associations; and providing assistance to our local farmers to install Best Management Practices and helping them stay in compliance with agricultural regulations.

We are guided by a Board of Directors, who are local residents like you and understand the local natural resource issues. We provide a service to our county through programs mentioned above. We rely on county, state, and grant funding to operate. Grant funding also allows us to pursue special projects and programs throughout the year.

Last year, we developed a new Strategic Plan to guide our office and programs through 2016 - 2018. This process, allows us to set goals and plan for the numerous activities our office will be involved during the next several years. For more information, please contact our office or visit our website located on the Clinton County Government website.  
*Mary Ann Bower, District Manager*

## Upcoming Workshops and Meetings – Save These Dates!



**Soil Health Meeting, March 15** – Join us for a gathering with nationally known soil health advocates. The meeting will be held at Toftrees Resort, State College, 9 am – 4 pm. Featured speakers are Ohio farmer Dave Brandt, North Dakota NRCS Jay Fuhrer, and Rodale Institute’s Dr. Kristine Nichols. Call the office to register – RSVP by March 9.

**Manure Management Plan Workshop, March 22** – District staff will assist you with writing or updating your manure management plan. The workshop will be held at the District Learning Center, 6:30 – 8:30 pm. Space is limited to 10 people. Call the office to register – RSVP by March 20.



***Any operation that applies manure or has a pasture is required to have a manure management plan.***

## Are You Following Your Farm Plans?

Pennsylvania requires farms to have plans for manure management and reducing erosion from cropland and barnyards. But more importantly that just having your plan, you need to be following the plans and document what you are doing.

There are two types of plans for managing manure and which type of plan you need depends on your animal numbers and acreage available for manure spreading. If you have high animal numbers and a small amount of acreage, you may be considered a

Concentrated Animal Operation (CAO) and require a nutrient management plan (NMP). The general rule of thumb to determine this is 2,000 pounds of animal per acre available for manure. If you think your farm is close to this threshold, please contact the Conservation District for verification and more assistance.

Most farms with animals will need the second type of plan, a Manure Management Plan (MMP). It is a common sense approach to making the best choices about using manure

nutrients while also protecting water quality. It also addresses barnyard runoff, pasture management, and winter spreading.

Soil erosion may also be addressed in two types of plans, either an Agricultural Erosion & Sediment (E&S) Plan or a current, updated Conservation Plan. If you have an older Conservation Plan it may need to be updated to include barnyard runoff and crop field management near streams.

The Conservation District is available to assist with all of these plans.



***One advantage to interseeding is that the cover is already established at harvest time, more seed varieties can be planted in early summer, and it adds diversity to the system.***

## Interseeding Equipment Available For Rent

The Conservation District has purchased another tool for planting cover crops. The InterSeeder equipment plants cover crops into standing corn, soybeans, or other row crops. The advantage is that the cover is already established at harvest time, more seed varieties can be planted in early summer, and it adds diversity to the system. Interseeding requires a low residual herbicide program and 30" row spacing. The InterSeeder also converts to a 10' no-till drill for regular seeding in the Spring and Fall. The new equipment rental rates are \$8 -10 per acre. There will be several demonstration plots established this summer and more program information is available at our office.

The Conservation District continues to promote soil health and educate farmers

on the principals for soil improvement. Healthy soils produce higher quality food, require less fertilizers and pesticides to grow crops, absorb rainwater, and capture carbon from the air and builds soil organic matter. There is an active group of farmers and agency staff in Central Pennsylvania that are

continually hosting educational meetings and are available for technical assistance. There are several local soil health meetings this winter that include nationally known speakers on the agenda. We encourage you to attend these events.



## Bridge Over Regulated Waters - Lexis Butler - Resource Conservationist

Since it was founded in 1839, Clinton County has seen a number of transitions to its environmental status. Historical timber harvesting, mining operations and early agricultural practices left the county's landscape and waters in poor condition. As time progressed, through anthropological and natural efforts, the land began to recover and the quality of water improved. Today, we proudly say that over 70% of Clinton County's waters are designated as special protection, specifically high quality and exceptional value.

However, there are still over 200 stream miles listed as impaired, with the top impairments being acid mine drainage, sedimentation, and agriculture related.

### **What Laws and Agencies Require Regulation?**

The Federal Clean Water Act of 1972 and the Pennsylvania Clean Stream Law of 1987 gave state and federal agencies jurisdiction over the waters of the United States, for the regulatory purposes of pollution reduction. The Clean Streams Law's main goal is not only to protect waters of the Commonwealth from pollution, but to reclaim and restore those impaired waters to a more natural state. Some of the specific regulatory duties have been passed down to the conservation districts.

### **What Identifies a "Water of the Commonwealth"?**

Waters of the Commonwealth, in short, are defined as "bodies or channels of conveyance of surface and underground water, or parts thereof, whether natural or artificial, within or on the boundaries of this Commonwealth" These are the waters that fall under the regulatory jurisdiction of various state and federal agencies, including Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and PA Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC).

### **What Parts of the Stream are Regulated?**

With the long history of sedimentation, agricultural pollution, and flood events, the state has to regulate or monitor what is happening in or near waters of the Commonwealth. Chapter 105 of the Pennsylvania Code regulates the activities within the stream channel, and within the floodway of that stream. Floodway location can be determined by FEMA Flood Maps. If no FEMA floodway has been designated for the stretch of stream in question, the floodway defaults to 50 feet from the edge of the stream bank on either side. Projects that take place within the channel and/or floodway will likely require a permit. Activities taking place within the flood fringe are regulated by municipalities.

### **What Type of Permit Do I Need?**

#### *General Permits*

General permits (GP) were created by the state for projects that do not pose a significant impact to flooding. These GPs have pre-approved conditions for specific projects, and grant federal authorization from ACOE. If the scope of your project fits the criteria, you may register for the use of a GP. Some examples of GPs include fish habitat,

minor and temporary stream crossings, agricultural crossings, small docks and ramps, stream bank stabilization, and utility line crossings. Delegation agreements between the Conservation District and DEP allow for the District to grant registration of GPs 1-9.

#### *Joint Permits*

If your project does not fall into the parameters of a GP, it will require a joint permit. Joint permits are issued by DEP, but are reviewed by multiple agencies, PFBC and ACOE. Joint permits cover those projects with significant environmental influences, such as stream relocation, multiple structures in the floodway, and large wetland impacts.

Past compliance issues could have been avoided if the responsible party made a phone call to our office before starting a project. Before beginning any work within or near water bodies (including potential wetlands), we encourage individuals to contact our office to determine whether or not a permit is needed to complete the work.



*Pictured above is culvert pipe that was installed using a GP-7 permit for minor permanent crossings. This pipe was installed as part of a Dirt and Gravel Roads project*

## Conservation District and Partners Complete Stream Restoration in Fishing Creek

- Scott Koser, Watershed Specialist/Education Coordinator

In 2007 the North Central PA Conservancy, the PA Fish and Boat Commission, the Department of Environmental Protection, and Conservation Districts began working together to complete stream restoration projects in the north central region of PA. The Clinton County Conservation District has partnered on several projects since then and helped complete one this past fall on Fishing Creek in Sugar Valley.

Fishing Creek is a High Quality and Class A trout stream. Some sections of Fishing Creek are listed by the PA Department of Environmental Protection as impaired. This project was aimed at fixing several problems that contribute to Fishing Creek's impairment including reducing agricultural related sediment and nutrient runoff into the stream.

What improvements were made? 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. Over 6000 feet of streambank fencing was installed to provide a 35 foot buffer that limits livestock access and impacts to the stream.

The role of each organization in the partnership depends on the strengths of the organization. One of the reasons the partnership has been so successful is because each organization involved has their own expertise needed to complete stream projects. The Conservation District's role in the partnership is to work with landowners, assist in project design, complete permits, work with contractors, seek volunteers or provide manpower, and coordinate the project at the local level.



Pictured above is the site before construction. Livestock impact streams by adding manure and sediment that degrades habitat for animals that live there.



Pictured above is the site after construction. Log vane deflectors like those shown provide fish habitat and stabilize the stream banks.

***The Conservation District is working with partners to complete several more restoration projects this year to reduce sediment and nutrients entering Clinton County Streams***



Pictured above is a livestock crossing before construction. The channel is over widened with lots of sediment accumulation and thermal impacts.



Pictured above is the crossing after construction. The crossing is stable and fencing limits livestock access to the stream reducing nutrient and sediment inputs.

## Farm City Family Festival Awards

The Farm-City Family Festival is held on the fourth Saturday in September at the Clinton County Fairgrounds. One of the numerous events during this day is the recognition of outstanding farm families and local businesses in the community.

**Family Farm of the Year** - Perry McCaleb Farm was bought in 1912 by Earl's great-grandfather Clarence Perry McCaleb. Four generations of the family have owned the farm. The family members still involved with the farm are: Perry, June, Earl, Crystal, Paige, Lydia and Sadie. They employ no one else. They work 120 acres and grow corn and hay and raise beef cattle.

**Business Family of the Year** Susquehanna Transit Co. was purchased by Carl Kephart, Sr. in 1952 as a local bus run from Lock Haven to Mill Hall. Carl Kephart, Jr. took over the company in 1974 and grew the business to present day status. In 1994 his son, Cameron Kephart came on board and is acting vice-president. There are currently 6 family members still involved in the business, however; they feel that everyone who works at Susquehanna Transit are extended family members. They have approximately 190 employees including supervisors, office staff, charter & tour personnel, full and part-time motorcoach operators, school bus operators, maintenance & cleaning crew. The main aspect of their

business is to safely transport students, schools and groups to destinations local or cross country.

### Outstanding Educator

Robbie Weaver started teaching at Sugar Valley Rural Charter School in 2001. He became the Envirothon Advisor that same year. He has taken 8 teams to the State Competition since 2001. In recent years, he has had between 20-30 high school students and 20-30 middle school students involved in the Envirothon program. He became an FFA advisor in 2009 when the SVRCS FFA became chartered. He is involved with the Forestry and Agronomy CDE competitions at area competitions. He also prepares students for the Forestry, Aquatics, Wildlife, and Agronomy CDE competitions. He has been working with the PA DCNR Department of Forestry planting trees since 2004. He takes a group of students each year to plant around 2,000 trees in PA's State Forest Lands. He has been working with the PA Fish and Boat Commission to stock fish in our local streams since 2008. He has helped our local 4-H group (Sugar Valley Ag) with road side trash clean up for the past 7 years.



## Sixth Grade Conservation Field Days

The 2015 Sixth Grade Conservation Field Days were held at the Clinton County Fair Grounds on September 23rd and 24th. The Conservation District has been hosting this environmental education program for Clinton County sixth graders for many years. More than three hundred students attended to see presentations by the Department of Conservation and

Natural Resources, Wayne Township Landfill, US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, PA Game Commission, 4H, and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. Thank you to all the presenters and staff that assisted in making the 2015 Sixth Grade Conservation Field Days so successful.

## 2015 Conservation Summer Day Camp

2015 marked the twenty-fourth annual Conservation Summer Day Camp, with 30 campers participating. The activities this year included a field trip to the Southern Clinton County Sportsman's Grounds for fishing and a field trip to Hyner State Park, Courter Farms, Western Clinton Sportsman's fish hatchery, and Red Hill for fossil digging. Other activities included: fly tying, bluebird boxes, orienteering, mammals and habitats, fishing, fish prints, Reptile Land's biodiversity program and Rick Mikula's program on butterflies.

The Conservation District would like to thank the following donators for making the camp possible: Kiwanis Club of Lock Haven, UGI Utilities, Clinton County Community Foundation, Dominion Foundation, Beiters, Charles Construction, Coploff, Ryan, and Welch Attorneys at Law, Dan's Gulf Service, Bald Eagle Distributors, Glossners Concrete, Lloyd Wilson Chapter of TU, Lock Haven Moose, Peters Sandblasting and Painting, and Woolrich.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### **Conservation Summer Day Camp**

Clinton County students who have completed grades 4 through 6 can participate in hands-on activities that deal with environmental topics such as forestry, aquatics, soils, and wildlife.

DATE: Monday, July 18th to Friday, July 22nd.

LOCATION: LHU, Sieg Conference Center, Lamar

COST: \$85/Student

Contact Clinton County Conservation District for details

### **Tree Seedling Sale**

Our Annual Tree Seedling Sale allows the public to purchase a variety of 2-3 year old seedlings. All proceeds benefit our educational programs. Order forms are available!

DEADLINE FOR ORDERS:

April 8, 2016

PICKUP:

Thursday, April 28th from 8:00 AM - 5:30 PM

Friday April 29th from 8:00 AM—4:00 PM

### **Kettle Creek Watershed Association Annual Meeting and Pot Luck Dinner**

Saturday, May 7, 2016 - 5:00 PM at the Kettle Creek Hose Company # 1 Fire Hall in Cross Fork, PA. Bring a dish to pass or, for those of you who do not cook, rolls or soda/ water, store bought pie/ cake, etc.

Roasts furnished by KCWA.

### **Clinton County Farm City Family Festival**

Vendors, Games, Contests, Awards, Family Fun to celebrate the relationship of Farm and City.

DATE: Saturday, September 24th 2016

LOCATION: Clinton County  
Fairgrounds

### **Sugar Valley Watershed Association Annual Meeting**

Monday March 7th, 2016 - 7:00PM at the Greene Township Building, Loganton, PA.

Topics of discussion will include updates by PA Fish and Boat Commission Staff on Fishing Creek trends in brook trout and un-assessed waters in Sugar Valley.

### **Clinton County Conservation District Sponsorship and Scholarship Opportunities**

Please contact our office for more information

Rich Ramm Memorial Scholarship Deadline: May 6, 2016

Outdoor Field School Sponsorship for Conservation Leadership School, Fly Fishing Youth Camp, or Wildlife

Leadership Academy Deadline: February 25, 2016

## **New Compliance Strategy for the Chesapeake Bay**

Half of the land area of Pennsylvania drains to the Chesapeake Bay, with the Susquehanna River being the largest tributary. In 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency established a TMDL to address the Bay impairments. Mandatory pollutant reductions were established to achieve water quality goals by 2017 and 2025.

Pennsylvania will not meet its 2017 pollution reduction goals for restoring the Chesapeake Bay. Agriculture is the largest source of nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment entering the Bay. The Department of Environmental Protection has developed a new plan or strategy to create a "culture of compliance."

Ten percent of farms will be inspected every year to verify manure

management and crop erosion plans, that farmers are following these plans, and using best management practices to reduce pollution. Conservation Districts are being asked to be a part of this strategy. Farm visits will determine any deficiencies in the plans and recommend best management practices to reduce sediment and nutrient runoff to streams and sinkholes.

Farmers are also being asked to complete a survey to identify which plans, practices, and construction projects have been completed or used on their farms. The Bay computer model, which is used by EPA and other agencies to predict water quality values, does not appear to give PA credit for many undocumented practices which farmers are doing on

their own without government funding. It is important that farmers get the proper credit for all the good things happening on the farms. If you receive this survey in the mail, please take the time to complete the information.

Local water quality is important to all of us. Not only for fishing, swimming, and boating but so many of our county residents have wells or springs for their drinking water. The land management around these areas directly affects our waters. All Pennsylvania residents and agencies will have to work together to succeed in restoring local water quality and the Chesapeake Bay.

## Dirt & Gravel and Paved Low Volume Roads Maintenance Program

Since 1999, the Conservation District has administered the Dirt & Gravel Roads program and provided financial and technical assistance for local municipalities or eligible entities. In 2015, the program was expanded for use on Paved Low Volume Roads (roads with less than 500 vehicles per day). The goal of the program remains the same: to fund safe, efficient, and environmentally sound maintenance practices on critical sections of dirt & gravel or paved low volume roads. The projects target critical portions of roads to prevent sediment from entering our streams while also addressing erosion and stormwater runoff issues.

Since 1999, municipalities have completed 43 road projects and we provided \$512,459.00 for local road construction. In 2015, program funding was significantly increased and we were able to assist with more projects. The state funding is distributed to each county based on

the number of miles of roads under municipal, and certain State entities' control.

In 2015, we allocated \$183,632 to assist Chapman, Lamar, Gallagher, Woodward, and Dunnstable Townships, and also PennDOT with 6 projects. These projects included installing best management practices to stabilize banks, ditches and outlets, install cross pipes and french mattresses to control water runoff, and road crown development and stabilization.

This year the applications will be due on October 1<sup>st</sup> and will be ranked by the Quality Assurance Board members. Some of the projects rank higher based on their location and the affected streams. Most of the project total costs also include a significant amount of in-kind services or municipal funds.

A municipality or other entity must attend a two-day environmentally sensitive road maintenance training

to be eligible to request funds. This training is typically attended by someone who is involved with the road work or is in charge of work plan development and project implementation.

For 2016, the Center for Dirt & Gravel Roads is offering 6 regional trainings for municipalities. Training locations are Montour County in March, Blair County in April, Sullivan County in October, and Centre County in November. All persons interested in attending one of the regional trainings this year, must register on line through the Center for Dirt & Gravel Roads at: [www.dirtandgravelroads.psu.edu](http://www.dirtandgravelroads.psu.edu). If you need assistance with the online registration, or if you want further information on the program, please call our office.

## Clinton County Agriculture Preservation Program

The Conservation District is now administering the Agriculture Preservation Program in our County. Since 1998, the County and the State Board of Farmland Preservation have purchased easements on 24 farms. The program is designed to assist farmers with keeping their farmland in agriculture, instead of selling it for development. The Clinton County Agriculture Preservation Program Board of Directors are Frederick (Dan) Chappell, Tim Owens, Chuck Bechdel, John Lucas, Jim Harbach, Mae Johnson, and Steve Bason. When a person applies to the program, the farm will be ranked on a variety of attributes, including the development potential: such as public water and sewer, sewer and road frontage; the farmland potential such as cropland or pasture acres, stewardship of the land, and the soils classifications. These items are based on statewide criteria, and once the farms are appraised and ranked, the Board will review these items and based on funding available through the County and the State, work with those farms on an easement purchase. Because we only have a limited amount of funding, farms may only be purchased every other year. For more information or to submit an application, please contact Mary Ann Bower at the Conservation District, 570-726-3798.



Road banks were removed to allow for better sheet flow and Driving Surface Aggregate installed. A proper road crown allows for proper road drainage.



Recently installed inlet to strategically capture storm water runoff.

Clinton County Conservation District  
45 Cooperation Lane  
Mill Hall, PA 17751-9543

Non-Profit Organization  
Lock Haven, PA  
Permit No.99

Return Service Requested



**Would you like to receive your newsletter either via email or see it posted on our Website?**  
We are looking to save costs, so we would be glad to send you the next newsletter via email or notify you when it is posted on our website. If you are interested please email our office. Thank you for helping us stay green!



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Robbie Fulton, Resource Technician  
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Susie Peters, Program Assistant/Board Secretary

We're on the Web!

<http://www.clintoncountypa.com/departments/conservation>