

Elk County Conservation District 2016 Annual Report



Photo by Resource Conservation Technician, Kate Yetzer

Directors & Staff

2016 Board of Directors

Russ Braun, Chairman
Mike Hovatter, Vice-Chairman
Jerry Olsen, Secretary/Treasurer
Matt Quesenberry, Commissioner
Joe Labant, Public Director
Andy Sorg, Farmer Director
Ray McMinn, Farmer Director

Associate Directors

Jim McCluskey

Director Emeritus

Ron McMinn

County Commissioners

Matt Quesenberry
Daniel Freeburg
Janis Kemmer



Pictured above: Top (L-R): *Kate & Kim*.
Bottom (L-R): *Diane, Steve, & Amanda*

District Staff

Steven Putt- District Manager

Kim Bonfardine- Watershed Specialist

Kate Yetzer- Resource Conservation
Technician

Amanda Murdock- Resource Conservation
Technician

David Stubber -Solid Waste Enforcement
Officer

Diane Myers- Secretary

The Elk County Conservation District Has Moved to Saint Marys!

The Elk County Conservation District has had a busy year ! In July 2016, the District moved from its long time location in Ridgway, to 850 Washington Street in Saint Marys.

The County of Elk / Elk County Solid Waste Authority purchased the building and The Elk County Conservation District is utilizing some of the office space. The Conservation District is located in the modular home portion of the complex (next to the green arrow below). Monthly District Board meetings are now held at the Saint Marys Location in the conference room.

All phone numbers and email addresses remain the same for the office and staff.

**850 Washington Street
St. Marys, PA**



Left: The first Conservation District Board meeting was held in the new location on 8/22/2016).



2016 7K Run Winners

Male Winner: Gage Yaple of Waterford, PA 31:27

Female Winner: Cheri Micale of St. Marys, PA 45:36

2016 14K Run Winners

Male Winner: Keelan Kunselman of Brookville, PA 1:05:00

Female Winner: Eugenia Clark of Emporium, PA 1:26:20

On Saturday September 24, over 85 participants braved the fall weather to participate in the 5th Annual Les Haas Memorial Trail Challenge at the Laurel Mill Ski Trail. Participants could choose between the 2 mile fun walk, 7k run, or challenge themselves to the 14k run.

In the 7k male category a new course record was set by 16 year old Gage Yaple of Waterford, PA, with a time of 31 minutes and 27 seconds. The 14k male record was also broken by 17 year old Keelan Kunselman of Brookville, PA with a time of 1 hour and 5 minutes.

In the female division, the 7k Winner was Cheri Micale of St. Marys with a time of 45:36, and the 14k Winner was Eugenia Clark of Emporium, with a time of 1 hour and 26 minutes and 20 seconds.

For the 5th year anniversary, a quilt was presented to Mrs. Haas as a tribute to her late husband, Les Haas. Diane Myers, of the Elk County Conservation District, made the quilt herself and used past race tee shirts in the quilt.

All proceeds from the race go towards environmental education programs that the Elk County Conservation District provides to the community.

Below: Diane Myers (right) presents the 5th year anniversary quilt to Mrs. Haas (left) during the awards ceremony.



Above: Winners from the 2016 race L to R:
Gage Yaple, Eugenia Clark,
Keelan Kunselman, and Cheri Micale

2nd Annual Clays for Conservation Shoot

The Elk County Conservation District hosted a successful Clays for Conservation Shoot on Sunday, July 17, 2016 at the St. Marys Sportsmen's Club. This year boasted 47 shooters and raised approximately \$700 for environmental education in Elk County! Participants shot 25 clay birds in one round of Wobble Trap and 50 clay birds in one round of Doubles. The money raised from the shoot will go to environmental education programs such as Junior and Senior Envirothon, educational displays, field days, the Elk Expo, and classroom events.

Resource Conservation Technician, Kate Yetzer, presents 1st place overall winner, Eric Uhl, with his award.



Special thanks to the St. Marys Sportsman's club & the Benezette Hotel for donations.

The beautiful weather made for an awesome time and an increase in attendance.

Participants watch the competition while snacking on a great lunch generously donated by supportive community members.



Prizes were awarded to:

1st place overall– Eric Uhl

2nd place overall- Mike Chiodo

Top Female Shooter– Olivia Catalone

3rd place overall– Tie btw Rodger Retzinger & Lon Reigle

Top Youth Shooter- Kyle Micale (17yrs old)



The 13th Annual Elk County Envirothon was held in May at the St. Mary's Sportsmen's Club. All four local high schools, Johnsonburg, St Marys, Ridgway and Elk County Catholic, had several teams compete. They were tested in the areas of Wildlife, Soil & Land-Use, Forestry, Aquatics, and the Current Issue was Invasive Species. A St. Marys team won first place, a Johnsonburg team took second place and an Elk County Catholic team won third place.



3rd Annual Elk County Jr. Envirothon

On May 4th, 2016, the 3rd Annual Elk County Jr. Envirothon was held at Bendigo State Park. For this annual event, ten teams from the Elk County Catholic and Johnsonburg Area Middle Schools participated. The students were tested in the areas of: Wildlife, Aquatics, Forestry, & Agriculture/Soils. Each participant received lunch and a t-shirt. Awards were given to 1st, 2nd, & 3rd places.

Special thanks to DNCR and Bendigo State Park for assisting at the Junior Envirothon and allowing us to spend the day at the park. Holly Dzemyan, Environmental Education Coordinator, with DCNR, taught students how to geocache after lunch in the park following the competition.

Below: The 1st place team, the Eco Warriors.



Below: Holly Dzemyan, DCNR, teaches the students about geocaching.



Below: A group photo with the students, the teachers, DCNR, and Elk County Conservation District staff.



TROUT in the CLASSROOM



Trout In the Classroom (TIC) is a program for students in grades 3-12 to learn about coldwater conservation while raising brook trout from eggs to fingerlings in a classroom aquarium. TIC ties together environment & ecology, science & mathematics, social studies, language & fine arts, and physical education. Each teacher tailors the program to fit his or her curricular needs. Eggs are delivered to the participating schools in the fall and the program ends with the school year by releasing their fingerling trout into a state-approved waterway.

Along with the release of the fish, teachers set up an aquatic educational aspect to the field trip and that is where ECCD comes in. For the past several years, ECCD has been collaborating with Trout Unlimited, Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) and the Western PA Conservancy (WPC) to provide interesting out of the classroom experiences as the students say good-bye to the young fish that they reared from eggs. It is a wonderful learning experience for the kids and the lessons make good connections between clean water and health and survival, not only for the fish but also for the entire food web.

District staff provided students with a macroinvertebrate lesson and watershed discussion, PFBC Conservation Officer McMann discussed water conservation efforts with the students, and PGC WCO Edmiston also talked with students.



Stream Workshop



On March 29, 2016 the Elk County Conservation District hosted a stream workshop at the Elk Country Visitor Center, featuring speakers from Stroud Water Research Center, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC), and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Dr. Bern Sweeny, Director and senior researcher at the Stroud Water Research Center in Avondale, PA, spoke to attendees about the importance of riparian forest buffers, and how they can effectively filter sediment, phosphorus, and nitrogen, from entering a stream. In the photo below, Dr. Sweeny shows attendees a graph on the most effective forest buffer width. Currently most installed buffers are a minimum of 35 feet. Dr. Sweeny suggests 100-200 feet would be more beneficial to filter out phosphorus and nitrogen, however, 35 feet is very effective if space is limited.

Kylie Maland, and Luke Bobnar, from WPC spoke to attendees about Hellbenders and current studies and projects being conducting in the area, as well as local stream restoration projects taking place in the region.

Ron Lybrook, of the Northwest DEP Regional Office discussed flood ways and floodplain management and storm water. Lybrook discussed the effects of undersized culverts and how one can impact others by changing a floodway or a floodplain.

Over 50 guests attended the workshop, located at the Elk Country Visitor Center in the new Outdoor Classroom. Funding for this workshop was provided by a PACD Non Point Source Mini Grant.



Above: Dr. Bern Sweeny of Stroud Water Research Center, speaks to a crowded room



Above: Kylie Maland, speaks to the group about stream projects that WPC is involved with in the region.

2016 Elk Expo

Every year in August, visitors flock to Elk County for the annual Elk Expo. This two day event was held at the Elk Country Visitor Center in Benezette, PA on August 20th and 21st, 2016. According to Carla Wehler, Keystone Elk Country Alliance Operations Manager, this year the attendance was around 11,300 people. This number is down slightly from previous years due to inclement weather on Sunday. Most guests attended the event on Saturday, where the Pennsylvania Game Commission held their elk tag drawing live at the Elk Expo in the ECCO Building.

Elk County Conservation District conducted a children's presentation during the Elk Expo titled "Fred the Fish." During the one hour presentation, children learned about different sources of pollution that affect "Fred the Fish". Children were able to participate by dumping various "pollutants" into the water to see how they impacted Fred. After children dumped the pollutants into Fred's stream, a short discussion was held with both adults and children about solutions to prevent pollution. This included things such as medicine collection services, recycling, proper trash disposal, cover cropping, and washing vehicles in the grass instead of the driveway, to provide a filter for nutrients.

In addition to the environmental educational presentation, the District was also offered the opportunity to set up a display among the other vendors. Throughout the event, district staff spoke with guests about the importance of Conservation Districts and environmental stewardship. The District gave out pollinator seed packets, fish identification brochures, information on local recycling programs, flyers for upcoming workshops, etc.



Left– District Staff (L-R: Kate Yetzer, Amanda Murdock, & Steve Putt) present the "Fred the Fish" program.

Bottom Left– District staff show off some of the temporary tattoo options available to kids. The tattoos were generously donated by the Dubois NRCS office.

Bottom Right– District Staff (L-R: Amanda Murdock, Kate Yetzer & Steve Putt) pose for a team photo behind the Fred the Fish program materials



Multi-County Partnership Continues to Grow

For the third year in a row; Cameron, Elk, McKean, Potter, Warren, and now Tioga Counties have been partnering on regional workshops. In 2016 the following workshops were held as a part of this cooperative outreach effort:

Dirt and Gravel Roads Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance (ESM) Workshop– Held in McKean Co.

Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) Workshop– Held in Potter Co.

Best Management Practices (BMP) Workshop– Held in Elk Co.

Stroud’s Stream Workshop– Held in Elk County

E&S Technical Workshop– Held in McKean Co.

E&S Basic Workshop– Held in Warren Co.

E&S Basic Workshop– Held in Potter Co.



Left: Conservation District staff from Potter, McKean, Tioga, Elk, Cameron, and Warren Counties continue to work together on various workshops, such as the SFI workshop.

Below Left: District Manager Steve Putt discusses Chapter 105 permits for logging operations at the SFI workshop in Potter County, 2016.

Below: Cameron County Technician Kate Morgan leads a group at the SFI training in Potter County.



District Partners with St. Marys Ecology Club on Various Environmental Community Service Projects

Saint Marys, PA-

On May 6, 2016 the Saint Marys Ecology Club assisted Conservation District staff in cleaning up the West Creek Wetland Learning Center in St. Marys. Students collected trash, pulled weeds, mulched, trimmed bushes, and shoveled stone in the rain garden.

Following lunch, Pennsylvania Game Commission WCO, Jason Wagner, instructed students about the Eastern Blue Bird and assisted students in assembling Blue Bird Boxes provided by the PA Game Commission. Eight boxes were built and placed in the Learning Center.

Thank you students and WCO Jason Wagner for all your help!

In November 2016, students from the Saint Marys Ecology Club assisted with the beginning stages of a pollinator garden at the Elk Country Visitor Center in Benezette, as well as helping District Staff prepare seed packets for an upcoming pollinator workshop.



Above: Students built bluebird boxes that were donated from the PA Game Commission. Eight Bluebird Boxes were installed at the West Creek Wetlands Learning Center Site.



Above: Students pose with WCO Wagner (Right) and their Bluebird Boxes .



Left: Students prepare a pollinator garden at the Elk Country Visitor Center.



Right: Students pose with trash collected at the West Creek Wetlands.

District Hosts Wetland Field Days for Elk County Middle School Students

Two educational lessons were provided by Elk County Conservation District staff to Elk County Catholic Middle School students at the West Creek Wetland Learning Center in 2016.

One lesson was held in the spring on May 12 and the other in the fall on October 20th. Middle School Students learned what a wetland is, different types of wetlands, wetland or hydric soils, and wildlife in wetlands such as beavers, birds, and bats. Students broke into groups lead by District staff members Kim Bonfardine, Amanda Murdock, and Kate Yetzer and learned first hand about the subjects as they walked along the walking path and read the interpretative signs. Students even got muddy and dug a few holes to check out hydric soils. At the end of the lessons, students tested their knowledge during a fun game of Jeopardy before returning back to school.



Students sit in the pavilion and test their knowledge at wetland jeopardy.



Watershed Specialist, Kim Bonfardine, shows students what a scrub shrub wetland is.



Resource Conservation Technician, Amanda Murdock, digs a hole with students to explain wetland soils characteristics.



Resource Conservation Technician, Kate Yetzer, talks about wetland wildlife on the wetland platform.



Annual Clarion River Cleanup

Ridgway, PA- The Elk County Conservation District (ECCD) again partnered with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC), the Elk County Recycling Office/Elk County Cleanways, and the Allegheny National Forest (ANF) to host a dual phase river cleanup in an effort to clean up the Clarion River.

The event was part of the International Coastal Cleanup, one of the world's largest volunteer efforts aimed at improving oceans and waterways. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is the statewide coordinator for the ICC, and Elk County Cleanways – administered through the recycling office - is a Keep PA Beautiful affiliate.

Phase one of the cleanup was held on September 8, 2016. During this phase, a group of 12 adults from the ECCD, WPC, recycling office, ANF and local volunteers were able to remove two dumpsters, between Ridgway and Portland Mills. A huge thank you goes out to the ANF for the use of their equipment and their staff. They played a huge role in ensuring the success of phase 1!

Phase two of the cleanup was held on September 22, 2016. During this phase, a group of 50 high school students from the St. Marys Area High School, Ridgway Area High School, and Elk County Catholic High School combined with their teachers, ECCD staff, recycling staff, WPC staff, ANF staff, and more volunteers removed more than 760 lbs. of trash, 988 lbs. of metal and 5 tires from the Clarion River. The students were even able to pick up some unique items such as a set of whitetail deer antlers, a plastic snake, a kickball, several pipes, & 5 tires!

After phase two of the cleanup, all participants were invited back to Country Squirrel Outfitters (CSO), who generously donated the use of their canoes, for a well-deserved lunch. Special thanks to Keep PA Beautiful and Elk County Cleanways for gloves and trash bags that were used during the clean-

up and to Country Squirrel Outfitters for the use of their canoes. The ECCD is extremely proud of the community support they received for this event.



A group photo of the students, advisors, and volunteers who participated in the cleanup.



1st Annual Photo Contest



Second Place Adult
Roger Parsons



First Place Student Brenden Dauber



Adult Facebook Favorite
Paul Staniszewski



First Place Adult
Melinda Marconi



Second Place Student
Julie Wilson



Third Place Student
Chloe Horning



Student Facebook Favorite Brenden Dauber



Third Place Adult
Janet Blessel

In 2016 the District held it's first annual photo contest. The contest was open to students and adults with small prizes for first, second and third place, plus a Facebook winner. The theme is "Nature of Elk County" - photos must be taken in Elk County, but the contestants could be from anywhere. The photos are labeled with the photographer's name.

Dirt and Gravel Roads Program Passes QA/QC

Saint Marys, PA— On July 21-22, representatives from the State Conservation Commission (SCC), Penn State Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads (CDGRS), The Elk County Conservation District, and the Elk County Conservation District Quality Assurance Board (QAB) participated in a two day Quality Assurance/ Quality Control Audit (QA/QC).

During the QA/QC, conservation district staff, and QAB members were each interviewed about their knowledge and implementation of the Dirt and Gravel Road Program. The Interviews were conducted by employees of the State Conservation Commission, and the Penn State Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads. After the interviews, three past Dirt and Gravel Road projects within the last 5 years were visited and evaluated . The Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads evaluated the projects and recommended ways to improve the projects. Road surface and road drainage was looked at in each case.

At the end of the visit, the group visited a current Dirt and Gravel Road Construction Project and the members from the CDGRS & SCC provided feedback on how the Dirt & Gravel Road program operates in Elk County. Overall the District received good reviews/feedback. Under the guidance first of Steve Putt, District Manager, and now Kate Yetzer, Resource Conservation Technician, the program continues to grow and improve and the SCC noticed these improvements.



Dirt, Gravel, & Low Volume Road Program

Dirt & Gravel- In 2016, five dirt & gravel projects were completed for a total cost of \$164,599.30. Additionally one project has been contracted in 2016 and scheduled for completion in 2017.

Low Volume- In 2016, one project was completed in the low volume program at a total cost of \$13,412.99. Additionally, one project has been contracted in 2016 and scheduled for completion in 2017.

Fox Township, Squab Hollow Road (DG)



• Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance Practices Used:

- Driving Surface Aggregate
- New Sub-base Material
- Headwalls & Endwalls

• Permit

- The Township needed to acquire a General Permit 11 for this project.
- During construction, a temporary diversion dike and pumping system was used to divert normal flow around the construction area to facilitate construction.

• Project Costs

- Original Grant Funds: \$9,483.94
- In-Kind Funds: \$11,610.04
- Overage: \$4,989.70
- Total Project Value: \$26,083.68

Project Completed in June of 2016

2016 Featured Projects

Jay Twp- Spring Run Road (DG) Blue Cont.



• ESM Practices Used:

- Driving Surface Aggregate
- New Sub-base Material
- Headwalls & Endwalls
- Cross Pipes
- French Mattress



Project Completed
in July 2017



West Creek Project

In 2016, ECCD received a \$19,200 grant to continue investigation in the West Creek Watershed. Landowners came to the Jim Zwald Chapter of Trout Unlimited looking for help to remediate the acidic seeps and hazardous massive coal refuse piles that are throughout the site. ECCD was able to secure funding to do a one year study of the flow and other water chemistry to understand how much mine drainage flows from the site into West Creek and how bad the water quality is. Water samples will be taken for one year and a watershed assessment will be completed also. The data will be compiled and a remediation design will be completed for the AMD seeps which will be used to put the construction phase out for bids. The spreadsheet below shows the average readings from each site between September 2016 and January 2017.

Average Parameter Per Site Between September 2016- January 2017								
Average per site	Site:	WC 1	WC 2	WC 3	WC 4	WC 6	WC 9	WC 10
Parameter	Unit							
pH	pH units	3.0	2.9	3.4	3.1	4.3	6.7	6.9
Alkalinity	mg/CaCO3/L	0	0	0	0	3	24	27
Acidity	mg/CaCO3/L	118	198	58	149	61	-6	-8
Sp. Conductance	µS/cm	702	909	307	697	397	187	189
Sulfate	mg/L	177.3	273.0	83.0	233.6	158.6	33.6	37
Total Suspended Solids	mg/L	10.3*	5.0*	5.0*	6.4*	4.2*	8.6*	8.6*
Aluminum	mg/L	7.62	12.67	3.29	9.63	1	0.53	0.64
Iron	mg/L	3.76	16.42	4.89	18.44	21.97	1.18	1.18
Manganese	mg/L	1.05	1.48	0.90	1.90	1.23	0.26	0.22

* <5.0 is assumed to be 5.0 for average



Elk County Water Monitoring Program

Satellite Telemetry Monitoring

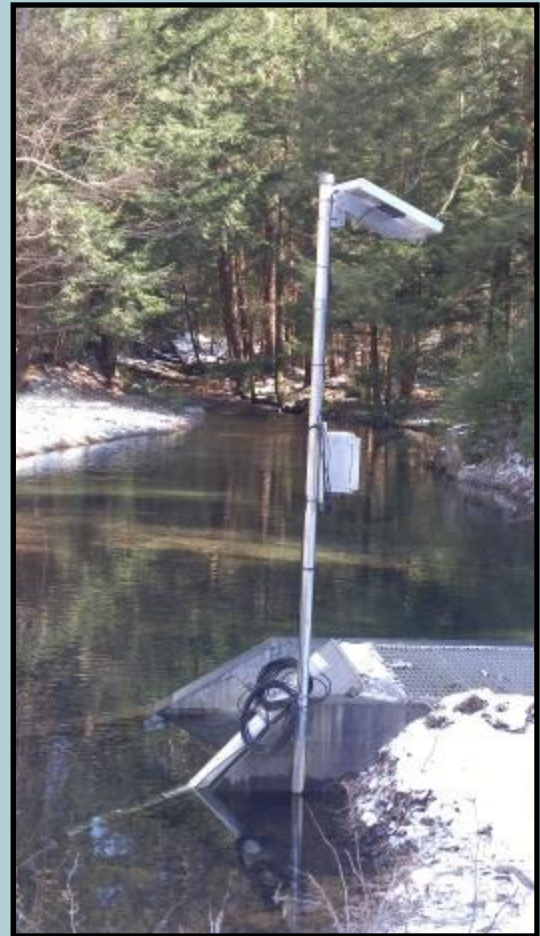
In 2016, the Elk County Monitoring Program (ECWMP) continually recorded Satellite Telemetry Data all year at nine stations.

The multicolored data chart below shows the average Conductivity and pH for 2014, 2015 and 2016 for comparison. As you can see, the averages from 2014 & 2015 stayed very close to the averages from 2016. Not included in the chart were 2016 highs and lows of both parameters but they were all within the normal range of the particular stream or groundwater, which is a good indicator that no pollutants were detected that could be monitored by Conductivity and pH. The average range of Conductivity in the nine sites that we are monitoring is a low of 26.9 again at Silver Creek to a high of 79.8 again at Powers Run, which is notable because both are water sources for Johnsonburg. Oddly, Silver Creek had the lowest conductivity but in contrast it also had the lowest pH of 5.6. Big Mill Creek had the highest and best pH of 7.07 and its conductivity was only 44.

This year maintenance was completed on many of the STS sites. Due to their exposure to the elements for years, the seal on the doors started to dry rot, therefore doors were replaced on all STS meters that showed signs of moisture on the inside of the batter housing. You can see this in the picture.



Powers Run



Picture above: Whetstone site full of clear water

2014, 2015 & 2016 STS Average Conductivity and pH Data

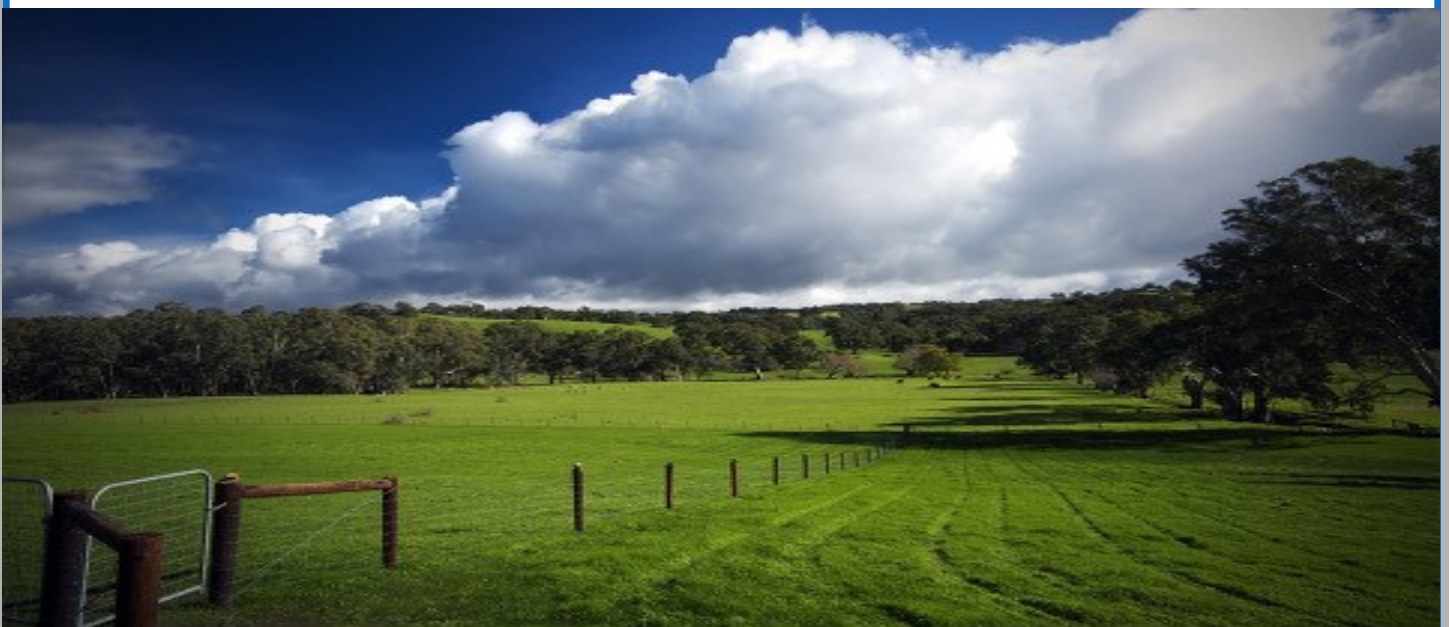
2014 STS Data	Cond μ S	pH	2015 STS Data	Cond μ S	pH	2016 STS Data	Cond μ S	pH
Kersey Run	33.6	6.1	Kersey Run	33.8	6.2	Kersey Run	39.2	6.8
Fox Twp.	32.7	4.1	Fox Twp.	29.3	5.3	Fox Twp.	30.1	6.4
Rattlesnake Creek	40.5	6.6	Rattlesnake Creek	39	6.7	Rattlesnake Creek	54.7	6.4
Highland Twp.	60.1	5.7	Highland Twp.	54.1	6.2	Highland Twp.	65.8	6.1
Whetstone Branch	38.9	6.2	Whetstone Branch	34.3	10.4	Whetstone Branch	35.9	6.6
Powers Run	85.2	7.1	Powers Run	79.4	7.1	Powers Run	79.8	6.5
Byrnes Run	66.3	6.8	Byrnes Run	65.2	6.7	Byrnes Run	62.4	6.4
Big Mill Creek	44.9	6.2	Big Mill Creek	49.3	7	Big Mill Creek	44	7.07
Silver Creek	26.1	5.3	Silver Creek	28.7	5.5	Silver Creek	26.9	5.6
Data collected from 1-1-14 to 12-31-14			Data collected from 1-1-15 to 12-31-15			Data collected from 1-1-16 to 12-31-16		

Pasture Health Workshop Held for Elk County Farmers

Ridgway, PA- On March 8, 2016, a Pasture Health workshop was held at the Courthouse Annex in Ridgway, PA. Soil testing, Pasture Health, NRCS Programs, Manure Management, and Heavy Use Area Management were all discussed. 27 farmers from the county attended the workshop.

Thank you to all of the cooperating agencies who presented information: Nicole Carutis (PSU Extension) presented on soil testing and liming, Suzette Truax, (NRCS) Heavy Use Areas, and Jared Shippey (NRCS), NRCS funding programs. Amanda Murdock presented on Manure Management planning requirements. The workshop was a great opportunity for farmers to meet unfamiliar cooperating agency personnel who attended and provided some networking opportunity.

Each attendee received free pizza, a free Penn State Soil Test Kit, and a binder of information including a Manure Management Manual. A PACD Manure Management Mini Grant was used to supply the cost of food and materials to attendees. A portion of the PACD Manure Management Mini Grant was also used at the Penn State Pesticide Meeting on March 16, 2016. Amanda Murdock presented to a group of about 30 Elk County Farmers on Manure Management and determining how many Animal Units (AU's) are on your operation, and how much manure you generate each year.



District Sets Up Soil Health Display at the Elk County Fair

The Elk County Conservation District set up a Soil Health and Biology display at the Elk County Fair August 8th-13th, 2016.

Various handouts were provided to attendees, such as manure management plan books, conservation calendars, and pollinator seed packets.

Those who stopped by the Conservation District Display could enter to win a free soil test, and sign up to be added to the Districts "Elk Bugle" email newsletter.



2015 Elk County Fair Display

Allegheny National Forest Hosts Forestry Tour for District Staff

On October 21, 2016, the Allegheny National Forest hosted a field day training for Conservation District Staff.

Staff, including District staff from Elk, Warren, & Cameron Counties and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy walked through the rain to observe active Timber Sites in Elk County on the National Forest.

Topics including safety on logging sites, harvesting equipment, landing areas, best management practices in the woods, and others were discussed by the Allegheny National Forest staff.



Thank you to the Allegheny National Forest for arranging this great educational opportunity!

Invasive Species & Forest Pest Management

Gypsy Moth Suppression Program

In 2016, the Elk County Conservation District continued to serve as the County Coordinator for the DCNR Bureau of Forestry's Gypsy Moth Suppression program. Fortunately, Elk County has experienced lower numbers of gypsy moths over the last few years. Aside from a few isolated areas, little signs of defoliation were present. There was no need for a spray program in 2016. Eastern parts of Pennsylvania continue to experience larger populations of this forest pest. The gypsy moth populations will continue to be monitored in Elk County.



Above: Gypsy Moth Caterpillar



The Elk County Conservation District continues to work closely with the Sinnemahoning Invasive Plant Management Area (SIPMA) program. Conservation District Manager, Steve Putt, serves on the SIPMA Steering Committee as well as participates in the quarterly program update meetings. Working closely with the neighboring Counties of Cameron and Potter, the SIPMA program and the Elk County Conservation District works to educate area residents about the importance of forest pest management and invasive species. The SIPMA program is also actively involved in invasive species management through herbicide spray programs to eradicate and control the invasive plants. SIPMA is led by new program coordinator, Nikki Ryan, who is a graduate of Penn State University and an Elk County native. Nikki joined SIPMA in October 2016 and replaced previous program coordinator, Tanya Meyer.



Right: Mile-A-Minute Weed

Left: Japanese Knotweed



Chapter 105 Dam Safety & Waterway Management

In 2016 the Elk County Conservation District continued its delegation agreement with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to administer the Chapter 105 program. The Title 25, Chapter 105, Dam Safety and Waterway Management regulations pertain to dams, reservoirs, culverts, bridges, stream enclosures, channel dredging, channel manipulation, fill materials, stream crossings, and other stream and wetland related activities. The responsibilities of the Conservation District under this delegation agreement includes; investigation of complaints, routine inspections, technical assistance, education and outreach, and acknowledgement of General Permit (GP) activities. The number of permits issued in 2016 are listed below.

<u># Permits Issues</u>	<u>Permit Type</u>
2	GP1 Fish Habitat Enhancement Structures
1	GP2 Small Docks and Boat Launching Ramps
15	GP3 Bank Rehabilitation, Protection/Gravel Bar Removal
0	GP4 Intake and Outfall Structures
11	GP5 Utility Line Stream Crossings
0	GP6 Agricultural Crossing and Ramps
6	GP7 Minor Road Crossings
14	GP8 Temporary Road Crossings
0	GP9 Agricultural Activities



Residential Stormwater Workshop Held at New Recycling Center, Featuring Rain Barrels and Raised Bed Gardening

Saint Marys, PA– On October 1, 2016, the Elk County Conservation District partnered with the Elk County Planning Department to host a Stormwater Workshop at the new location of the Elk County Recycling Center .



35 Elk County residents attended the workshop. This year the focus of the workshop was on residential storm water management, and raised bed gardening. Jodi Foster, of the Elk County Planning Department introduced the workshop, Amanda Murdock from the Elk County Conservation District spoke to attendees about raised bed gardening and chemical free gardening methods. Elk County Conservation District Watershed Specialist, Kim Bonfardine, spoke to attendees about residential storm water control and rain barrels.



At the end of the workshop, attendees received both a rain barrel and an elevated raised bed (pictured on the left). Funding for this workshop was provided by a DEP Environmental Education Grant, Elk County, and Seneca Resources. This event was free to attend, but limited to the first 35 registrants from Elk County.

Erosion and Sedimentation Pollution Control Program (E&S Program)

The Elk County Conservation District has Level II delegation from the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to administer the erosion and sediment pollution control program. Level II duties include; education, technical assistance, site inspection, plan review, and voluntary compliance. The Conservation District works with the DEP on all enforcement matters. The goal of this program is to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation. Erosion is part of our naturally occurring processes, but this process can be greatly increased by human disturbances.

PA Code, Title 25, Chapter 102 and the Pennsylvania Clean Streams Law requires measures and facilities to be in place during earth disturbance activities to minimize the potential for erosion and sediment pollution problems. These regulations also require individuals involved in earth disturbance activities to develop an erosion and sediment control plan (E&S Plan). An E&S plan is required for all disturbance of 5,000 square feet in size or larger. This plan includes measures that will be implemented to minimize erosion, describes how construction activities will progress at the site, identifies the scope of the project, and identifies how the disturbed areas will be stabilized upon completion of the project.

Working under the direction of the Chapter 102 rules and regulations and through the delegation agreement with the PA Department of Environmental Protection, the Elk County Conservation District is tasked with the responsibility of reviewing erosion and sediment control plans. In 2016 the Elk County Conservation District reviewed and processed 58 erosion and sediment control plans. Projects encompassed approximately 585 project acres and included approximately 135 acres of disturbance.

In addition to the processing of erosion and sediment control plans, the Conservation District also investigates complaints, conducts site inspections, provides technical assistance and organizes educational events. In 2016 the Elk County Conservation District received and investigated 10 complaints and conducted 38 site inspections.

NPDES permits are required for earth disturbance activities that will involve one (1) or more acres of disturbance over the life of the project (excludes agriculture, timber harvesting, road maintenance and oil & gas activities). There are two types of NPDES permits. Individual NPDES Permits are required for projects that will occur in special protection watersheds (high quality or exceptional value) or may be required due to other special circumstances. General NPDES permits are for projects involving earth disturbance activities of one acre or more in areas that are not considered special protection and do not fall under one of the other special circumstances. In 2016 the Conservation District processed 3 General NPDES permits and 1 Individual NPDES Permit. We were also involved in 2 NPDES Permit Major Modifications.



ELK COUNTY COMMUNITY RECYCLING CENTER

850 Washington Street, St. Marys, PA 15857 (814) 834-4886 Office: (814) 776-5373

<http://www.co.elk.pa.us/recycling/>



The Elk County Community Recycling Center was opened in October 2010 by the County of Elk and the Elk County Solid Waste Authority / Recycling Office. The center started operation at the Stackpole Complex in St. Marys and utilized that space for the first 5 1/2 years. In 2016, the county purchased the former Advanced Recycling Building and the move was made.

The Recycling Center currently accepts newsprint, office paper, magazines, mixed paper, cardboard, hard & soft cover books, #1 plastic bottles, #2 plastic bottles, #5 plastic, #5 flex bags (bulk packs), bi-metal cans, and aluminum cans. In addition, the Recycling Office has an ongoing electronics collection which occurs on the 3rd Saturday of each month. They also collect fluorescent bulbs, batteries, and oil based paint and pesticides.



We've Moved!!!

The Community Recycling Center moved to our new location on May 1, 2016.

The offices of the Elk Co. SWA / Recycling and the Elk Conservation District also moved their offices in July of 2016.

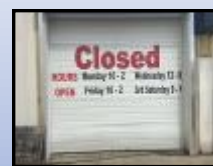


A **Biomass Furnace** was included with the building. The West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund provided grants to upgrade the system and extend the trunk line to heat the entire building.

The **Stackpole Hall Foundation** also provided a grant to upgrade the building which included new secondary heating units, LED lighting fixtures, and a new entrance to accept roll-off containers & commercial loads.



"DRIVE THRU SERVICE"



The **Department of Environmental Protection** provided a 902 Grant for a new skid steer, baler, and elevated sort line with conveyor system.



2016 Financial Statement

Income

Conservation District Fund Allocation Program	
Admin. Assist. Grant	19,500.00
Manager & First Technician	64,829.96
Ag Conservation Technician	29,649.98
Nutrient Management Program	13,220.62
Act 13 UGWF Block Grant	57,159.09
Watershed Specialist Grant	31,514.64
County	
Solid Waste Enforcement Officer	57,044.42
County Allocation	24,500.00
Permits & Fees	
E&S Review Fees	5,275.00
GP Permit Fees (Chap.105)	10,750.00
NPDES Permit Fees	5,000.00
ESCGP Permit Fees	1,000.00
Account Interest	
CNB Savings	377.48
Dirt, Gravel & Low Volume Roads Account	37.66
Clean Water Account (Permit Fees)	99.22
Grants	
Mini-Grants	8,703.00
Workshop Registrations Fees	110.00
Envirothon	
Envirothon Donation	700.00
Jr. Envirothon Donation	10.00
Fundraisers	
Trail Race & Clay Shoot	3,445.00
Water Monitoring Project	
Stackpole Hall Foundation	12,500.00
2015 Sinnemahoning Grant	518.00
Dirt, Gravel & Low Volume Road Program	
Dirt & Gravel – Project Funds	125,073.60
Low Volume Road - Project Funds	32,000.00
Dirt & Gravel – Administration	15,634.20
Dirt & Gravel – Training & Education	15,634.20
Low Volume Road – Administration	4,000.00
Low Volume Road – Training & Education	4,000.00
Total Income	<u>\$542,286.07</u>

Expenses**2016 Financial Statement**

Payroll Expenses	176,681.62
Health Insurance	
Health Insurance	21,044.03
Vision Insurance	497.61
Dental Insurance	1,248.52
Retirement	12,367.62
FICA (Social Security) Company	12,152.36
Med. (Social Security) Company	2,842.15
PAUC – Unemployment Comp. Company	1,510.82
Workers Compensation	1,846.46
Misc. Employee Expenses	
Travel Expense	4,766.85
Per Diem Expense	1,348.53
Training Registration Fees	560.00
Meeting Expense	341.41
Administrative Expenses	
Office Supplies	992.92
Telephone	300.00
Dues & Memberships	2,584.30
Sponsorship Fees	700.00
Education & Outreach Expenses	2,189.83
Director Travel	876.42
Annual Report	121.26
Liability Insurance	1,300.50
Postage	37.33
Administrative Services	7,217.54
Audit	2,550.00
Envirothon	
Envirothon Expenses	1,632.64
Jr. Envirothon Expenses	533.09
Fundraisers	
Trail Race & Clay Shoot Expenses	1,248.94
Mini-Grants	
ARIPPA Mini-Grant	130.00
Misc. Mini-Grant Expenses	8,162.01
Misc. Workshop Expenses	157.22
Sinnemahoning West Creek AML/AMD	6,346.20
West Creek Wetland	1,435.44
Water Monitoring Project	
2015 Stackpole Hall Foundation Grant	
Calibration	60.00
Satellite Transmission	5,774.00
Equipment Parts/Maint/Repairs	2,424.89
2017 Stackpole Hall Foundation Grant	
Calibration	90.00
Colcom Foundation / IFCTU Grant	
Equipment	13,013.00
Contractual	561.00
Travel	82.08
2015-Sinnemahoning Grant	1,344.00
Dirt, Gravel & Low Volume Road Program	
Dirt & Gravel Road – Projects	123,951.43
Low Volume Road - Projects	13,412.99
Dirt & Gravel Road – Admin. Expenses	5,283.96
Dirt & Gravel Road – Training & Edu. Expenses	3,668.61
Low Volume Road – Admin. Expenses	534.21
Total Expense	<u>\$445,923.79</u>
Net Income	<u>\$96,362.28</u>

Cooperating Agencies & Organizations

The Elk County Conservation District works closely with many local, state and federal government agencies as well as many non-profit organizations. We greatly value these partnerships and collaborative conservation efforts they provide. The following is a partial list of some of our partnering agencies and organizations:

Allegheny National Forest
Marienville Ranger District
131 Smokey Lane
Marienville, PA 16239

Army Corps of Engineers
East Branch Lake
631 East Branch Dam Road
Wilcox, PA 15870

DCNR Bureau of Forestry
Elk Forest District
258 Sizerville Road
Emporium, PA 15834

DCNR Bendigo State Park
533 State Park Road
Johnsonburg, PA 15845

Keystone Elk Country Alliance
950 Winslow Hill Rd
Benezette, PA 15821

PA Dept. of Environmental Protection
North West Regional Office
230 Chestnut Street
Meadville, PA 16335

PA Dept. of Environmental Protection
Knox District Office
310 Best Avenue
Knox, PA 16232

PA Fish & Boat Commission
North Central Region Law Enforcement
595 East Rolling Ridge Drive
Bellefonte, PA 16823

PA Fish & Boat Commission
North Central Region Outreach & Education
450 Robinson Lane
Pleasant Gap, PA 16823

PA Game Commission
North Central Region
P.O. Box 5038
Jersey Shore, PA 17740

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
478 Jeffers Street, Building 3, Suite D
DuBois, PA 15801

PA Association of Conservation Districts
25 North Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Headwaters Resource Conservation & Development
109 North Brady Street, 2nd Floor
DuBois, PA 15801

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
Allegheny Regional Office
159 Main Street
Ridgway, PA 15853

PA Department of Agriculture
Western PA Region
6 McIntyre Road
Gibsonia, PA 15044

PA Department of Transportation
Elk County Maintenance Department
32 St. Leo Avenue
Ridgway, PA 15853

US Fish & Wildlife Service
PA Field Office
315 South Allen Street, Suite 322
State College, PA 16801

North Central PA Regional Planning & Development
49 Ridgmont Drive
Ridgway, PA 15853

Western PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation
266 Donohoe Road, Suite 110
Greensburg, PA 15601