



The Elk Bugle

Volume 4, Issue 1

Spring 2017

Conservation District Dives Into Spring with Many Educational Workshops

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Envirothon Study Day Held in Benezette

Benezette, PA—



The Elk County Conservation District hosted an Envirothon Study Day for local high schools within Elk County on April 12, 2017.

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Department of Conservation Natural Resource (DCNR), Western PA Conservancy, and PA Game Commission set up stations for students to prepare in soils, forestry, aquatics, and wildlife. NRCS also spoke about the current issue, Agriculture Soil and Water Conservation to students.

The Envirothon is coming up on May 10, 2017 at the St. Marys Sportsman's Club.

Good luck to Ridgway, Elk County Catholic, Johnsonburg, and St. Marys High Schools!



Above: Photo of Suzanne Klinger, NRCS, at the Soil Station during Envirothon Study Day. Suzanne discusses soils from forest, plowed field, and hay field that students pulled using soils probes.

District Hosts Successful Pollinators in the PA Wilds Workshop



Benezette, PA-

A successful Pollinators in the PA Wilds Workshop was held on March 29, 2017 at the Elk Country Visitor Center. Approximately 50 people attended the workshop ranging from Jefferson, Clearfield, Elk, and Cameron Counties.

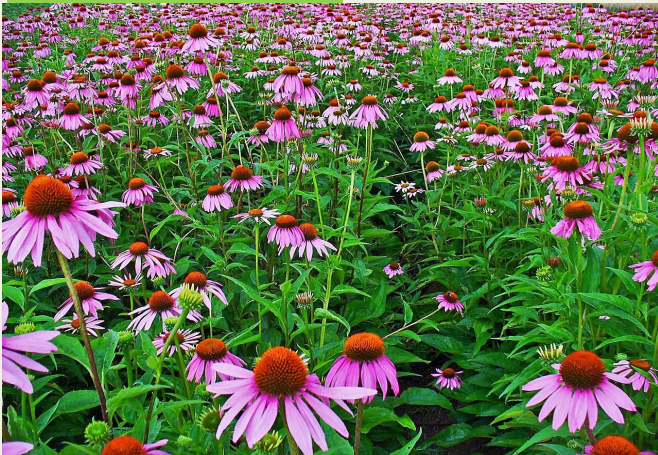
Speakers from DCNR, NRCS, PSU Master Gardeners, KECA, and The Penn State Center of Pollinator Research spoke about topics ranging from native plants, monarch butterfly's, current honeybee research, pollinator habitat programs, and pollinator gardens.

All attendees received hummingbird and butterfly seed mix to plant at their homes to feed and provide habitat for pollinators. Attendees also received a free lunch courtesy of a PACD Non-Point Source Pollution Mini Grant. The entire event was free and covered by the grant.

Pollinators are in decline across the United States. By promoting native plants, native pollinators will be given not only a native food source, but habitat as well. Homeowners can do many things to promote pollinators at their homes, from pollinator flower beds, to fence rows with flowering trees, to planting fields with pollinator seed mixes. Pollinator seed mixes typically contain not only flowering plants for nectar and food sources, but also native grasses for habitat and places to lay eggs. Pollinator seed mixes select plants that bloom throughout the spring, summer, and fall months. However, flowering trees are typically the first source of nectar for pollinators and are also beneficial to attract pollinators.

Who are Pollinators?

- bats
- hummingbirds
- butterfly's
- bees
- honeybees
- spiders
- beetles
- moths
- many more!



Above: Chris Firestone, Wild Plant Program Manager of Tioga State Forest, DNCR, discusses Native Plants and Invasive Species



PSU Master Gardener Cheryl Shenkle discusses Monarch Butterfly's



? Did you know ?

Native pollinators evolved with native plants? Native pollinators mouth parts are adapted specifically to the shape of the native plant they prefer.



PSU Graduate Students, from The Center of Pollinator Research discuss their research regarding honeybees populations in Pennsylvania. Left, Tayler Jones, Center, Emily Erickson

Native Plants to PA:

- Black eyed Susan
- Red Maple
- Redbud
- Switchgrass
- Indian grass
- Bee-Balm (Wild Bergamot)
- Oxeye Sunflower
- Butterfly Weed
- Common Milkweed
- Wrinkle Leaf Goldenrod
- Trumpet Creeper Vine
- Little Bluestem (Grass)
- Arrowwood
- Mountain Laurel

Below: Trumpet Creeper Vine





4/21/2017– Dirt and Gravel Road Applications Due

4/24/2017– Elk County Conservation District Board Meeting 4:30 pm

5/3/2017– Junior Envirothon, Bendigo State Park

5/10/2017– Senior Envirothon, Saint Marys Sportsman's Club

5/16/2017– Holiday, Primary Election Day, Office Closed

5/29/2017– Holiday, Memorial Day, Office Closed

6/26/2017– Elk County Conservation District Board Meeting 4:30 pm

7/4/2017– Holiday, Independence Day, Office Closed

7/16/2017– Clays For Conservation, Sporting Clay Shoot– St. Marys Sportsman's Club





Pull!



...Your calendar up and save the date!



Elk County Conservation District 3rd Annual Clays for Conservation Shooting Event!

What: Wobble Trap & Doubles (1 round each, 75 birds total)

When: Sunday, July 16th 2017

Where: St.Marys Sportsmen's Club

Why: Raise money for environmental educational programs throughout Elk County

Who: Contact, Kate Yetzer at:
kyetzer@countyofelkpa.com

***More details to follow!**



Best Management Practice Workshop Held for Local Townships, Municipalities, and Engineers



Above: Over 65 attendees listen to Trout Unlimited Speaker, Phil Thomas, discuss culvert placement in streambeds.

Ridgway, PA-

A Best Management Practices (BMP) workshop was held on February 16, 2016 at the 911 Center in Ridgway. This years workshop focused on stream culverts and proper pipe installation in the stream.

Featured speaker was Phil Thomas from Trout Unlimited. Phil discussed aquatic organism passage (AOP) considerations and investment protection of the culvert. He later discussed proper pipe installation, calculating proper grade, and establishing grade breaks when installing AOP.

Luke Bobnar, of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, spoke about bioengineering projects and local examples of natural stream design projects. Bioengineering is the use of live tree and shrub stakes that are used to establish protection on eroding stream banks. It is a cheap, easy method to prevent streambank erosion. See diagram below.

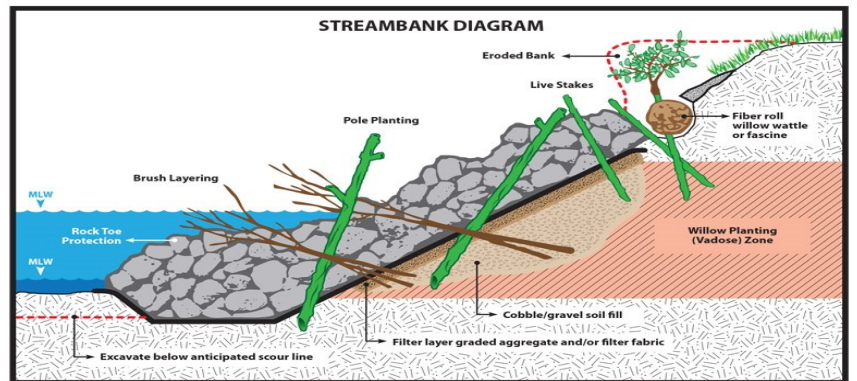
Conservation District Staff, Steve and Kate, discussed bridge and culvert maintenance procedures related to Chapter 105 regulations.

Randy Albert, PE from Penn Dot, then talked about geosynthetic reinforced soil integrated bridge system that is being used across Pennsylvania. Jones Township will be installing one of these bridges by Twin Lakes in 2017.

For the most up to date information
"Like" us on Facebook!



Right: Diagram of using live stakes for bioengineering to protect eroding streambank



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Erosion and Sediment Control in Our Forests Workshop Held in Elk County



District Staff discuss site specific situations that could be found at an active logging site. Left: Mike Hovatter (Landvest) discusses with a group how to get water off the main haul road. Below, Kate (ECCD) and Amanda (WCCD) discuss ephemeral streams, and BMP's to use if they need to be crossed.



Brynedale, PA-

Through a cooperative county partnership, an Erosion and Sediment Control in our Forests workshop was held in Elk County on April 20, 2017. Foresters, and loggers from the region attended to learn about ways to improve site conditions before and after the harvest of timber.

A field activity was held on property of the Western PA Conservancy in Penfield, PA and the classroom portion was held at the Jay Township Fire hall.

During the field activity group leaders lead discussions on topics such as legacy roads, timber harvest planning, stream crossings, ephemeral streams, and drainages on haul roads.

This workshop has been held each year with a cooperative effort by McKean, Potter, Tioga, Cameron, Warren, and Elk Counties. The Conservation Districts from these counties work together to present information on forest land Best Management Practices, timber Erosion and Sediment Control Plans, and update attendees with information regarding 105 stream and wetland permitting, and items like the PNDI tool to determine threatened and endangered species. This workshop also partners with the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), and allows those in the timber industry to obtain course credits at the end of the course if they choose.

This years event brought 24 attendees in addition to conservation district and cooperative staff. A PACD Non-Point Source Pollution Grant was used to fund this workshop and pay for the facilities.

Agriculture Planning Workshop Held in March

Right: Amanda Murdock discusses Agriculture Erosion and Sediment Control Plans to farmers at the Ag Planning Workshop



Ridgway, PA-

An Agriculture Planning workshop was held on March 7, 2017 in Ridgway at the Courthouse Annex Building.

Eight farmers attended the meeting, in which they learned about proper soil testing, and how soil testing can improve the farm, courtesy of Nicole Carutis, Forage and Crop Educator from Penn State Extension. Each attendee received a free soil test to take home and use on the farm.

Suzanne Klinger from the Natural Resource Conservation Service also spoke about programs offered through USDA that provide funding in install Best Management Practices (BMP's) on the farm. These practices include roof gutters, cover crops, high tunnels, streambank fencing, animal heavy use areas, no-till, buffers, and grazing systems, and many more.

To tie everything together, Amanda Murdock, of the Elk County Conservation District discussed the plans needed to obtain funding, and address erosion and sediment on the farm. Any farm that plows or tills, including no-till, or has an animal heavy use area must have a Agriculture Erosion and Sediment Control Plan. The Conservation District is available to help with these plans at no cost. Contact Amanda if you are interested in a Agriculture E & S Plan or a Manure Management Plan.

Thank you for all of those who attended! This workshop was made possible from a PACD Manure Management Mini Grant and included dinner, and free soil test kits for attendees.



District Staff Speak at Educators in Our Workplace Event and Attend Career Day at the Elk County Visitor Center

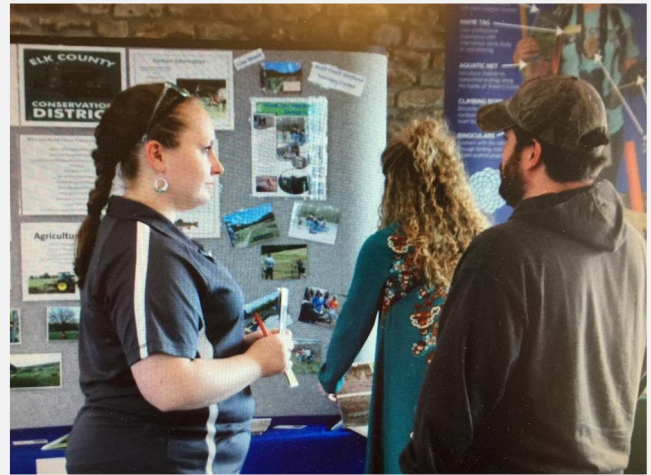
Benezette, PA-

The Elk County Conservation District has been busy promoting Conservation Districts with Educators and Students.

On March 24, Kate Yetzer attended a career day at the Elk Country Visitor Center in which high school and college students attended. She talked to youth about career opportunities in Pennsylvania with Conservation Districts, and how her degree in Geology turned her towards working in the conservation field. Other environmental agencies such as DCNR, KECA, PA Game Commission also attended.

On April 7, 2017, Kate Yetzer and Amanda Murdock attended Educators in Our Workplace event and spoke to educators in the region about careers in Conservation Districts, and what Conservation Districts do for the public and for adult and youth education. Other cooperating agencies also attended the event. The goal of the event was to educator teachers on what careers are available in the PA Wilds Region.

Special thanks to KECA for allowing the Elk County Conservation District to be apart of these great events and promoting what we do.



Above: Kate Yetzer, speaks to students about possible conservation district careers. Photo courtesy of the Elk County Visitor Center

Dirt and Gravel Roads Environmental Sensitive Maintenance Event Held in Benezette

Benezette, PA-

The Penn State Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads held an Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance Training (ESM) in Benezette on March 22-23, 2017. This event was attended by many townships and municipalities as well as other Conservation District staff and local landowners.

Townships and Municipalities that apply for Dirt and Gravel Road funding through the Elk County Conservation District must have at least one ESM Certified Individual at Dirt and Gravel and Low Volume Road sites. Every 5 years these individuals must take an ESM class to maintain there certification as well as Conservation District Staff.

Topics covered in this training include road surface drainage, road surface maintenance, driving surface aggregate, ditch outlets, off right of way influences, roadside vegetation management, stream interfaces, and road side banks.



Photo courtesy of the Elk Country Visitor Center

Erosion and Sediment Control in Our Forests



Above: District Staff from Elk, Cameron, McKean, Potter, Tioga, and Warren County Conservation Districts. All Districts presented at the workshop

Below: Steve Putt, of Elk County Conservation District discusses a stream crossing at the project entrance. Steve discussed the size of the watershed, the type of permits that may be needed to replace the structure, and aquatic organism passage considerations.



This workshop started with the McKean County Conservation District and soon became a cooperative effort between neighboring Conservation Districts, which include Potter, Cameron, Elk, Warren, and Tioga Counties. It has been held cooperatively for the past 3 years.

This workshop also partners with the Sustainable Partnership Initiative (SFI), and attendees can receive credits towards their SFI Certification.

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), and the Western PA Conservancy also partner and assisted in this years Erosion and Sediment Control in Our Forests

Thank you to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy for allowing us to use your property for this workshop!



Above: Sandy Thompson and Sherry Dumire of the McKean County Conservation District educate foresters during the “Tailgate” Erosion and Sediment Plan Talk at the workshop

Right: Kate Morgan of the Cameron County Conservation District, and Glenn Dunn of the Potter County Conservation District discuss legacy trails and roads, when to retire them, when they can be reused, and environmental considerations when dealing with legacy roads.

