



The Elk Bugle

Volume 5, Issue 1

Spring 2018

The Elk County Conservation District Holds Annual Rain Barrel Workshop



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Saint Marys, PA-

38 participants attended the Stormwater and Rain Barrel Workshop hosted by the Elk County Planning Department, and the Elk County Conservation District on April 7th. All attendees received a free 40 gallon rain barrel (Pictured Right) and a free elevated composter to take home .

Participants learned about composting, healthy soil, storm water impacts on ecosystems, and how land-owners can minimize stormwater on their property.

The goal of the workshop was to educate land-owners about stormwater issues, and how they can combat those issues using items such as a rain barrel. The rain barrel can be collected and used as a watering source for gardens, plants, etc.

Workshop speakers included Stephanie Stoughton (Pictured Below) , ECCD Watershed Technician, and Jodi Foster, Elk County Planning Director

Funding for this event was provided by a DEP Education Grant, Elk County, and Seneca Resources.



Junior Envirothon 2018



Lunch , t-shirts, and awards, for both Envirothon events were provided to all participants and their advisors free of charge by the Conservation District.

Bendigo, PA-

The Elk County Conservation District held it's 5th Annual Jr. Envirothon on May 2, 2018 at Bendigo State Park. Teams from St. Marys, Elk County Catholic, and Johnsonburg Middle Schools participated in the categories of Forestry, Wildlife, Aquatics, and Soils. After the competition, the students participated in a walk on the Eagle Trail, led by Erica with DCNR. All of the teams did a fantastic job and we plan to continue this event in the future. All 6th through 8th grade students in Elk County are encouraged to participate in this environmental learning experience.



First Place—St. Marys

Zach Mosier, Andy DePrater, Caleb Mattiuz



Second Place—Johnsonburg

Gary Larner, Camron Marciniak, Tess Kocjancic

Sr. Envirothon 2018

Study Day →

Benezette, PA- Students learned about wildlife, forestry, aquatics, soils, and pasture management from industry professionals. The Game Commission brought a nuisance bear trapped in Caledonia. Students assisted WCOs Jason Wagner and Sue Edmiston as they collected data from the bear before its release.



Ten teams from Johnsonburg, Ridgway and Elk County Catholic competed in our 15th annual Envirothon at the St. Marys Sportmen's Club.



First Place—Johnsonburg

Kyle Walker, Josh Calla, Austin Hoover, Zac Hodgdon, and Zac Rigard



Second Place—Ridgway

Isabel Ginther, Gabbie Rohr, Maddie Taylor, Bailey Bauer, and Carly Renwick



Ag Literacy Week

On March 19, 2018 Fox Township and Bennett's Valley Elementary Schools, along with other schools in the county, participated in Ag Literacy Week. This is an annual event organized by the Elk County Farm Bureau. Kate Yetzer and Kelsey Kilhoffer, with the Elk County Conservation District, along with Danielle Terbovich, Elk County Farm Bureau Member, read the book "Tyler Makes Pancakes" to Kindergarten through 2nd grade students. The content focused on the connections between farms and every day food items.

Top Right: Kelsey Kilhoffer, Danielle Terbovich, and Kate Yetzer with Fox Township 2nd grade students.

Bottom Right: Danielle Terbovich reads "Tyler Makes Pancakes" to students.



Stormwater Education



Ridgway, PA- Marcia Raubenstrauch, a 4th grade teacher at Ridgway's FSG Elementary School, tried to sign up for our Annual Rain Barrel Workshop; however, the workshop was already full. Marcia was looking to attend the workshop and planned to use the free rain barrel and compost bins for science education with her 4th graders. Two people did not show up the day of the workshop, so The District donated the extra rain barrel and compost bin to Marcia's classroom. Nearly 50 fourth graders listened to a presentation, given by Watershed Technician, Stephanie, about how impervious surfaces can have a negative impact on the environment. The students learned how to use the rain barrel and compost bin to reduce stormwater runoff and landfill waste.

Farmer's Winter Meetings

On March 7th and 14th, the Elk County Conservation District held winter meetings for farmers at the Elk County Courthouse Annex and the ECCD office, respectively. Speakers included Dr. Kimberly Bohn (pictured right) with Penn State Extension, Tim Elder with NRCS, Joel Semke with the State Conservation Commission, and Kelsey Kilhoffer with the ECCD. Topics encompassed riparian buffers, rotational grazing, the REAP tax credit program, and manure management. The ECCD provided free soil test kits to all attendees.



Financial support for this project was provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection through the Clean Water Fund.

Career Day at the Elk Country Visitor Center



Benezette, PA- Conservation District staff, Kate & Stephanie, attended a career day at the Elk Country Visitor Center in Benezette on March 23rd. This event was open to middle school, high school, or college level students interested in pursuing a career in natural resources. The District joined other professionals from : The Keystone Elk Country Alliance, Pa Game Commission, Pa Fish and Boat Commission, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, US Forest Service, & US Army Corps of Engineers.

Forestry Days for Districts



Ridgway, PA-

On April 27th, Mike Hovatter, District Forester with LandVest Forest Management Services, hosted an educational tour for District staff. The tour included site visits to active and future harvest sites. Great discussions were had about healthy, sustainable forest management. District staff also learned about timber harvesting equipment and safety components of active sites.

Thanks Mike! We really appreciate the hospitality and the invitation. It was a great day and we look forward to doing it again.

Staff from Elk, Cameron, Warren, Jefferson, and Huntingdon County Conservation Districts attended this event



Did you know?

According to Penn State Extension: The leading hardwood-producing state in the nation, Pennsylvania is home to more than 2,100 forest-products companies and 500,000 forest landowners. More than 80,000 Pennsylvanians work in the forest-products industry, accounting for about one of every nine manufacturing jobs in the state. The industry generates nearly \$12 billion in annual sales and contributes about \$19 billion a year to the state's economy

BMP Workshop

Ridgway, PA-

A Best Management Practices (BMP) workshop was held on February 15, 2018 at the 911 Center in Ridgway. This years workshop highlighted common sense wetland identification tips, new invasive species, hydraulically applied blankets, and site inspection procedures.

One featured speaker was John Ellis with LSC Environmental Products. John discussed hydraulically applied blankets including where and how they are best applied. He later discussed the maintenance requirements of hydraulically applied blankets.

Joseph Hudson, Watershed Specialist at the Erie County Conservation District, spoke about common sense tips to wetland identification. If a wetland is not easily identifiable, oftentimes it can be mistaken for just a, "wet area" and not an actual "wetland." This is an issue because wetlands are a resource of the commonwealth and have similar protections to streams. Joseph did a fantastic job relating the components of wetlands to everyday situations and scenarios.

Conservation District Staff, Steve and Kate, discussed site inspection procedures related to Chapter 102 regulations and updated invasive species information on the spotted lanternfly. The spotted lanternfly prefers to eat several agricultural crops, including: apples, nut trees, grapes (wine!), and hops (beer!)



Above: A spotted lanternfly depositing egg masses.



Above: John Ellis speaks about hydraulically applied blankets to over 45 attendees.
Left: A photo of the spotted lanternfly. Adults are approx. 1 in. long and 1/2 in. wide.

Elk Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan Update

By Tara Fisher

Stephanie Stoughton, the district's Watershed Technician is in the process of writing a Coldwater Conservation Plan for Elk Creek. Data is being collected by Stephanie and her intern, Tara Fisher on Elk Creek and 10 of its major tributaries. These assessments include, water quality, instream and riparian habitat, aquatic biological communities, and any threats to water quality and habitat.



Pictured on the left is a railroad that runs along the stream bank on Elk Creek. The railroad above has caused the bank to erode and can have a negative effect on the stream's water quality. In this case, the railroad is too close to the stream and lacks a riparian area for vegetation to hold the soils in place. Erosion can also dangerously affect the structure and function of the railroad.

During a stream assessment on Water Tank Run, this culvert (pictured right) was found underneath a railroad crossing. On the downstream side of the culvert, a large pool had formed which contained about a dozen trout.

This resulted due to the height of the culvert and lack of water inside for the fish to pass through. In the future, the Conservation District could reconstruct or modify this culvert and provide access for the fish to move upstream.



Elk Creek Coldwater Conservation Plan - Continued -



Abandoned mine drainage (AMD) can result in decreased pH levels and increased dissolved metal concentrations. AMD causes stress to aquatic organisms, especially native Brook Trout. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection reports 8 abandoned coal mines found within the Elk Creek watershed. Pictured on the left are acid mine drainage seeps found on Daguscahonda Run. Water samples of the AMD seeps revealed pH levels below 4 and conductivity readings around 1000 $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$.

Meet our Intern: Tara

Tara Fisher (right, sampling pH in Daguscahonda Run) is interning for The District this summer. Her primary duty is assisting Stephanie with Elk Creek stream assessments.

Though Tara is from Bunola, she's no stranger to our area. She spends a lot of time at her dad's cabin in Benezette and enjoys fishing Elk County waters.

Tara is a student at California University of Pennsylvania studying Environmental Studies with a concentration in Fisheries and Wildlife. She plans to pursue a career in the wildlife and fisheries sector when she graduates in December.

Thanks for your help, Tara!



Elk County Conservation District

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Phone: (814) 776-5373
www.co.elk.pa.us/conservation

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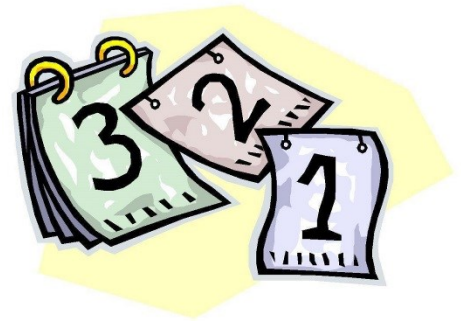
Joe Labant- Public Director

Jerry Olsen- Public Director

Jim McCluskey- Associate
Director

Chris Smith- Associate Direc-
tor

Ron McMinn- Director Emeri-
tus



Clays for Conservation– July 15th, at the St.Marys Sportsmen’s Club, in St.Marys



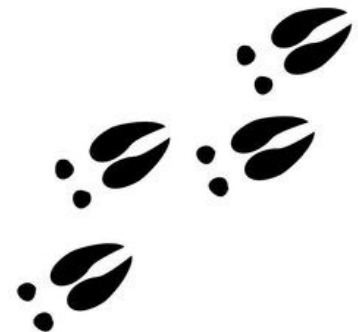
Board Meeting– July 23rd, at the District office, in St.Marys

Farm Tour– July 31st, at the District office, in St.Marys



Elk Expo-
August 18 & 19th, at the Elk Country Visitor Center in Benezette

Board Meeting– August 27th, at the District office, in St.Marys



Labor Day Holiday- District office closed

DGLVR Annual Training– Sept. 18th-20th, in Indiana, PA



Les Haas Memorial Trail Challenge– September 22nd, at the Laurel Mill Trail Head near Sandy Beach in Ridgway Twp

Elk County Conservation District

4th Annual

Clays for Conservation Shoot!

What: Wobble Trap and Doubles Shooting Event (75 Birds).

When: Sunday, July 15th 2018. Event will be held rain or shine. Registration will be from 8:00-noon, and shooting will begin at 8:30am.

Where: St.Marys Sportsmen's Club, 1339 Glen Hazel Rd., St.Marys, PA 15857

Why: Raise money for environmental educational programs throughout Elk County. *The funds raised from the pervious shoot were donated to the St.Marys Sportsmen's Club to help cover the costs of sending local students to Conservation Camp. The remaining funds were used to hold water quality activities for local students.*

Cost: \$25 per shooter. This will include refreshments, and a delicious picnic style lunch of BBQ pork, generously donated by the Benezette Hotel.

What to bring:

- ♦ Eye & Ear Protection
- ♦ 12 or 20 gauge shotgun capable of firing 2 shots
- ♦ Enough shot for 75 targets at a minimum.
A tie will result in a shoot off, please be prepared for this possibility.

Awards: Etched glasses will be awarded to:

- ♦ 1st Place Overall Shooter
- ♦ The Top Youth (under 18) Shooter



Please contact Kate Yetzer at kyetzer@countyofelkpa.com or (814) 776-5369 with questions.

Agriculture Bus Tour



The Elk County Conservation District would like to invite you to attend our Agriculture Bus Tour! We will be visiting **Hoffman Appalachian Farm**, a Certified Naturally Grown farm that provides hops and barley to Straub Brewery. We will then stop for a tour of the **Straub Brewery** (*with a tasting of course) and proceed to visit **“Chocolate Crop Farm,”** where the nutrient-rich spent grains are used to feed beef cattle.

⇒ **July 31st**

⇒ **9:30am—4pm**

Bus loads at the ECCD office

⇒ **Lunch provided**

⇒ **FREE and open to the public***

* Participants must be 12 years of age or older and anyone wishing to sample beer must be 21 with a valid driver’s license.



To register, please contact:

Kelsey Kilhoffer

kkilhoffer@countyofelkpa.com

814-776-5388

*Space is limited and seats are reserved on a first-come-first-served basis.

Financial support for this project is provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection through the Clean Water Fund.



7th Annual Les Haas Memorial Trail Challenge
14K Run, 7K Run & 2 Mile Fun Walk
 Hosted by the Elk County Conservation District
 Proceeds Benefit Environmental Education



WHEN & WHERE: 9 AM, Saturday, **September 22, 2018**, at the Laurel Mill Ski Trail, Allegheny National Forest, near Ridgway, PA. (GPS: 41° 24' 26.3" N, 78° 47' 18.9" W)

COURSE: The Laurel Mill Trail was designed specifically for XC skiing and hiking. The trail is a series of interconnected loops and is mostly rolling hills. The surface is dirt, gravel, rocks, sticks, leaves, mud, grass and maybe even a few tree branches. Watch out for the bears and skunks! 14K runners will run two laps of the 7K course.

AGE GROUPS: Male and Female Runner Divisions: 14 & Under, 15-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60 & Over

AWARDS: Awards to first overall male and female in the 14K and 7K. The walk is a "fun walk" and is non-competitive. Awards to 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place male and female in the 14K and 7K age groups. There will also be door prizes!

SHIRTS: Each participant registered by September 10 will receive a race t-shirt (adult unisex sizing). T-shirts are only guaranteed to those that are pre-registered.

REGISTRATION: \$15 pre-registration received by September 10. \$20 post-registration and on race day. Race day registration at the Laurel Mill Trailhead from 7:30 AM until 8:45 AM. **Online Registration is also available at UltraSignUp.com**

Mail registrations with check payable to:
 Elk County Conservation District
 850 Washington Street
 St. Marys, PA 15857

Drop Off Registration and payment at:
 Elk County Conservation District
 Elk County Community Recycling Center
 850 Washington Street, St. Marys, PA
 Mon. - Fri. 8:00AM – 4:00PM

FACILITIES: Rest room (pit toilet) will be available at the trailhead. Water will be provided along the trail.

REFRESHMENTS: Post-race snacks and beverages will be provided.

INFORMATION: Phone: (814) 776-5377 or Email: sputt@countyofelkpa.com
 Additional information, maps and photos are also available online at www.co.elk.pa.us/conservation

I, the undersigned, hereby release the Elk County Conservation District, Allegheny National Forest and all sponsors, volunteers and other organizations involved with the Les Haas Memorial Trail Challenge from any or all liability that may result from my participation. I understand that participation in such events comes with potential risk and I have consulted with my doctor and determined that I am healthy enough to participate in such activities.

Name _____ Sex _____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Circle Shirt Size: S M L XL XXL

Email (please print legibly) _____

Entrant's Signature _____ Circle Event: 14K Run 7K Run 2 Mile Walk

If under 18, parent or guardian's signature _____