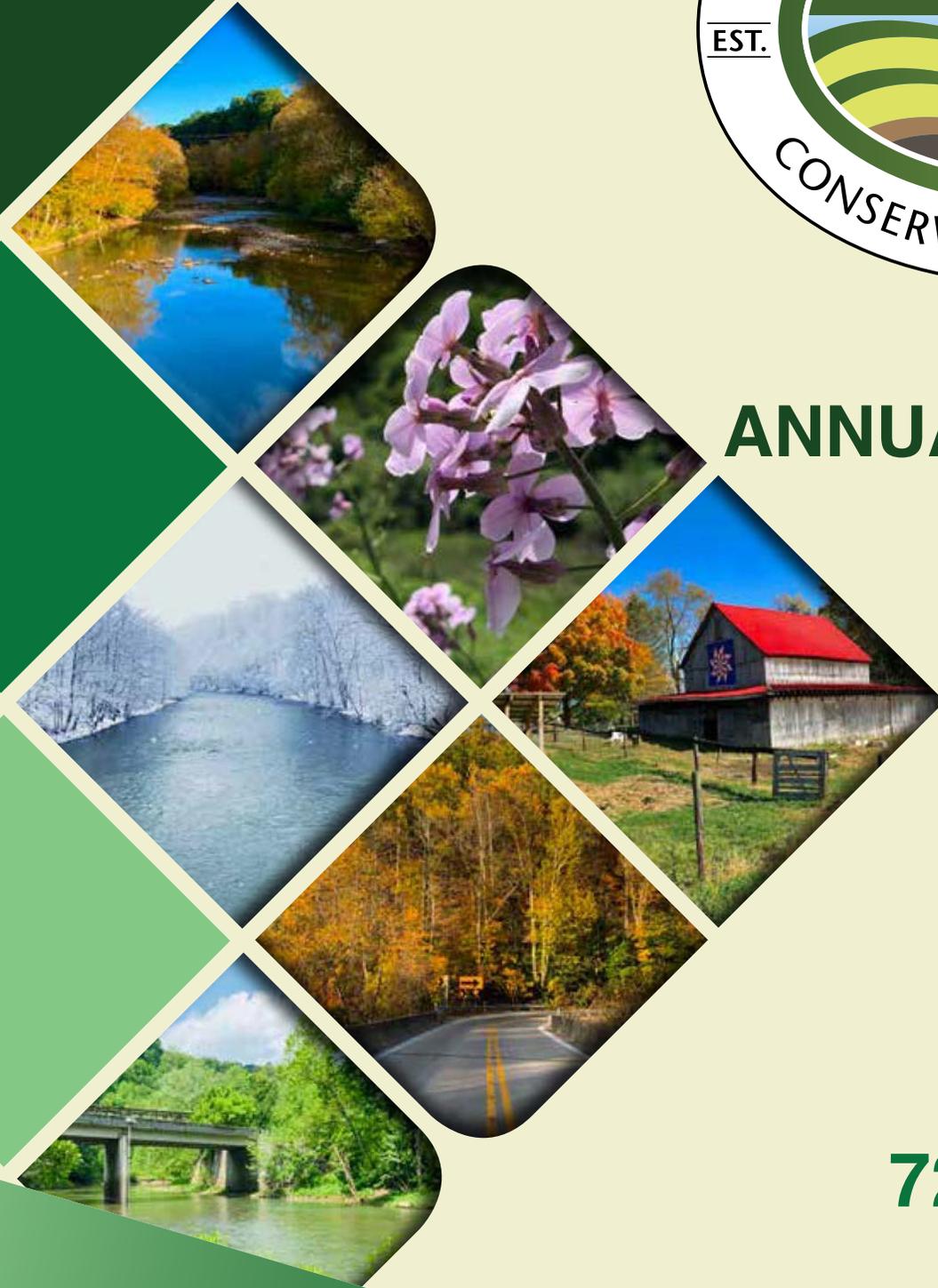




# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



**724-852-5278**

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## Nominating Organization

Greene County Conservation District Nominating Organizations are the backbone to a diverse conservation district board. These organizations provide our local leaders with candidates to be appointed as district directors. All nominating organizations are approved by the State Conservation Commission at the district's request. A diverse nominating organization provide directors with different points of view and help define membership on a Board that makes critical decisions about how we manage our growing community's natural resources in Greene County.

Contact the District for information about how County organizations can be considered for approval as Nominating Organizations. Our current Nominating Organizations are Penn State Extension, USDA Farm Service Agency, Association of Township Officials, Bar Association, Greene County Fair Board, Pomona Grange #63, Farm Bureau, Farmland Preservation, Fireman's Association, Tourist Promotion Agency, Historical Society, Planning Commission, Izaak Walton League, Richhill Agricultural Society, Southwestern PA Woodland Owners.



# Board Members



## 2020 BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

- Mike Belding, Chairman
- Betsy McClure, Vice Chairman
- Blair Zimmerman, Secretary

## 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- James Cowell, Jr., Chairman
- Commissioner Mike Belding, Vice Chairman
- Greg Hopkins, Treasurer
- William Wentzel, Secretary
- Glodenna Halstead, Director
- Dave Shipman, Director
- Melissa Adamson, Director

## 2020 ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

- Gay Thistle
- Glodenna Halstead
- William Cree, Jr.
- Jerry Day
- Jim Willis
- Dominick Barbetta
- Rebecca Salosky
- Lance Kerr
- Joel Folman
- Carol Adamson
- Spencer Johnson
- Raymond Stockdale
- George Scull
- Keith Golden
- Mickey Lemley
- Charles Kubasik

## DISTRICT STAFF

- Lisa Snider, District Manager
- Lindsay Kozlowski, Asst. Mgr; Environmental Program Specialist
- Zachary Basinger, Environmental Program Specialist
- Jared Zinn, Watershed Specialist
- April Morris, Fiscal Officer
- Sara Hlatky, Conservation Technician
- Benjamin Schweiger, Conservation Technician

## COOPERATING AGENCIES

- Greene County Department of Economic Development  
Jeremy Kelly, Planning and Business Development Manager
- Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Phil Evans, District Conservationist
- PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry  
Russell Gibbs, Service Forester
- PA DEP Field Representative  
Vacant
- PA Fish and Boat Commission  
Eric Davis, SW Region Waterways Conservation Officer
- Penn State Cooperative Extension  
Tom Beresnyak, Area 6 Client Relations Manager
- Washington/Greene County Farm Service Agency  
Michal Roup, CED

## DISTRICT LOCATION

2nd Floor of the Ben Franklin Building at  
22 West High Street, Suite 204  
Waynesburg, PA 15370  
Phone: 724-852-5278  
gcccd@co.greene.pa.us  
Hours: 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday-Friday

*The GCCD Board meets the third Tuesday of each month at 10:00 am in the Conservation District Conference Room located on the 2nd Floor of the Ben Franklin Building.*

# Financial Statement

## January through December 2019

Interest Income . . . . .	\$25,089.07
Donation Income . . . . .	\$14,968.24
E&S Fees . . . . .	\$78,735.00
Grant Income . . . . .	\$62,153.86
Misc. Income . . . . .	\$2,038.90
Permit Fees . . . . .	\$45,450.00
Program Income . . . . .	\$576,520.58
Rental Income . . . . .	\$1,122.50
<b>Total Income . . . . .</b>	<b>\$806,078.15</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT . . . . .</b>	<b>\$806,078.15</b>

Audit . . . . .	\$6,625.00
Scholarship . . . . .	\$4,500.00
Equipment & Supplies . . . . .	\$12,446.49
Donations . . . . .	\$3,022.22
Bank Service Charge . . . . .	\$114.45
Misc. . . . .	\$0.00
Total Advertising/Marketing . . . . .	\$27,548.70
Total Contracted Work . . . . .	\$1,245,865.26
Dues . . . . .	\$3,665.00
Total Equipment/Automobile . . . . .	\$8,648.78
Total Events/Workshops . . . . .	\$8,656.96
Mini Grant . . . . .	\$10,000.00
Total Employment Expenses . . . . .	\$261,893.88
PNDI Search . . . . .	\$440.00
Total Postage Machine/Copier . . . . .	\$2,558.93
Surety Bonds . . . . .	\$875.00
Total Telephone . . . . .	\$1,752.46
Total Travel . . . . .	\$12,440.62
<b>Total Expense . . . . .</b>	<b>\$1,611,053.75</b>
<b>NET INCOME . . . . .</b>	<b>-\$804,975.60</b>

# PSCFO Dedication to Agriculture Award

At the 2019 Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania State Council of Farm Organizations, the first ever PSCFO Dedication to Agriculture Award was presented to Frosty Springs Farm Owner, Greene County Farmer and District Board Chairman, Mr. James A. Cowell, Jr. Each year this award is presented by the council, awardees embody the following attributes;

- Service with a significant economic or social impact on rural Pennsylvania
- Service generally affecting PA Agriculture
- Service making a vital difference in one component of PA Agriculture such as for a specific commodity
- Unheralded accomplishment with limited public awareness
- Public Service performed at the local, state, or national level providing a meaningful contribution/benefit to agriculture
- Service providing a greater awareness of agriculture's importance to the general public

Mr. Cowell was nominated by the PA Cattlemen's Association. The nomination of Mr. Cowell by the organization was a clear decision. Simply put, Mr. Cowell sees that agriculture and environment are not opposing terms but rather are complementary. He works to cultivate that relationship which will lead to Pennsylvania leading in food and fiber production while improving the environment in which it is accomplished. The Cowell family has a long history with the Greene County Conservation District dating back to 1978. Mr. Cowell's Frosty Springs Farms is located in Greene County near Waynesburg. Much of Jim Cowell's activities include advising farms on best practices and educating 4-H and FFA members about ways to farm that increase productivity while reminding them that farmers are the original stewards of the environment.

According to PSCFO Immediate Past President Jeff Nogan, individuals who have dedicated themselves to helping PA Agriculture are not sufficiently recognized.

*"This Award is for the unsung heroes of Agriculture who work to help all, yet do not seek attention for themselves. Hopefully, the PSCFO Dedication to Agriculture Award will allow people to be appreciated for the works they have accomplished,"* he said.

Congratulations on your award Mr. Cowell!



*Photo Left to Right-- Chief of Staff for Senator Camera Bartolotta (R-Beaver/Greene/Washington), Katrina Hanna; James A. Cowell, Jr, Award Recipient; PA Department of Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding; PA House of Representatives Pam Snyder (D-Greene/Fayette/Washington). Back row-Gregg Robertson, President PSCFO*

## 2019 Poster and Coloring Contests Winners



*1st Place, Elizabeth Bell, 7th grade and 2nd Place, London Whipkey, 8th grade. Both are students of West Greene Middle School*



*3rd Place, Kaylee Ayers, 7th grade Margaret Bell Miller Middle School*



*Leah Ayers, 4th grade and Sara Tuttle 4th grade, both are students of Waynesburg Central Elementary.*



*Lydia Juliano, a four-year-old student at Christian Sandbox, Eastyn King, a five-year-old student at Carmichaels Elementary Pre-K; and Naviah Dean, a four-year-old student at Carmichaels Elementary Pre-K.*

## Conservation District Hosts Annual Awards Ceremony



*Chairman of the Conservation District Board, Jim Cowell with former County Commissioner and Conservation District Board Member Archie Trader who was recognized for his years of service.*



*Chairman of the Conservation District Board, Jim Cowell with the Jackson Township Supervisors, recipients of the Dirt, Gravel and Low-volume Road Program Municipality of the Year Award.*



*Chairman of the Conservation District Board, Jim Cowell with Sarah Calvert, the Outstanding Conservation FFA Speaker Award winner.*



*Chairman of the Conservation District Board, Jim Cowell with Tom Headlee, and his award for 35 years of service.*



*Chairman of the Conservation District Board, Jim Cowell with Dave Shipman, Mike Belding, Jim Willis and Jerry Day who were recognized for five years of service.*



*Chairman of the Conservation District Board, Jim Cowell with Jan Cox, the recipient of the Outstanding Cooperator of the Year Award.*



*Chairman of the Conservation District Board, Jim Cowell with Rebecca Trigger and Mark Foley of Rebecca's Woodlands, the recipients of the Outstanding Forest Conservationist of the Year Award.*

The Greene County Conservation District honored eighteen recipients during its annual awards ceremony on Wednesday, Dec. 11 at Valley View Farm in Waynesburg.

Each year, the Conservation District honors those within the county who have shown an outstanding commitment to soil and water conservation.

Those honored this year include:

- Jan Cox, recipient of the Outstanding Cooperator of the Year Award;
- Rebecca's Woodlands, recipient of the Outstanding Forest Conservationist of the Year Award;
- Sarah Calvert, recipient of the Outstanding Conservation Speaker Award;
- Jackson Township, selected as Dirt Gravel and Low Volume Road Program Municipality of the Year;
- Archie Trader, who was recognized for his years of service as a Greene County Commissioner and Conservation District Board Member;
- Tom Headlee, who was recognized for 35 years as a Conservation District Board Member;
- Mike Belding, who was recognized for five years as a Conservation District Board Member;
- Dave Shipman, who was recognized for five years as a Conservation District Board Member;
- Jim Willis, who was recognized for five years as an Associate Conservation District Board Member;
- Jerry Day, who was recognized for five years as an Associate Conservation District Board Member; and
- The Carmichaels Envirothon Team – State Envirothon Champions who finished in third place at the International Championship which includes: Joey Kurincak, Jacob Hair, Ryan Swartz, Stephan Zacoi, Christina Adams and team advisors Kevin Willis and Megan Patton.

The District recognized Jan Cox as Outstanding Cooperator of the Year. Jan operates a 125-acre farm that has been in his family for 225 years. Given this long history, Jan felt a moral obligation to make good use of the land. He began his operation with goats and eventually added cattle as well.

Jan is passionate about pasture management to maintain soil health and fertility. This provides benefits to both the land and his animals. He has a detailed rotational grazing system to increase efficiency of forage and reduce damage.

Rebecca Trigger and Mark Foley of Rebecca's Woodlands were recognized as Outstanding Forest Conservationist of the Year. Rebecca's Woodlands exemplifies the philosophy and science of resource conservation. They have worked alongside Service Forester Russell Gibbs and Conservation District staff to promote healthy forests that are free from invasive species.

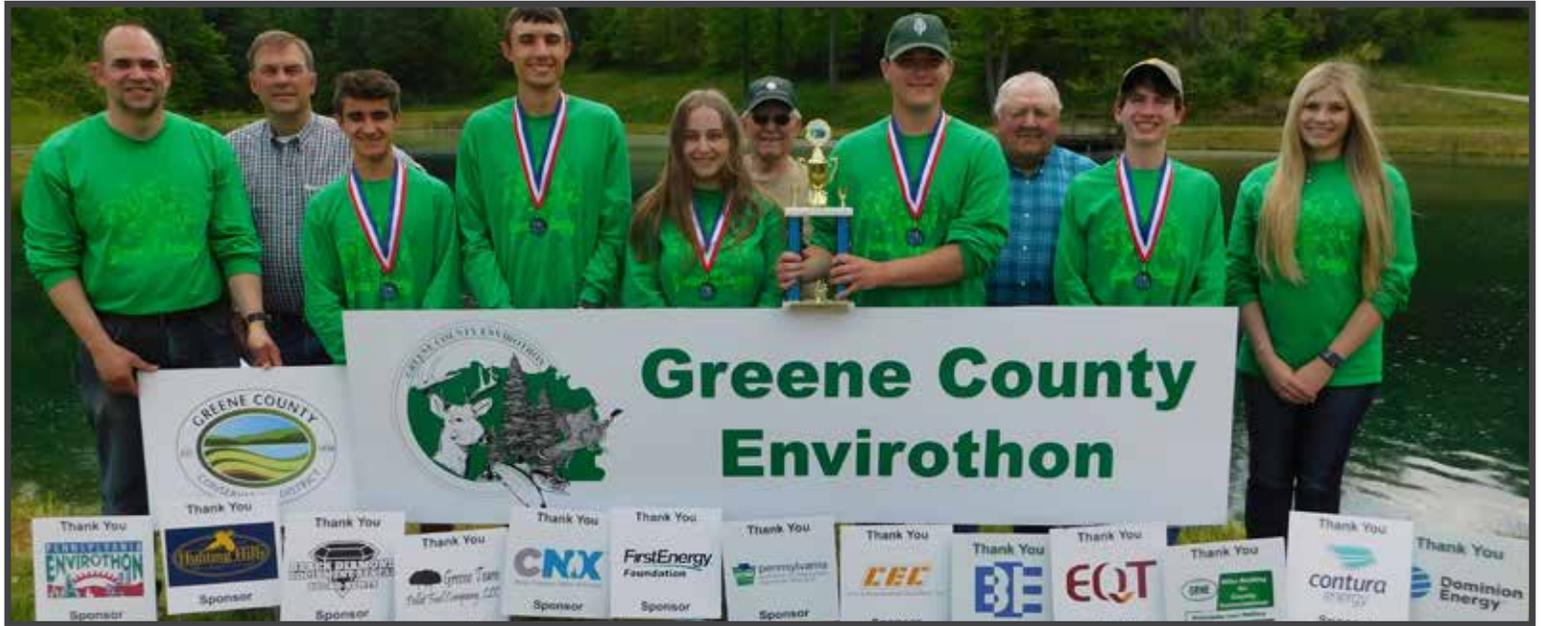
The District recognized Sarah Calvert for her outstanding speaking skills and for placing first at the Greene County FFA Conservation Public Speaking Contest. Sarah is the daughter of Judy and Richard Calvert of Spraggs.

The Jackson Township Supervisors were recognized as the Dirt, Gravel and Low-Volume Road Program Municipality of the Year. This award recognizes their outstanding accomplishments in the establishment of environmentally sensitive maintenance practices that protect water quality while providing the community with improved roads within the municipality.

For more information on the Conservation District awards, call 724-852-5278.

# 2019 State Envirothon Winners

*“Agriculture and the Environment: Knowledge and Technology to Feed the World.”*



Left to Right: Kevin Willis, Team Advisor; Mike Belding, GCCD Board Director; team members Joey Kurincak (12th grade), Jacob Hair (12th grade), Christina Adams (11th grade); Bill Wentzel, GCCD Board Director; Ryan Swartz (12th grade), Jim Cowell, Chairman GCCD; Stephan Zacoi (12th grade) and; Megan Patton, team advisor.

Congratulations to the Carmichaels Envirothon team representing Greene County for winning the Pennsylvania State Envirothon with a total score of 536 points out of 600!

The team had the highest score in the Aquatics Station with 93 points.

Each team member received a \$1250 scholarship from the PA Envirothon. For First place, the team was awarded a wooden plaque made from Pennsylvania hardwoods and medals, along with a framed wildlife print. For the high station Aquatics score, the team received a plaque along with framed Brook Trout print and PA Fish and Boat Commission publication.

This year marks the tenth year in a row and the eleventh time overall that the team has placed in the top 5 and the fourteenth year in a row that the team has placed in the top 10 at the State Envirothon. The team placed 1st in the state in 2018; 2nd in 2006 and 2010, 3rd in 2014, 2016, and 2017, and 4th in 2011 and 2015. In 2012 and 2013 the team placed 5th in the State. In 2009, the team placed 7th, in 2008 the team placed 8th, and in 2007 the team placed 10th in the State.

The team qualified for the state event by winning the local Greene County event organized by the district. The first-place ranking in the state event allowed the team to complete and represent the Commonwealth at the 31st NCF-Envirothon competition held this past July at North Carolina State University, Raleigh where they placed 3rd. More than 46 states, five Canadian provinces, and two Chinese provinces have initiated Envirothon contests based on the program that was originally developed by Pennsylvania's conservation districts.

The NCF-Envirothon is an international environmental education competition for high schoolers conducted by the National Conservation Foundation (NCF) and supported by the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). The top three overall scoring teams received cash prizes sponsored by Smithfield Foods, the world's largest pork producer and processor. The top fourth through eighth placing teams received cash prizes from Idaho Envirothon, Soil Health Institute, and National Association of State Conservation Agencies. Other event sponsors included the National Association of Conservation Districts, the U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Sustainable Forestry Initiative, along with many partners from North Carolina and across the country.



# 2019 State Envirothon



# 2019 GRACE Program

GRACE is the district funded Greene County's Reinvestment in Agriculture: Cost-share and Enhancement Program. GRACE was implemented in 2017 and was considered a tool to be used by the district to unite the farming community and available agencies in an effort to reintroduce farmers to programs that can benefit their operations while protecting resources.

The purpose of this program is to enhance and protect our soils through offering lime and fertilizer cost share funding, along with water facility improvements, fencing projects and forest management. Forestry is the newest added best management practice; this BMP was adopted into the program in 2018. The district hopes this program will lead to an improved presence in the farming community and allow the office to open the doors to other agencies through annual field visits and we want to be certain residents are aware of the resources through such programs.

In 2019, 10 additional applicants from the program's previous numbers with a total participation of 49 farmers in the program. This was an investment of approximately \$255,170.04 back into the agriculture community. The applicants represent 16 townships. Applicants can apply for as many practices that they can complete within the program year. The table below displays the combined totals for each practice applied for in 2019 compared to the previous years:

**GRACE Best Management Practice Distribution 2017-2019**

Best Management Practice	2017	2018	2019
Lime	20	31	45
Fertilizer	20	28	37
Watering Systems	15	15	18
Fencing	7	9	12
Forestry	NA	2	0
Other	NA	0	1

Funds utilized by the program are a direct result of PA Act 13 which the District receives annually to foster conservation efforts within Greene County. The Greene County Conservation District Board of Directors wanted to give back to the Greene County farming community in hopes that these funds would ensure viable farm land for the future. Applications must be submitted by August 31st to be considered for approval. Approvals are made by the District Board in September at the monthly board meeting. Approved practices are required to be completed by July 31st of the following year.

## Arbor Day 2019

On May 5th, 2019, 60 Carmichaels Area School District students planted 350 Northern Red Oak seedlings on a forest stewards' property in Jefferson Township. This Arbor Day plant was coordinated by the Pa Bureau of Forestry's Service Forester, Russ Gibbs. The students were a mix of middle, high school and special needs students.

Rebecca Trigger, a forest steward in the Pennsylvania Forest Stewardship Program, hosted the event on her property so that she could begin a multi-acre Northern Red Oak stand. According to Ms. Trigger "the special oaks planted are some of the most valued in the world. The planting will enhance water retention, air quality improvement, wildlife biodiversity and as a mood enhancer for humans".

The planting event was the result of Trigger's enrollment in the Greene County Conservation District's GRACE, or Greene County's Reinvestment in Agriculture: Cost-Share Enhancement,

Program that provides landowners resources and funding for conservation practices. The cost-share program allocates funds that Greene County receives from Act 13 impact fees and applies them to sustainable agriculture and forestry practices for farmers and private landowners.



*Ben and Lisa*



*District staff, Kevin Willis and Russ Gibbs, DCNR Service Forester*



*Envirothon Team and Cory Wentzel, DCNR*



*Whole Crew*

# Greene County Farmland Preservation

In 1988, the Pennsylvania Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program began and today our state leads the nation in preserving farmland. The purpose of the program is to protect farmland for future generations. To-date more than \$1 billion dollars have been invested by federal, state, county, and local agencies to preserve 5,329 farms in 58 counties with a total of 552,702 acres for future agricultural production within our state.

In 2007, Greene County joined this movement by the preserving its first farm, the Cree Dairy Farm. This farm has been followed by 6 others: James F. and Pearl Willis, Living Trust farm in 2011, Harley and Janet Gapen farm in 2012, the Charles A. Thelma Harry farm in 2013, the Richard Phillips farm in 2014, and both the Bell Tree Farm (now owned by David K. Bell and wife Ruth) and the Sky Mile Farm owned by William V. Milesky and wife Faye in 2018.

Therefore, a total of 7 farms consisting of over 852 acres have been preserved within the county and \$984,008.06 of state and county funds has been invested into purchasing these properties.

In 2019, the Greene County Farmland Preservation Program was successful in encumbering another farm parcel which is part of a dairy farm owned by William A. and Lura Ann Cree. This 83-acre parcel is in Cumberland Township and will add to Greene County's preserved farmland once the sale is approved at the State board meeting.

The Greene County Farmland Preservation Board accepts applications annually from January to April, ranks, and offers to purchase farmland easements dependent on funding availability.

This program would not be successful without the support of the County Commissioners and their contributions, the Board members that donate their time and put their faith in the program, and the Greene County Conservation District and staff.

## 2019 Manure Management Workshop

In 2019, the GCCD offered free manure management workshops for residents and one-on-one sessions.

Two half-day workshops were attended by landowners in which the District provided technical assistance. The first workshop was in collaboration with the Washington County Conservation District. This workshop was held at the Log Cabin Fence Company with the attendance of 9 farmers representing Washington and Greene County. The second workshop was held by GCCD at the District with the attendance of 5 farmers from Greene County.

Financial and material support for this workshop was provided by the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Inc., through a grant from the PA DEP under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act, administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

This workshop focused on PA Department of Environmental Protection Manure Management regulations which require any farm in Pennsylvania that applies manure to the land – whether you fork it on there, spread it with a machine, or let your livestock drop it directly in the pasture – to have a written manure management plan, regardless of the size of the operation. The workshop reviewed the regulations as well as assisted with the completion and guidance on developing operation specific plans.

As a result of the workshops and two additional one-on-one meetings, the plans combined total coverage was over 800 acres of land.

No manure-related complaints were received in 2019.



# Thistle Tree Farm Tour

## Woodland Organization Tours Thistle Tree Farm

The Southwest PA Woodland Organization hosted a tour of the Thistle Tree Farm. Thistle Tree Farm is located along the South Fork Tenmile Creek in Central Greene County. Formerly a sheep and cattle farm, the Thistles have planted more than 3,400 trees to develop their tree farm. They have won many awards including the Outstanding Forest Conservationist award by Greene County Conservation District, and the 2015 Pennsylvania Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year award.

Lamonte Garber, of the Stroud Water Research Center, was on hand to discuss the history, mission and research conducted at the Stroud Center. He detailed the role of aquatic insect communities in determining how healthy a stream is and discussed the role of streamside forests in supporting aquatic life.

Harold and Gay Thistle led attendees on a tour through plantations of Walnut, Red Oak and other native trees. Along the way, they showed how microsite conditions and ongoing maintenance affected the health and productivity of individual trees within plantations. They discussed the various options for protecting saplings from deer browse, wind damage and other factors. This included a lot of valuable information about tree-tube selection and good tube maintenance practices.

Each participant had an opportunity to take part in a hands-on demonstration of crop tree release. Crop tree release involves removing trees from a plantation to reduce overlap in the tree's crowns. Harold Thistle described how the investment of time and effort that goes into each tree makes it difficult to select trees for removal. He explained that while it may be difficult, it is an important part of the process and improves the productivity of the remaining trees in the plantation.

Throughout the tour, the Thistles discussed the importance of controlling invasive species. Gay Thistle focused on early identification and swift action to ensure that invasive species do not establish themselves. She provided examples of invasive species, such as mile-a-minute and discussed control methods.

The tour was a great experience for all who attended and really addressed some of the major challenges affecting forest landowners.



*Lamonte Garber describes the role of streamside forests in supporting aquatic life to the audience.*



*Harold Thistle discusses microsite conditions and how they affect the productivity of trees within a plantation.*



*Attendees consider walnut trees during the crop tree release activity.*

## Mini-Grants

Each year the Board accepts applications in two rounds for landowners to apply for funding for water quality improvement related projects. The rounds run from January to June and from July to December annually. In 2019, the GCCD Board approved two projects for \$5,000 under the District's mini-grant program. The projects addressed water quality improvement through the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMP). This year's projects consisted of a stormwater issue in Jefferson Borough and a stream encroachment at the Washington Township Park.



# Mobile Environmental Display

The Conservation District Board of Directors arranged to host the “H2Oh! On the Go,” Mobile Environmental Display at the 2019 Greene County Fair. The Mobile Environmental Display is the result of a partnership between the Armstrong County Conservation District and the Carnegie Science Center. It is a traveling exhibit that includes ten interactive installations modeled after the Science Center’s “H2Oh! Why Our Rivers Matter” exhibit. Each exhibit allows visitors to engage, experiment and learn about water and the role it plays in our lives. Conservation District staff and Directors welcomed visitors and discussed water quality in Greene County.

The MED includes 10 stations that demonstrate the properties of water, the concept of a watershed, how water and soil interact, soil erosion concepts, a greater understanding of aquatic species and other topics. Activities include the “frozen raindrop,” which allows participants to freeze a rain drop in place; the “Drag race,” which explores the effects of drag on objects in water and the “Virtual Watershed”, which allows visitors to make their own hills and valleys before unleashing virtual rain to see how water behaves.

“The Mobile Environmental Display was made possible through the generosity of the COLCOM Foundation. The Colcom Foundation’s primary mission is to foster a sustainable environment to ensure quality of life for all Americans by addressing the major causes and consequences of over population and its adverse effects on natural resources.

The Armstrong Conservancy operates a charitable trust with a mission is to establish and deliver programs of the highest quality that enable the protection of land through education, purchase, easements, and by partnering with individuals and organizations having similar goals.

The EQT Foundation, through a partnership with the Armstrong Conservancy, provided a grant to assist with the purchase of a towing vehicle for the Mobile Environmental Display. This vehicle is powered by Pennsylvania-produced, clean-burning, compressed natural gas. The EQT Foundation was established by EQT Corporation, one of the region’s leading energy producers, and is committed to the social and economic vitality of our operating regions. The EQT Foundation believes in meaningful engagement with the communities it calls home, and takes great pride in the role as both a responsible and responsive corporate citizen. The EQT Foundation has developed strong partnerships with a variety of nonprofit organizations to enrich the diversity and viability of our communities, sustain the principles of continuous learning and focus on environmental protection efforts.”



## Conservation District Distributes Rain Barrels

The Conservation District held a series of workshops and events focused on the importance of stormwater management and designed to empower landowners to reduce stormwater runoff by using rain barrels.

Unmanaged stormwater runoff is important as it drives water pollution and aquatic habitat degradation, leads to more frequent and more severe flooding and causes concerns for communities and municipalities. For example, an average sized roof may shed more than five hundred gallons of water during a moderate rain storm.

A rain barrel collects a portion of this water and stores it for later use by the property owner. This reduces the effect of this roof on stormwater runoff but also provides a benefit to the property owner by storing a supply of water suitable for watering gardens, washing vehicles and equipment, cleaning decks and windows and a host of other household tasks.

Working with Waynesburg Borough, and receiving funding from Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Conservation District distributed 50 rain barrels at no cost to Greene County landowners.



## Conservation District Partners with State Agencies and Local Business to Stabilize Streambanks

The Conservation District partnered with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) and Black Diamond Equipment Rental to stabilize a heavily eroded stream near Bobtown. The unnamed stream is a tributary of Dunkard Creek and flows through former mine land that now belongs to the PGC. The stream is intermittent, meaning that for some part of the year, it is dry. During storm events, however, the stream has intense flows.

These intense flows led to a severely eroded, deeply incised channel with unstable banks. This bank instability resulted in heavy sediment pollution loads in Dunkard Creek and eventually threatened the adjacent Burwell family cemetery. When District staff first visited the site in 2016, part of the cemetery's outer stone wall had already crumbled and fallen into the stream.

Development of the project took three years and had to overcome a number of obstacles. Eventually the pieces fell into place. A major piece was the Stream Improvement program administered by DEP. This program, offers assistance by designing and constructing small projects to restore stream channels damaged by high water or flooding events and to stabilize streambanks affected by erosion at sites where there are imminent threats to the structural integrity of homes, businesses and industries. DEP provided thousands of dollars in funding to pay for materials for this project.

Another large piece of this was Black Diamond Equipment Rental providing an excavator for use on the project. The final piece was local maintenance staff of the PGC who operated equipment and completed the bulk of the labor for completing the project. Today the stream is stable in even high flows, the threat to the cemetery is gone and less sediment pollution is entering Dunkard Creek. This is an example of a great project that improved water quality and protected cultural resources through partnerships.



## Waynesburg University Day of Service

Nearly fifty Waynesburg University freshmen volunteered with the Greene County Conservation District on Saturday, August 24th. Students were taking part in the University's Day of Service, an event that imparts the value of community involvement by pairing new students with local organizations.

Students participating with the Conservation District spent their morning at the Thistle Tree Farm near Rogersville. They learned about forestry practices and the challenges of controlling invasive species from the farm's owners, Gay and Harold Thistle. Students then got hands-on experience cutting, pulling and digging invasive species like Bush Honeysuckle, Multiflora Rose and Wild Grape.

This was a great opportunity for everyone involved. Students learned more about forestry in Pennsylvania. The Thistle's had a few extra pairs of hands to help out for the day and Greene County's soil and water resources benefit from the increased awareness that activities like this foster.



## Big Things Are Happening in Brown's Creek

The Conservation District has been working with the Morris Township Supervisors and local farmers for four years on a project to benefit landowners and improve water quality in the Brown's Creek watershed. This project work took place at three sites within the watershed including the Morris Township Community Center near Nineveh and two nearby cattle farms.

Work at the community center stabilized the banks of Brown's Creek that had become seriously eroded. This severe erosion resulted in a lot of sediment entering Brown's Creek which harms fish and other aquatic life. It also threatened the facilities at the community center and created unsafe conditions near the playground. Stabilization work included reshaping the banks and installing structures that protect them from future erosion. These structures serve as great habitat to support the fish populations that will flourish in the stream.

Work at the cattle farms helped farmers improve practices. While nothing was wrong with managing their farms before, improvements like stabilized stream crossings, spring developments, streambank fencing and woodlot exclusions made their farms cleaner and more efficient. At the same time, these improvements protect water quality in nearby streams. Cattle farming, like any human activity, produces some waste in the form of sediment and nutrients that are carried into the stream by rains and melting snow. These practices ensure that future runoff will carry less of these pollutants into our streams. This will benefit the fish and other life that call these areas home and will protect the water downstream that becomes drinking water for communities.

All totaled, this project has stabilized nearly 3,000 feet of heavily eroded streambank and installed three stabilized agricultural stream crossings, three watering systems and over 8,000 feet of fencing to exclude cattle from streambanks and woodlots. These will reduce sediment and nutrient loads in streams throughout the watershed and improve water quality in downstream communities. Additional tree and wildflower plantings will support wildlife and much needed pollinators.

So how did we get here? This project began with cooperating landowners. Yes, Conservation District staff held informational meetings and reached out to landowners. Project partners like the Natural Resource Conservation Service and Partners for Fish and Wildlife brought technical expertise to aid in conservation planning and engineering. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection provided over \$207,000 through Growing Greener grant program. Contractors moved earth installed practices. None of these would be possible if not for landowners that valued our soil and water resources enough to try new things on their farms and properties.

We at the Conservation District are very proud of this project and the soil and water health improvements. We are very thankful to the landowners that cooperated with us on the project. Finally, we are hopeful that other landowners, in all of Greene County's watersheds, will be inspired to take similar actions to protect our shared soil and water resources. For more information about this project or how you can get involved in future projects, contact the Conservation District at 724-852-5278.



# Erosion and Sedimentation Pollution Control

## Erosion and Sedimentation Pollution Control Program: Year In Review: 2019

The goal of this program is to protect Greene County’s soil and water resources by monitoring and maintaining soil erosion and sedimentation. The conservation district maintains a delegation agreement with the PA Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) which empowers our office to administer earth disturbance and water obstruction and encroachment permits. Our office has been tasked with inspections of these permits to ensure compliance is being met with the clean streams laws. The GCCD has chosen not to partake in the enforcement actions but merely administer the programs. When compliance is not being met, and enforcement actions are needed, the PA DEP is contacted.

Sediment is one of the top pollutants to our waterways. The chapter 102 (earth disturbance) and chapter 105 (water obstruction and encroachment permits) are tools that are used to protect our streams and wetlands from accelerated erosion. Erosion is a natural process, but when human activity (construction activities) cause erosion you get what is called accelerated erosion.

Best management practices (BMP’s) are controls and/or activities (silt-fence, grass seed and mulch, etc.) that help minimize the effects of accelerated erosion/sedimentation as well as stormwater to our waterways. Anyone proposing or conducting earth disturbance activities is required to implement and maintain these BMP’s. Permits are required for various earth disturbance activities, based on the size and the type of the project. A National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit is required when one acre or more of earth disturbance occurs over the life of the project. Erosion and Sediment Control General Permits (ESCGP-2) are required for projects associated with oil and gas activities that disturb five or more acres. Permits are also required for work in or near a stream or wetland. There are many types of permits depending upon the type of work that is proposed. It is always best to contact our office if there are any questions on a permit being required.

2019 Chapter 102/105 & NPDES Program Accomplishments	
Plans Received & Reviewed	110
Inspections & Sites Visited	221
NPDES Permits Issued	7
ESCGP-2 Permits Issued	4
E&S Plans Issued	18

Chapter 105 General Permits Issued	
GP-1 – Fish Habitat Enhancement Structures	2
GP-2—Small docks and boat launching ramps	0
GP-3—Bank rehab/protection & gravel bar removal	10
GP-4—Intake/outfall structure	1
GP-5—Utility line stream crossing	27
GP-6—Agricultural crossings and ramps	2
GP-7—Minor road crossings	13
GP-8—Temporary road crossings	27
GP-9—Agricultural activities	2
Chapter 102 Fees	\$174,500.00
Chapter 105 Fees	\$71,100.00
Total 102/105 Fees Received:	\$245,600.00
Funds Collected for PADEP Disturbed Acreage Fee ** These Fees go directly to the PADEP and are not kept by the GCCD.	\$61,200.00

### Some of the larger projects received in 2019:

#### NexGen Facility Development

A large building development located in Evergreene Park.

#### Hill Top Pipeline Project

A 12” gas-line to provide natural gas to the Hill Top Energy Center Power Plant located in Cumberland Township that is currently under construction.

#### Wisecarver Park

A large earthmoving project to construct multiple ball fields and recreational areas around Wisecarver Dam in Franklin Township.

#### Dilliner Dollar General

Proposed at the intersection of Holbert Stretch Road and Bobtown Road.

#### Cumberland Refuse Stream and Wetland Mitigation

Streambank protection and fish habitat enhancement structures located along Whiteley Creek in Greene and Whiteley Townships.

# West Nile Virus and Tick Surveillance 2019

2019 was a slower year compared to last year for West Nile Virus (WNV) surveillance. Traps were set weekly starting at 9 sites through the county, mostly sewage treatment plants. The mosquitoes that are most common to carry WNV (*Culex pipiens* & *Culex restuans*) are attracted to the sewage smell.

From May 6th – September 29th, our office conducted the surveillance and ended the year with a total of 2 positive mosquito samples of West Nile Virus (WNV), much better than last year with a reported 31 positives. That being said, less than 1% of all mosquitoes carry West Nile Virus. 80% of people have no symptoms if infected with West Nile Virus. Normally, children and the elderly are the ones that show symptoms (flu symptoms).

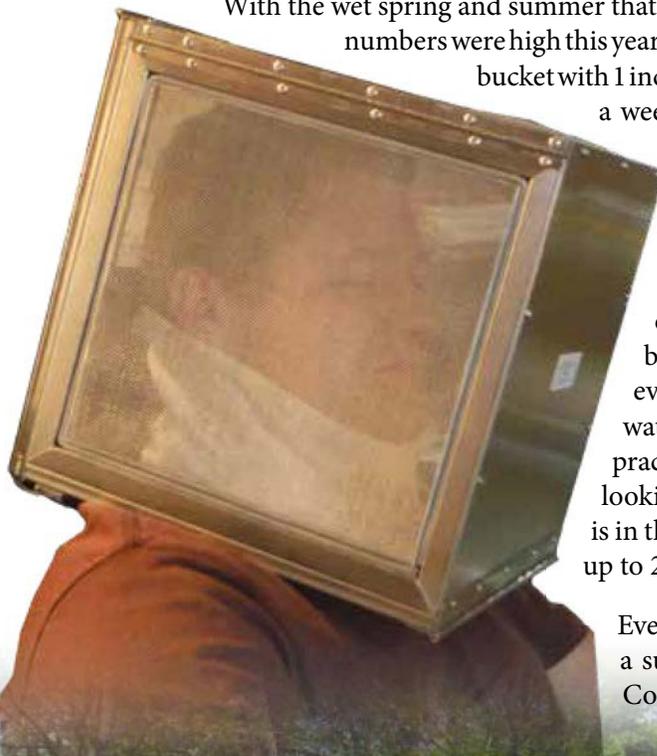
Tick drags were also added this year, in search of nymph ticks (Second Stage of Ticks life). To find them we used white felt to drag, the ticks would then attach themselves to when we walked by. The drags were conducted throughout the county's game lands almost every week on sunny days. Luckily there were not many nymph ticks as they are common carriers of Lyme Disease, remember to check yourself after leaving the woods during the summer.

Mosquitoes get the virus from biting infected birds, then transfer it with their next blood meal. WNV cannot be transferred by human to human contact, but can be transferred with a blood transfusion if infected. If you see a suspicious dead game bird (Hawk, Crow, Owl, etc.), this could be an indicator for WNV. You can contact our office if you find a suspicious dead game bird and if found soon enough, can be sent to be tested.

With the wet spring and summer that we endured, it wasn't a shock that mosquito numbers were high this year. It doesn't take much water to produce them, a bucket with 1 inch of water can produce over 1,000 mosquitoes a week. This is an example that can take us back

to the best way to fight mosquitoes and WNV, Prevention! If you can prevent the mosquitoes from breeding nearby, you will have a much better chance of not getting bit. Keep the gutters clean, get rid of old tires, dump out and turn over any buckets, wheel barrows, change the water in bird baths every week, anything that can hold water should be investigated. Also, when practical, wear long sleeves and use bug spray. When looking for bug spray, check the labels to see what percentage of "DEET" is in them. The higher the percentage, the better it will work. Some of the sprays have up to 25% DEET or higher.

Even though mosquito and WNV were low all over the county this year, it was still a successful year. No human, bird, or veterinary cases were reported in Greene County.



# West Greene FFA - 2019 Highlights

## Keystone Degrees - January 2019

Six members of the West Greene FFA Chapter at West Greene High School earned their Keystone Degree this year. Members were awarded their Keystone Degree at the PA Farm Show on January 7th, 2019.

406 FFA members from across the state received Keystone Degrees at the Pennsylvania FFA Mid-Winter Convention at the Pennsylvania Farm Show. Only high school juniors and seniors or graduates in their third year of membership are eligible to apply for the Keystone Degree. The candidates must have demonstrated leadership abilities and earned or productively invested at least \$1,000 and/or worked at least 300 hours in a supervised agricultural experience program. Just 3 percent of the more-than 8,000 Pennsylvania FFA members qualify each year for a Keystone Degree.



*Members from left to right are:*

**Kaden Bennington**, junior, earned his degree with entrepreneurship projects on Market Swine, Lambs, Goats and Rabbits. **Savannah Pettit**, senior, earned her degree with entrepreneurship projects on Market Steers, Swine, Lambs, and Goats. **Avery Berdine**, junior, earned her degree with entrepreneurship projects on Market Steers, market lambs, and breeding heifers. **Haleigh Thomas**, senior, earned her degree with entrepreneurship projects on Market Lambs, Swine, and Goats. **Courtney Ross**, senior, earned her degree with entrepreneurship projects on Market Swine, Lambs, Goats and Rabbits. **Makenzie Thomas**, senior, earned her degree with entrepreneurship projects on Market Swine, Lambs, and Rabbits.

## FFA Jacket Scholarship – January 2019

Five members of the West Greene FFA Chapter at West Greene High School were awarded their first official FFA jackets at the PA Farm Show on January 7, 2019.

365 FFA members from across the state received their official FFA jacket at the Pennsylvania FFA Mid-Winter Convention at the Pennsylvania Farm Show. The PA FFA Alumni association works with supporters to sponsor jackets for freshmen members who are just beginning their FFA experience. These members competed in an essay contest and were selected by a committee of FFA alumni to receive their jackets.

**Recipients were: Neveah Dudas** –of Waynesburg, **Jordan Jacobs** –of Graysville, **Jaime Jacobs** –of Graysville, **Keri Shipman** –of Rogersville, and **Kiley Meek** –of Holbrook.

## American Degree Recipient – October 2019

One member of the West Greene FFA Chapter at West Greene High School earned their American Degree this year. Members were awarded their American Degree's at the National FFA Convention on November 2nd, 2019.

At the 2019 National FFA Convention & Expo, a record of 4,353 FFA members were recognized on stage as American FFA Degree recipients. The American FFA Degree is awarded each year to less than one percent of FFA members, making it the organization's highest honors. FFA members who have demonstrated the highest level of commitment to the FFA and made significant accomplishments in their supervised agricultural experiences are eligible for the American FFA Degree.

Only students who have graduated from high school 12 months prior to the national convention the degree will be granted. The candidates must have earned at least \$10,000 and productively invested at least \$7,500 or earned and productively invested \$2,000 and worked 2,250 hours in a supervised agricultural program.

Caitlin Orndorff, 2017 graduate and member of West Greene FFA, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Corbly and Christy Orndorff of Waynesburg, earned her degree with entrepreneurship projects on breeding draft horses, laying hens, and her placement project at the Valley View Farm – Orndorff Event Barn where she organizes events and is the lead for a horse drawn carriage. Caitlin is currently pursuing a degree in business administration and minor in management from The California University of Pennsylvania.

*The American FFA Degree program is proudly supported by Case IH, Elanco and Syngenta.*



# West Greene FFA - 2019 Highlights

## Students Travel to National FFA Convention

9 FFA Members and both of their Advisors went to the 92nd National FFA Convention in October 2019. Students participated in the Career and Expo hall, went on various industry tours, and attended workshops. Students were also in attendance at the National FFA Sponsored Concert and Rodeo. West Greene FFA Members had the opportunity to tour the Umbarger Show Feeds Facility. The students were able to learn about camaraderie, leadership, and the future of the National FFA Organization.

### **The FFA Mission:**

*FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.*



## Members Travel to the PA FFA State Convention

3 Members of the West Greene FFA travelled to the PA FFA State Convention in State College Pennsylvania. Brock Bedillion moved to State's in Extemporaneous Public Speaking, Benjamin Archer moved on in Senior Prepared Public Speaking and Zachary Frye moved on in Conservation Public Speaking.

Other members participating at States were: Makenzie Thomas, Savannah Pettit, Avery Berdine, Emily Cooke, Kaden Bennington, Courtney Ross and Keri Shipman. These students competed in Livestock Judging and Wildlife Contests. Savannah Pettit also participated in the Nominating Committee and interview candidates for FFA State Office.



Benjamin Archer, Karlie Wright



Zachary Frye, Karlie Wright



Brock Bedillion



State Convention Group

## Local Farmers Received State Honorary FFA Degrees

Richard and Janice Patton and James and Billie Cowell were nominated by the West Greene and Waynesburg FFA Chapters to receive the Pennsylvania FFA State Honorary Degree because of their dedication to our programs.

The purpose of the degree program is to recognize individuals who have rendered outstanding service to the agricultural education-FFA program.

These two couples have provided never-ending support to our programs and our students. We appreciate their efforts to help grow our students and glad they were able to be recognized at a State Level.



# 2019 Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road

2019 proved to be a very busy year for the Districts Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Roads Program. By years end a total of 24 projects were completed totaling \$857,692.65 and 6 projects were contracted totaling \$584,680.71. Since 1997 the district has participated in the Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Program and has managed to complete 88 projects and currently have 14 projects under contract. This program has allowed the district to apply funds directly to municipalities for road improvements that improve the water quality. In total since 1997 we have completed and contracted 46 miles of worksites, totaling \$4,286,562.84 in contracts and \$750,813.76 in municipal in-kind match.

This program is funded by two statewide programs, Section 9106 of the PA Vehicle Code and PA Act 89 of 2013, the PA Transportation Funding Bill. Both programs permit local county conservation districts the necessary funds to address environmental issues and provide maintenance practices that can be implemented on local dirt and gravel roads and low volume roads to correct those problems. Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance practices encouraged by the program allow the limited man-hour resources of townships to be focused on other issues in the municipality.

The program is turning out to be a great asset to the municipalities and we hope to ensure the program is utilized to its fullest extent. This program not only assists municipalities with their budgets but it keeps some of our local streams free of sediment.



*Jackson Township Culvert, Jones Road*



*Muddlick Road, Aleppo Township*



*Blacks Creek, Aleppo Township*



*Blacks Creek, Aleppo Township (2)*

# Cooperating Agency Contacts

## **GREENE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

Greene County Office Building  
3rd Floor  
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Mbelding@co.greene.pa.us  
Betsy McClure  
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Blair Zimmerman  
bzimmerman@co.greene.pa.us

## **FARM SERVICE AGENCY**

Michal E. Roup  
County Executive Director  
Washington/Greene County  
Farm Service Agency  
50 Old Hickory Ridge Road  
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Phone: 724-705-8127 or  
724-222-3060 ext. 2  
Fax: 855-847-3602  
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## **USDA / NRCS**

Phil Evans  
Lamont Furnace Service Center  
1359 Connellsville Road, Suite 10  
Lamont Furnace, PA 15456  
Bus: (724) 437-7971 ext 101  
E-mail: Phil.Evans@pa.usda.gov

## **PA FISH & BOAT COMMISSION**

Eric Davis  
236 Lake Road  
Somerset, PA 15501-1644  
Bus: (814) 445-8974  
E-mail: erdavis@pa.gov

## **PA GAME COMMISSION**

Steve Leiendecker  
SW Regional Field Office  
4820 Route 711  
Bolivar, PA 15923  
Bus: (724) 238-9523  
Email: sleiendeck@pa.gov

## **Penn's Corner RC&D Council**

Council Chair: Jonathan Burgess  
(Allegheny County)  
Allegheny County Conservation District  
River Walk Corporate Centre  
33 Terminal Way, Suite 325 B  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
Bus: (412) 241-7645  
Email: jburgess@accdpa.org

## **GREENE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Planning Commission  
Jeremy Kelly, Planning and Business  
Development Manager  
49 South Washington Street  
Fort Jackson Building  
Waynesburg, Pa 15370  
Bus: (724) 852-5300  
Email: jkelly@co.greene.pa.us

## **BUREAU OF FORESTRY**

Russell Gibbs, Service Forester  
PA Department of Conservation and  
Natural Resources  
Bureau of Forestry, Forbes State Forest  
10 Nickman Plaza  
Lemont Furnace, PA 15456  
Bus: (724) 437-7983  
E-mail: rugibbs@pa.gov  
www.dcnr.state.pa.us

## **PENN STATE COOPERATIVE**

26 West High Street, Room 1  
Waynesburg, PA 15370-1324  
Contact: Thomas Beresnyak  
teb119@PSU.EDU  
Bus: 724-627-3745  
Fax: 724-852-4318  
GreeneExt@psu.edu

## **SOUTHWEST PROJECT GRASS**

6024 Glades Pike, Suite 103  
Somerset, PA 15501  
Email: email@swprojectgrass.com  
Phone: Contact your local conservation  
district

## **PA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Southwest Regional Office  
400 Waterfront Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15322  
Bus: (412) 412-4000

## **DEP CALIFORNIA DISTRICT MINING OFFICE**

724-769-1100  
Surface or underground mining  
complaints

## **DEP OIL AND GAS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

412-442-4006  
Oil and gas complaints

## **US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS-PITTSBURGH DISTRICT**

412-395-7500  
Permitting, river and wetland issues

## **US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE**

814-234-4090

## **DEP EMERGENCY RESPONSE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS**

1-800-541-2050  
Chemical and oil spills from transport  
trucks, trains and industrial facilities

## **BUREAU DOG LAW ENFORCEMENT**

(717) 787-3062  
ra-doglaw@pa.gov

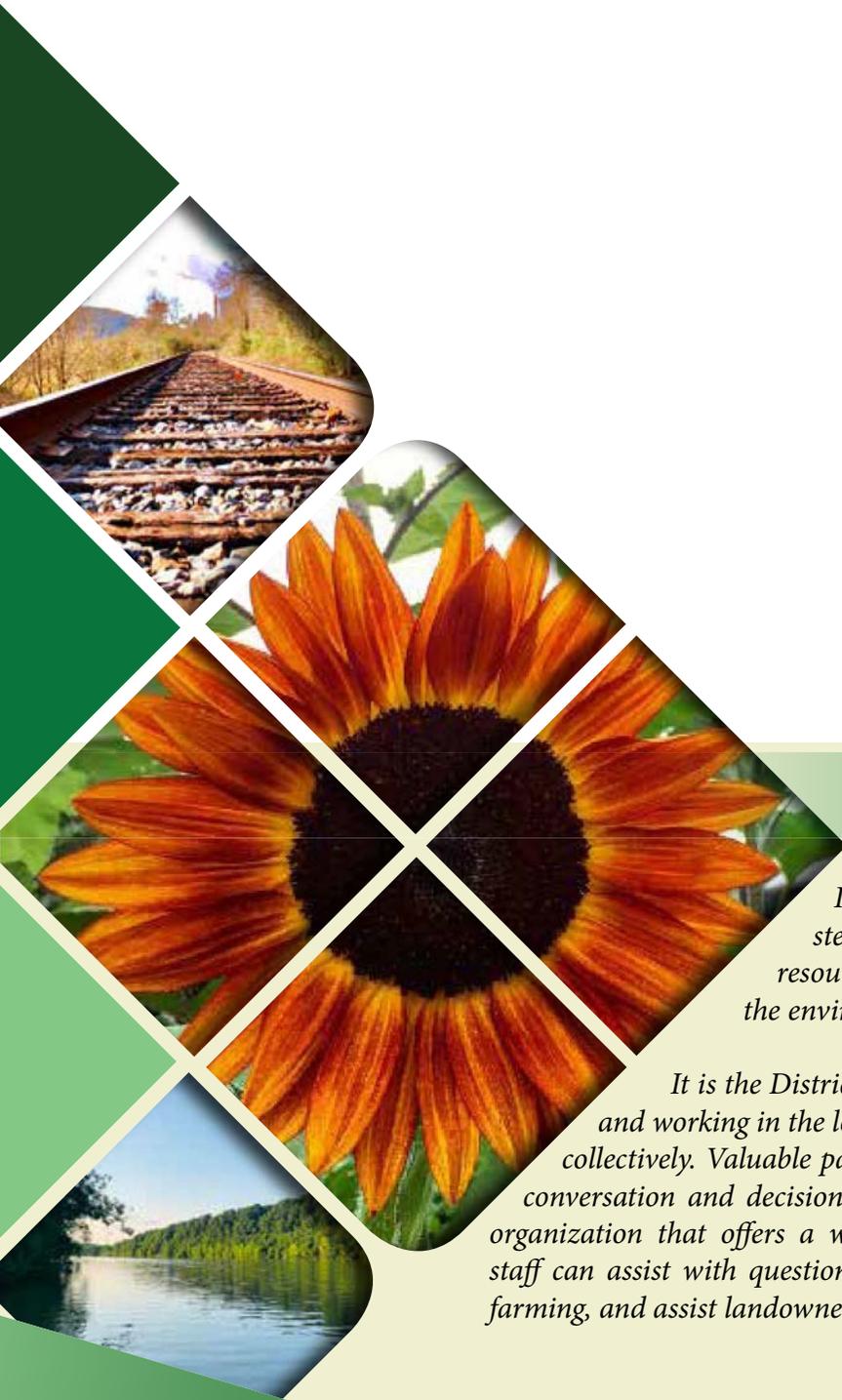
## **PENN DOT-GREENE COUNTY MAINTENANCE**

724-627-6131



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Waynesburg, PA 15370

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## Our Mission

*It is the mission of the District to commit to protection, stewardship, and conservation of the County's natural resources to ensure a wise balance between the protection of the environment and the benefit of the landowners of the County.*

*It is the District's belief that conservation works best when people living and working in the local area work together to manage their natural resources collectively. Valuable partnerships are formed when diversity is brought into the conversation and decision-making process. Our office is a conservation-oriented organization that offers a wide variety of expertise and knowledge. The District staff can assist with questions related to permitting, offer guidance on planning for farming, and assist landowners with various natural resource related topics.*