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Grant will aid Ruff Creek, Pumpkin Run

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Greene County Conservation District has received a \$182,033 grant from the state's Growing Greener program to address various stream impairments on Ruff Creek and Pumpkin Run.

The money will be used for projects aimed at improving water quality in the two streams, said Lisa Snider, manager of the county's conservation district.

Sections of Pumpkin Run have been determined to be "impaired" by the state Department of Environmental Protection, which earlier conducted a study there referred to as a Total Maximum Daily Load, or TMDL study.

TMDL is a calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a water body can receive and still safely meet water quality standards.

Some impairments to sections of Pumpkin Run, which is a relatively small watershed, result from nutrients in the water stemming from agricultural-related activities, Snider said.

Part of the Growing Greener grant will help pay for the construction of a protected feeding area in an area of a farm in the watershed where there is currently a problem with water run-off.

The stream in the area already is protected with stream-bank fencing to keep animals away from the water.

The protected feeding area, which will include a roof, drains and an agricultural ramp, will help keep nutrients and sediment in water run-off out of the stream, Snider said.

The grants will pay 75 percent of the project costs, and the landowner will cover the remaining 25 percent.

The project on Ruff Creek will involve re-shaping the bank along about a 500-foot section of the stream between Ruff Creek and Lippencott. This is a place where the stream has "very high banks and highly erodible soil," Snider said.

The work will involve lessening the slope of the bank and placing rock along the top of the slope to prevent erosion. Downed trees also will be removed and the area will be seeded, planted and fenced, she said.

Snider said the conservation district is always looking for opportunities to help landowners address issues that impact streams and water quality.

Property owners who would like assistance can call the conservation district at 724-852-5278.