

District Digest

The BCCD Newsletter



BERKS COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

DISTRICT COMPLETES INNOVATIVE PROJECT

The Berks County Conservation District (BCCD) is excited to announce the completion of a project that began many years ago. In 2008, the BCCD received funding from the PA Department of Environmental Protection's Growing Greener II Program for a Stormwater Best Management Practice (BMP) Retrofit Park at its offices at the Berks County Agricultural Center in Bern Township, PA. The BMP Retrofit Park will serve as an educational area dedicated to the protection of our water resources and the organisms that inhabit them. Best Management Practices are physical structures and non-structural practices for stormwater infiltration and water quality management. This project is a concentration of working examples of BMPs to demonstrate their capabilities and how they can be incorporated into the landscape. Visitors, such as schools, elected and government officials, designers, engineers, contractors, and families, can visually learn about stormwater issues and solutions by visiting the BCCD's project at the Agricultural Center. Information will be communicated to visitors by either a self-guided tour or a BCCD facilitated tour.



Photos above: The BMP Project Tours offer a in depth look at the various options available to prevent stormwater pollution.

Photos below: The photo on the left is a photo of the Ag Center plaza before the Retrofit project began. The photo on the right is a photo of the plaza after the project was completed.

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The BMPs chosen for the property were a diversified assortment of practices that could be implemented at other commercial sites and even residential properties. The BMPs include: a rain garden (*pictured top-right*), a porous paver plaza walkway, porous concrete, porous asphalt parking lot (*pictured middle-right*), bio-infiltration beds, rain barrels, porous parking pavers, and a Terre-Kleen Unit (*pictured bottom-right*). Increased management of the Agricultural Center's stormwater has reduced the impacts to the Unnamed Tributary to the Plum Creek, which ultimately flows into the Tulpehocken Creek. If you are interested in learning more about the BMPs that the BCCD installed or taking a tour of the project please contact the BCCD at 610-372-4657.

Submitted by Kate O'Brien



**Berks County Conservation
District**
1238 County Welfare Road
Suite 200
Leesport, PA 19533
610-372-4657

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*Watershed Specialist/Env. Educator***MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGER:
NEW KID ON THE BLOCK!**

My name is Dan Greig. I am the new Berks County Conservation District Manager. No, I am not a Berks County native, but please do not hold that against me. I was born and raised in Chester County. My previous work history was as the manager of the Chester County Conservation District. I worked for the CCCD for 31 years starting in a technical position and then as district manager. I have extensive Agricultural and Urban resource conservation experience.

Berks County is one of the most beautiful counties in the United States. The soils here are heritage soils, allowing a bountiful harvest of crops and if the land is already in agriculture, then it should be preserved. Berks County continues to be an agricultural leader in PA. Berks also has a rich history in its boroughs, municipalities, and city. This history presents unique dynamics, challenges and opportunities in resource conservation.

The Berks County Conservation District has wealth in a professional and knowledgeable staff to assist you. The District Board of Directors, an all volunteer group made of 7 Berks County citizens, provides endless hours of service in governance of the Conservation District. We are a service oriented organization "dedicated to the encouragement and instruction of the wise stewardship of the soils and waters of Berks so that present and future generations may have healthy land on which to live and work and clean water for drinking and recreation." Now many people will say that is a nice mission statement and a good thing to do. The Directors and staff take that statement one step further. We live it to provide the services to help you do your part to make the land and water resources viable to you now and in the future for your children or grandchildren.

I hope in my time with the Berks County Conservation District I can do my part to help the Conservation District meet its goals and mission, with hard work, innovation, empowerment, motivation, and partnerships.

I offer this invitation: visit the Berks County Conservation District office. See what your local Conservation District is really like.

Thanks,
Dan Greig

MEET THE NEW AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION TECHNICIAN

Jeff Overstreet was born and raised in Salem County, NJ. Upon graduating from West Virginia University with a Bachelor of Science in Forest Resources Management, Jeff moved back to the family farm in Virginia and began a career in industrial forestry/silviculture where he was involved in timber harvesting, site preparation, and timber appraisals for both private and industrial woodlands. Jeff and his wife moved to West Chester while Jeff worked for Peco Energy in the vegetation management department. In 2008, Jeff earned a Master of Science degree in Aquatic Biology at West Chester University. Jeff is looking forward to bringing his resource management experience and education to Berks County.



New District Manager, Dan Greig (left), discusses invasive plants with the new Agricultural Conservation Technician, Jeff Overstreet (right).



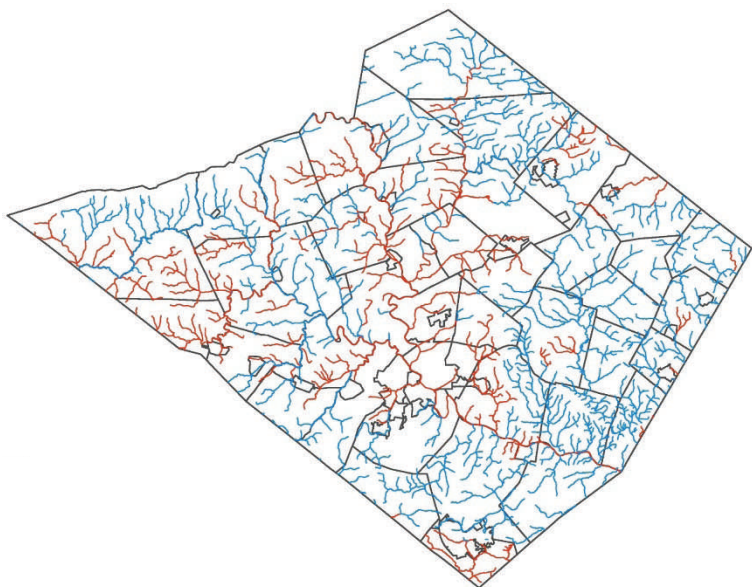
FEMA FLOODPLAIN ORDINANCE UPDATE

The Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) has recently announced that the deadline for Municipalities to adopt a compliant Floodplain Ordinance has been pushed back. The Letter of Final Determination (LFD) is now anticipated to be released on February 16, 2012. Municipalities will be given six months after the LFD is issued to have adopted a compliant Floodplain Ordinance. In the event that a municipality fails to adopt a new compliant ordinance, then residents within the floodplain areas will not be able to purchase floodplain insurance through the National Floodplain Insurance Program (NFIP).

DCED has contracted with the Berks county Conservation District to assist 50 of the 73 municipalities in Berks County in drafting and adopting a new floodplain ordinance. The revised floodplain ordinances must meet minimum FEMA requirements in order for residents to obtain floodplain insurance through NFIP. The revised ordinances are required as part of the updated, digitized maps and requirements of FEMA and the National Floodplain Insurance Program. The District is pleased to announce that many of the municipalities have already submitted draft ordinances for the District's review. Upon receiving feedback from the District or DCED that their ordinance is compliant, the municipality will have to wait for the LFD, insert the effective map date, and then may begin the ordinance adoption process.

- Submitted by Eric Konzelmann

THE HEALTH OF BERKS COUNTY STREAMS



The map above shows the streams that flow through Berks County. The red lined streams are the streams that are considered impaired. The Blue lined streams are considered to be meeting their designated uses.

impaired, the PA DEP or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will determine the conditions that would return the water to a condition that meets its designated use.

Waterbody assessment and data evaluation are continuous processes. Changes on the land affect the health of Berks County streams. The Berks County Conservation District is here to assist the PA DEP in their efforts to monitor the streams of Berks County as well as assist you in addressing your questions and concerns about local streams. If you have a question about a stream near you, please contact the Berks County Conservation District at 610-372-4657 ext 5.

Do you ever wonder about the health of a nearby stream? The Berks County Conservation District addresses this question everyday while carrying out our various programs. Under the 1972 Clean Water Act, states are required to develop lists of impaired waters. The PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has an ongoing program to assess the quality of streams that are and are not attaining their *designated uses*. Designated uses are water quality terms and goals which can include supporting: aquatic life, fish consumption, recreation, and potable water supply.

The PA DEP then its findings in the *Pennsylvania Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Report Narrative*. This report lists the streams that are not attaining their designated use (or in other words are considered impaired) by surface water pollution. The list will also identify the reason for impairment. There are many different pollutants that can impair a stream. These impairments include sediment, nutrients, bacteria, and chemicals. After a stream has been determined to be

-Submitted by Kate O'Brien



DISTRICT BEGINS OUTREACH TO CHESAPEAKE BAY FARMS

In July, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Berks County Conservation District staff began an outreach effort to conduct educational site visits to agricultural operations in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. These outreach visits are a component of Pennsylvania’s Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) and are designed to increase awareness in the agricultural community of the current regulatory requirements for farm operations.

“Pennsylvanians have made great strides in working together to improve the health of our waterways and, specifically, the Chesapeake Bay,” DEP Secretary Mike Krancer said. “This partnership and outreach effort will only further our initiatives toward a healthier environment through education and teamwork.”

Agricultural erosion and sediment control regulations have been in place in Pennsylvania since 1972, when the Clean Streams Law was first enacted. However, on November 19, 2010, additions and changes to the regulations took effect. The Berks County Conservation District recognizes that these requirements are not universally known within the agricultural community, and the current outreach effort is an attempt to address this concern.

As part of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan, the Berks County Conservation District will undertake 100 farm visits per year to operators in the County. Berks County has an estimated 400 hundred farms in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, thus, it is the Conservation District’s goal to visit each of them in the next four to five years.

Berks County Conservation District staff will be available to answer any questions about regulatory programs, provide informational materials on these requirements and discuss options for technical and financial assistance that are available to support Pennsylvania’s farmers as they address environmental concerns.

For more information, please visit www.berkscd.com or call 610-372-4657.

-Submitted by Jeff Overstreet

WEST NILE VIRUS AND YOU

It has been over a decade now that Americans have been living with West Nile Virus (WNV) as a potential threat in their own back yards. It has even become part of school curriculum, with children reminding adults to get rid of standing water in their yards. The 2010 WNV season in Pennsylvania had the highest number of positive mosquitoes reported for the Commonwealth and this year is on track to beat that record. Every year, a handful of people get reported as human WNV cases in PA and a couple hundred people are reported throughout the nation. Late summer is the time of year that people are most at risk of contracting WNV. So, please do your part of reducing standing water and taking personal precautions against mosquito bites. To track WNV activity and the associated risk in your area visit: <http://berkscd.com/insect-mgmt/west-nile-virus-program/>

- Submitted by Bob Hopkins

BERKS COUNTY WNV TESTING

Year	Number of mosquitoes tested for WNV	Number of WNV positive mosquitoes	Berks positive for WNV?
2001	5951	43	yes
2002	15464	674	yes
2003	12138	954	yes
2004	11856	163	yes
2005	13258	276	no
2006	15464	234	yes
2007	15790	223	no
2008	15881	518	no
2009	15143	279	yes
2010	15188	1057	yes
2011*	11122*	726*	yes

*current as of 22 August 2011



AG CENTER CORNER

Penn State Master Gardeners Annual Fall Plant Sale!

Berks County Agricultural Center, County Welfare Road, Bern Township
Friday, September 9, Noon - 7 p.m. and
Saturday, September 10, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Master Gardeners will be on hand to offer information on planting techniques, soil preparation, use of native plants in the landscape, and plant care. Master Gardeners will help shoppers select the most appropriate plants for their needs and locations. The sale will feature a large variety of perennials, native plants, and woody ornamentals, including flowering shrubs. Vegetable gardeners will find five varieties of garlic bulbs for fall planting. Proceeds from the sale benefit more than two dozen Master Gardener volunteer projects in Berks County.

B.A.R.N Annual October Farm Tour

October 22, 2011 9 a.m. until 4p.m

Tour will feature farms and agricultural businesses in central Berks County. The theme this year is "Farming in the Heart of Berks." The event is sponsored by the Berks Agricultural Resource Network, a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote the county's agricultural industry and related food industries. The cost is \$10 per vehicle. There will be a dozen stops for tour participants to choose to visit at their own pace. Maps go on sale October 22nd at 8:30 a.m. at three locations: Reifsnnyder's Ag Center; Geissler Tree Farms; and the Berks County Heritage Center. For more information about the October Farm Tour, contact Sheila Miller, Berks Agricultural Coordinator, at 610-898-5482 or smiller@countyofberks.com

Penn State Extension

Berks County Equipment Rodeo & Landscape Update Meeting

For questions about **registration**, contact Dawn Knepp at 610-378-1327; dzk2@psu.edu
For questions about the **class content**, contact Andy Beck at 570-622-4225; awb123@psu.edu

September 19, 2011

9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Berks County 4-H Community Center

1238 County Welfare Rd

Leesport, PA 19533

PENN STATE



Cooperative Extension
College of Agricultural Sciences

GREEN OFFICE CORNER

Coffee Time!

The "life cycle" of a mug is about 3,000 uses – the equivalent uses in disposable paper or foam cups would produce 30 times more solid waste and 60 times more air pollution.

Writing It Down!

Annually Americans dispose of 770 tons of unnecessary plastic waste from disposable pens. Look for refillable pens made of recycled paper or timber, or from biodegradable bioplastic. Also choose pencils manufactured from sustainably harvested timber, wood substitutes such as recycled paper, old plastic cups, wood offcuts, or reclaimed denim.

Sleep Mode!

During a normal business day chances are there is an hour of time accumulated that your computer is not used – put it into sleep mode and that hour reduces its electricity consumption to less than 5 percent of full power.



ENVIROTHON WRAP UP

On May 5, 2011, The Berks County Conservation District held its annual high school Envirothon at Nolde State Forest. Twelve teams from local high schools competed in a competition that tested the students' knowledge on natural resource topics such as forestry, wildlife, soils, aquatics, and estuaries. The participating high schools were: Oley Valley, Governor Mifflin, Fleetwood, Boyertown, Kutztown, Twin Valley, and Tulpehocken. The winning team was Oley Valley's Team C-1. Oley Valley Team K-4 and Twin Valley D-2 took second and third place respectively. The winning team consisted of Amelia Howe, Kellsey Turner, Damian Oswald, Katie Beekman, and Nicole Lynch, along with their advisor Mr. Jeremy Deysher. **The Oley Valley team traveled to the Pennsylvania's state-wide competition where they attained an admirable 8th place!**

2012 Envirothon
Dates have been set!
Senior: May 1st
Junior: May 9th

Then on May 10th, the Berks County Conservation District held its middle school Envirothon. Sixteen middle school teams competed at Nolde State Forest. The middle schools that participated were: Oley Valley, Fleetwood, Exeter, North East, North West, South West, Commonwealth Connections Academy, and Tulpehocken. The winning team was Fleetwood Team A-1. Oley Valley Team C-1 and Oley Valley I-2 took second and third place respectively. **Congratulations to all of the students who participated in the 2011 Envirothon!**



Teams were hard at work identifying trees at the Forestry station during the Junior Envirothon!

-Submitted by Kate O'Brien

BANQUET RECAP

Chairman's Award

Rick Kauffman, Penn State Cooperative Extension

Farmer of the Year

Russell Guntz

Erosion Control Plan Preparer of the Year

Bob Stewartz, Stackhouse Bensinger, Inc.

Erosion Control Contractor, Developer or Project of the Year

Shiloh Road Relocation

Conservation Service Individual/Organization of the Year

Chris Shiery, Fleetwood Middle School Teacher

\$5,000 Scholarship Award

Amelia Howe

\$1,000 Scholarship Award

Alyssa Downs

\$1,000 Scholarship Award

Julie Schubert

Solon Phillips Memorial Scholarship Award

Martin Wolfskill

Pike Township Sportsman Association Scholarship Award

Judy Mohn

The Berks County Conservation District congratulates all of the award and scholarship winners from March's Annual Farm Service Agency / Conservation District Awards Banquet that was held at Fleetwood Grange!



FUTURE CONSERVATION LEADERS OF TOMORROW



These Don Hartman Conservation Leadership School Students quickly mastered Nolde’s low ropes course!

Each summer the Berks County Conservation District, along with the Department of Conservation of Natural Resources-Nolde State Forest, host the Don Hartman Conservation Leadership School. This past summer students from all over Berks County (and Pennsylvania) came to Alvernia University to learn about the potential effects that climate change could have on Berks County wildlife, vegetation, food production, and water resources. Students learned about these subjects while hiking at Hawk Mountain, visiting the Western Berks Water Authority and the Berks County Community Foundation’s green building, calculating their carbon footprints and interactively discussing agriculture and climate.

The Nolde State Forest Environmental Education Center provided the students with two days of action-packed activities. The students mastered their team work and leadership skills in the team building courses that Nolde offers. They then hiked around Nolde learning about invasive, nonnative species and how a changing climate can introduce a more favorable habitat for nonnative vegetation. This hike proved to be a good crash course in invasive plants as the next day the students performed their community service project by removing invasive wisteria from around the Nolde Forest Property. The fun-filled week wrapped up when the students presented what they had learned to their parents and family members!

A special thank you goes to the Don Hartman Conservation Leadership School Sponsors: Adeline Hartman, Perry Township Game Association, Tulpehocken Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Marion Rod and Gun Club, Mohnton Fish and Game, Womelsdorf Rod and Gun Club.

APPLES AND PUMPKINS WORD SEARCH



The first THREE people to send the word search back to the Berks County Conservation district with all the words correctly found will win a Berks County Conservation District reusable Tote Bag!



1. Circle each word you find that is in the below word bank.
2. Scan and email, fax, or mail the word search to the Berks County Conservation District.

Berks Co. Conservation District
 1238 County Welfare Road
 Suite 200
 Leesport, PA 19533
info@berkscd.com
 Fax: 610-478-7058

ACORN
 DECIO
 HUBBARD
 NIAGARA

BUTTERNUT
 GALA
 JONAGOLD
 REDDELICIOUS

CAMEO
 GRANNYSMITH
 MCINTOSH
 SPAGHETTI

CALENDAR

September	28th	1:00PM	BCCD Board Meeting	Berks Agricultural Center
October	15th	7:00-9:00AM	Legislative Breakfast	Berks Agricultural Center
	26th	1:00PM	BCCD Board Meeting	Berks Agricultural Center
November	16th	7:00-Noon	Engineers Workshop	Berks Agricultural Center
	30th	1:00PM	BCCD Board Meeting	Berks Agricultural Center
December	28th	1:00PM	BCCD Board Meeting	Berks Agricultural Center
January	3rd		Scholarship Essay Topic Announced	
	25th	1:00PM	BCCD Board Meeting	Berks Agricultural Center
February	29th	1:00PM	BCCD Board Meeting	Berks Agricultural Center

Our next Newsletter will cover these important upcoming spring events

- ◆ Farm Service Agency/Conservation District Banquet ◆ Seedling Sale ◆
- ◆ Spring Engineers and Operators Workshop ◆



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CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

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Suite 200
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