

District Digest

The BCCD Newsletter



**BERKS COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

WEST NILE VIRUS PREVALENT IN BERKS COUNTY

Submitted by: Kevin Witmier

As it has for the past decade, the Berks County Conservation District is continuing to conduct county-wide Mosquito surveillance and West Nile Virus testing again in 2012. Following a short winter and mild, wet spring, the mosquito season started with a bang and hasn't slowed down since. On May 3, a mosquito pool tested positive for West Nile Virus in Exeter Township - the earliest by nearly two weeks that the virus was ever found in the state, let alone Berks County, since the West Nile Program was created in PA in 2000. Since May, numbers of mosquito and bird positives have continued to rise and, by mid-July, reached **(see page 4)**

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BCCD RECOGNIZED WITH LEADERSHIP AWARD

Submitted by: Piper Sherburne, Chairperson Berks County Conservation District

On July 17th of this year, the State Conservation Commission presented our Berks County Conservation District with an award for Outstanding Leadership. Through the dedication and leadership of our Board of Directors and our partners we thought we had achieved remarkable success. It is quite an honor however, that those outside our County lines also recognize our efforts and agree.

Everywhere I look around me, I see displays of leadership not only in our Board and our manager, but also in our staff as well as they become more entrenched in our organization. There is a "hum" in our office that indicates an air of purpose and productivity. There is a renewed commitment.

My hope in the coming years is to take our District even further into uncharted territory. I would like our District to be the "Go To" place in the County for Agriculture Assistance and Source Water Protection. We are thinking about other funding possibilities, and ways to pilot new programs to enhance stewardship by partnering with other organizations through a stakeholder initiative. If we continue to co-operate as leaders and followers we can accomplish almost anything we want as a Conservation community. Not only can we protect our resources, we can promote the continued prosperity of our economy and our end users.

Let the good work continue!



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Agricultural Resource Conservationist
- M. Kathryn O'Brien
Watershed Specialist/Environmental Educator
- Kevin Witmier
West Nile Virus Technician

Meet the Staff!



From Left to Right: Bryan Withiam, Christine Esterline, Kevin Witmier

NEW TO THE STAFF:

Bryan Withiam is an Agricultural Resource Conservationist for the Chesapeake Bay and Tulpehocken Watersheds. He is a graduate of Shippensburg University and has a degree in Geoenvironmental Studies.

Christine Esterline is an Agricultural Resource Conservationist for the eastern half of the County. She is a recent graduate from Delaware Valley College with a degree in Environmental Science.

Kevin Witmier is the District's West Nile Virus Technician. He is a graduate of Muhlenberg College with a degree in Environmental Science.

In Memory: of Henry E. Bohn, Jr.
(October 13, 1928 - April 8, 2012)



Henry E. Bohn, Jr., a lifelong farmer and conservationist passed away on April 8th, 2012. Henry had worked not only on his farm, but in various positions with the USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service until his retirement in 1989. Afterwards, he remained active in conservation by serving first as a Director, then as an Associate Director, on the board of the Berks County Conservation District. This past March, the Berks County Conservation District honored Henry with the Chairman's Award at their annual Conservation Awards Banquet.

A MOMENT OF RECOGNITION

Submitted by: Damian Painter

The Berks County Conservation District and the Farm Service Agency took the opportunity to recognize conservation leaders during their annual Conservation Awards Banquet on Monday, March 19th. Leaders in industry, farming, and the public sector were honored for their efforts to help the cause of conservation in Berks County. Not only were today's leaders awarded, but tomorrow's leaders were given a helping hand in the form of nearly \$7,000 in scholarships. The banquet was held at the Pike Township Sportman's Association and featured Roger Mallon in character as Mark Twain for the evening's entertainment. Watershed Specialist Kate O'Brien gave a presentation on the value of rain barrels.

Henry E. Bohn Jr. was presented the Chairman's Award for lifelong involvement in agriculture and conservation. Henry worked for the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service until his retirement in 1989. He has spent many years

serving the BCCD, first as a Director, then as an Associate Director.

Other award winners include the Paul Martin Farm for Farmer of the Year, Stackhouse Bensinger Inc. for Erosion Control Plan Preparer of the year, Barwis Construction, LLC for Erosion Control Contractor, Developer, or Project of the Year, Dave Renninger for Conservation Individual of the Year, and Blue Mountain Wildlife, Inc. for Conservation Organization of the Year.

Scholarships totaling \$6,500 were awarded to area students who are pursuing conservation related careers. This year's selection of scholarship winners was particularly hard, as so many qualified students applied. All of our winners, and applicants, should be proud of their accomplishments.

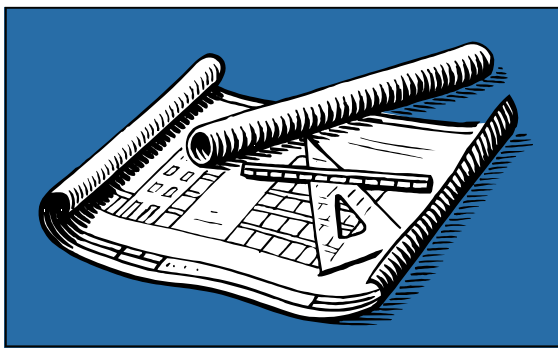
Alaina Weinheimer, a senior at Wilson High School who plans to eventually obtain a doctorate in environmental science, was awarded the \$4,000 Berks County Conservation

District Scholarship. Among other activities, Alaina is a member of Student Government, vice president of her School's National Honor Society, co-founder of the Wilson Environmental Club, and is involved in cross-country and track. Academically, she is in the top one percent of her class and has been accepted to Penn State's Schreyer Honors College and the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences.

Other scholarship winners include Ashley Mohn of Conrad Weiser High School for the Solon Phillips Memorial Scholarship, Megan Gribb of Drexel University for the BCCD Scholarship, and Alexandra Rae Wagner of Wilson High School for the Memorial Endowment Scholarship.

To read more about the banquet and award winners visit the events page on our website, <http://berkscd.com>.

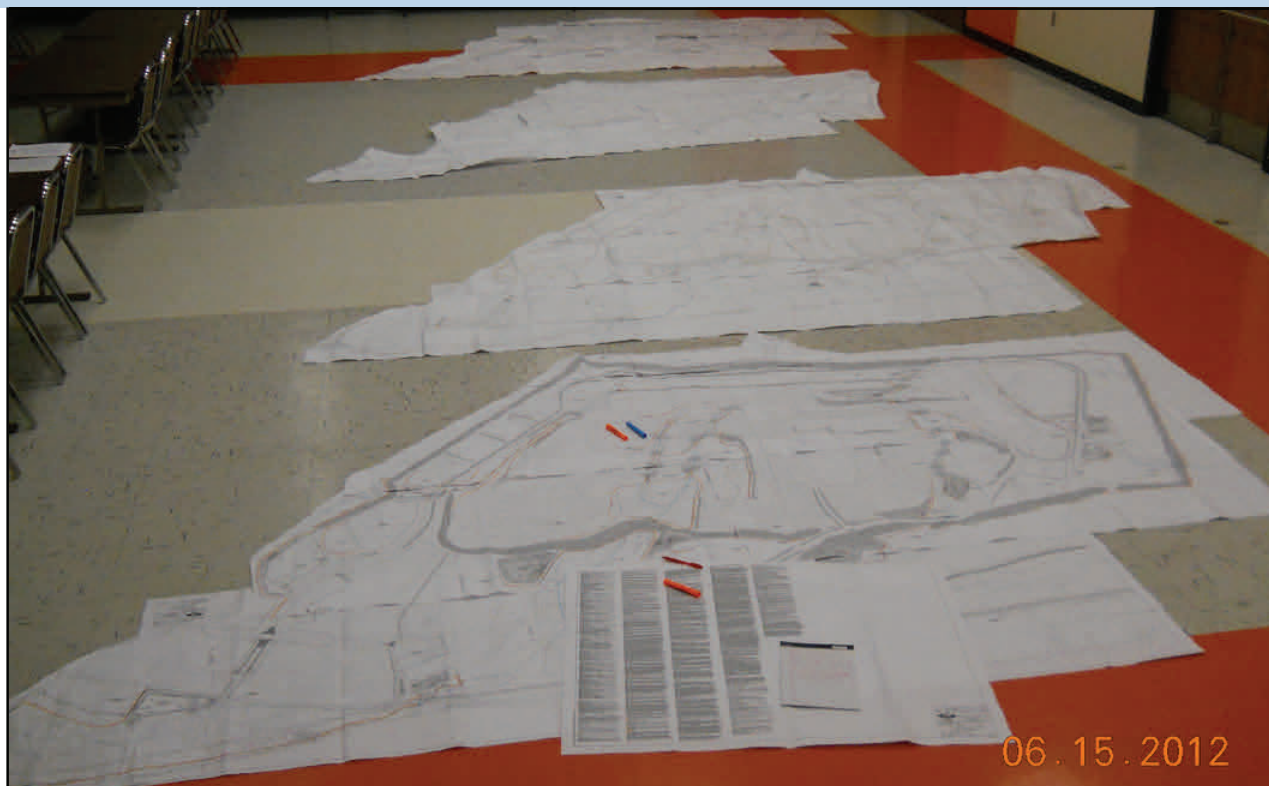
BCCD FALL DESIGNER'S WORKSHOP COMING THIS FALL



The BCCD Fall Designer's Workshop is scheduled for Thursday October 11, 2012! This workshop will be held at Alvernia College at the McGlenn Conference Center, and will include a walking tour of Alvernia's recent constructed wetlands basin retrofit. The lectures and tour will focus on the science, design, and installation of constructed wetlands, and will highlight the Alvernia project and its successful and cost-effective solution to a basin damaged when the Angelica Lake Dam failed. Other E&S and Post-Construction Stormwater topics will be included; the full schedule, pricing, and registra-

tion information will be available in September. Please check the website www.berkscd.com in September for more information, or email tammy.bartsch@berkscd.com to be added to our workshop mailing list. This will be an 8-hour workshop with 8 PDH's available, there will also be the option to attend for a half day (morning or afternoon) to earn 4 PDH's. See you in October!





Submitted by: Eric Konzelmann

Photo: This was the largest plan sent in for review in recent history (if not ever) at BCCD. Each of the four plans shown above are comprised of fourteen large size sheets and had to be reviewed in the Ag Center's auditorium due to space constraints. There are two erosion and sediment control plans and two Stormwater management plans shown above. Separate reviews are conducted for each type of plan under a DEP delegation agreement. The District compared the original submission to the revised submission during this review. The area of the entire site is 653 acres with 375 acres of proposed disturbance. The proposed use for the site is a large-scale race track system with accessory buildings and a large sound wall surrounding the site. Numerous undisturbed areas of the site will be farmed in the future as they are currently.

WEST NILE VIRUS

(continued from page 1)

numbers unprecedented in the program's history.

As of early August, West Nile Virus, from both mosquito and avian samples, has been detected in twenty-seven different municipalities across Berks County. Adult trapping, as well as larval mosquito sampling and control, take place on a daily basis. In addition, due to rising infection rates in mosquito populations, the Conservation District, in conjunction with PA DEP, has been conducting evening adul-



Culex Mosquitos, the genera of mosquitos primarily responsible for the transmission of West Nile Virus, are most active for a short period immediately after sunset. It is at that time when precautions should

ticiding operations one to two times per week where necessary. Surveillance and control will continue throughout the rest of the summer months and wrap up sometime in late October.

be taken against mosquito bites. Use insect repellents that contain DEET and apply them by closely following the instructions on the label. Additionally, take the time to try to minimize the amount of standing water around your home to reduce the amount of mosquito breeding habitat near you. Dead birds (crows, ravens, blue jays, and raptors) may continue to be submitted for West Nile Virus testing up until October 1. Finally, if you are experiencing flu like symptoms that require you to see a physician, be sure to request that you are tested for West Nile Virus.

DON HARTMAN CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP SCHOOL

Submitted by: Kate O'Brien

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 seventeen students from all over Berks County (and Pennsylvania) came to Alvernia University to learn more about Pennsylvania Wildlife. The students spent five days around the Alvernia Campus, French Creek State Park, and Lehigh Valley Zoo learning about various aspects of native PA wildlife and habitat. At the end of the week, the students constructed a turtle raft at Angelica Park so that local turtles will be able to sun themselves on the raft. We enjoyed presentations from Red Creek Wildlife Center,

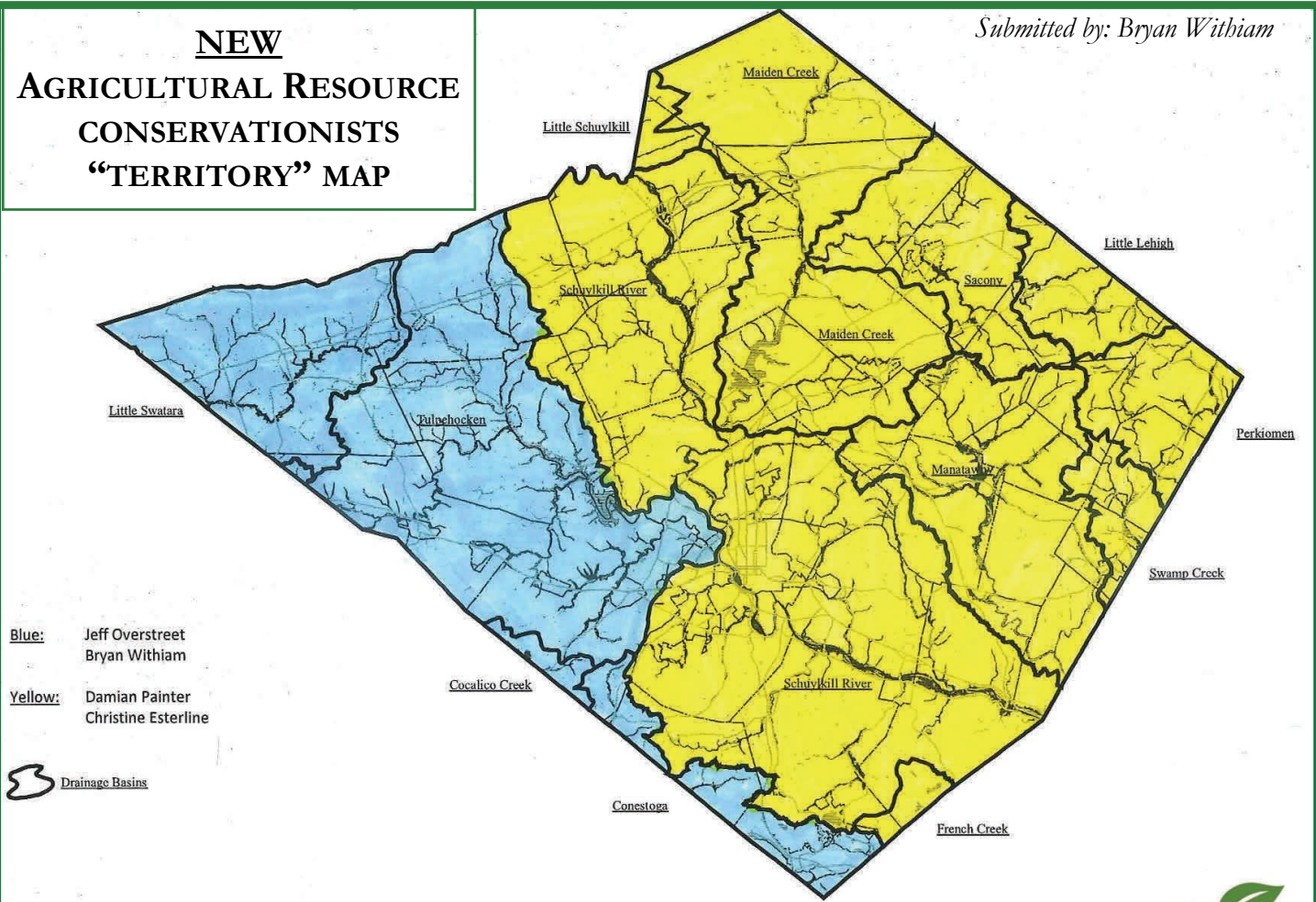


The 2012 Don Hartman Conservation Leadership School enjoys the day at the Lehigh Valley Zoo

Albright College, Leave No Trace, the PA Game Commission, the Mengel Natural History Society, and the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. 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 Twp. Game Association, Tulpehocken Chapter Trout Unlimited, Inc., Marion Rod & Gun Club, Mohnton Fish and Game, Womelsdorf Rod and Gun, Brentwood Industries Inc., East Coast Erosion Blankets, LLC, and Strausstown Rod & Gun Club.

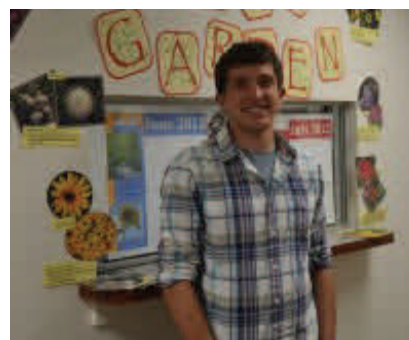


Notes from our Summer Interns



Well my name is Josh Seidel and I was an intern here at the Conservation District from May 15th till July 19th. What did I do here? The answer is I learned from experiencing what the dedicated and steadfast staff here at the Conservation District does on a daily basis. It was a lot to absorb, but all of the staff worked with me to gain as much knowledge as I could about the Erosion and Sediment Controls, Agricultural conservation plans, Agricultural nutrient plans, and watershed education programs such as the Don Hartman Conservation Leadership School. I also got the Google Earth project up in running which Holly Kaplan had designed, which will now allow the E&S technicians to look up sites using Google Earth to view the location and information pertaining to the permits. The Agricultural team is doing the same, but with their farms, which I did give advice on from my work with Google Earth. I also feel like I have become an E&S technician as I will check out construction sites that I see to look for E&S controls, because I feel it is important from all I have learned to protect our water system from the threat of Erosion downstream. I also will miss the Conservation District staff as I go back to Slippery Rock University to complete my final year for Environmental Geoscience; Environmental Science, but I hope to come back sometime in the near future.

Sincerely,
Josh Seidel



My name is Kyle Rezac and I was an intern here at the Berks County Conservation District during the summer of 2012. One of my main projects while I was here was to design a brochure for the stormwater best management practices tour. This idea was sparked from the 2012 Environmental Education Grants Program which called for funding of an educational outdoor classroom/kiosk. This brochure will have a graphic of the area with a walking trail to guide visitors safely around the property while being able to view the stormwater BMP's that are in place. Along with the graphic, the brochure will also have descriptions of each BMP to explain how they work and how it impacts the environment. The overall goal of this project is to prevent nonpoint source pollution through education at the Berks County Agricultural Center. I also gained a lot of exposure to a wide range of activities by shadowing members of the various departments within the Conservation District such as the Environmental Educator, the Ag team, and the E&S team. I've learned about conservation plans, nutrients plans, erosion and sediment controls, and how to do compliance checks and inspections. Another aspect of the conservation district I found interesting was being able to see the governmental process that the BCCD works within through board meetings. I really enjoyed my time here at the BCCD and I can't thank the staff enough for being so helpful and making this experience a great one.

Sincerely,
Kyle Rezac

Affiliate Members

Berks County Conservation District would like to thank our 2012 Affiliate Members. With your Affiliate Membership contribution you aided the continuation and growth of vital programs that protect Berks County's natural resources. To learn more about becoming an Affiliate Member visit: www.berkscd.com/about-us/district-affiliates

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MUNICIPAL SEPARATE STORM SEWER SYSTEM PERMITS

*Submitted by: Brian Boyer,
Public Member, BCCD Board of Directors*

The latest acronym you may have been hearing in the news is MS4 or Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System. It is associated with the next phase of a PADEP permit process to monitor stormwater discharges to water bodies. In Berks County a total of 48 permittees, which consists of municipalities, Berks County and the Reading Regional Airport, are considered to contain urbanized areas and must submit a permit application to the PADEP or request a waiver of the

requirements. The applications are due September 14, 2012. The MS4 permit requires permittees to prepare a stormwater management program to satisfy six MCM's (minimum control measures) to protect water quality and to reduce the discharge of pollutants.

Over 30 of the municipalities in Berks County are intending to participate in the Berks County MS4 Steering Committee. The committee was formed in order for the municipalities and their engineers to collaborate in meeting the permit requirements.

The Berks County Conservation District (BCCD) has also been an active partner and committee member.

The BCCD will be assisting the permittees in meeting three of their MCM's. Our Watershed Specialist will be providing public education and outreach on stormwater impacts. Our Urban Team will be reviewing plans and providing periodic site inspections for construction site stormwater runoff control and post-construction stormwater management activities.

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAM ON CHAPTER 102 AND MANURE MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Submitted by: Christine Esterline

The Agricultural Conservationists at Berks County Conservation District, are busy with Education Outreach on Chapter 102 requirements throughout the County. Currently, the efforts are focused in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and will expand throughout the county to reach other watersheds. Last year, the staff visited over 70 operators in the Chesapeake Bay with educational outreach. The staff has plans to complete visits in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and extend to other watersheds in the County.

These short visits give the operators one on one time with the District staff member to learn about the District, the regulations that pertain to the farm and knowledge about assistance available to the operators. During the visit, the operator receives a helpful packet with a Manure Management Manual and handouts on erosion and sediment control requirements.

The Department of Environmental Protection developed the Manure Management Manual to assist small operations that do not require an ACT 38 Nutrient Management Plan to develop their only manure management plan for their operations. In October 2011, anyone who has equivalent animal weight to one horse on their property is required complete a Manure Management Manual. These manuals are available at the Conservation District and the staff can guide the operators through the packet. The Manure Management Manual helps operators to walk through the plan writing steps and perform accurate record keeping.

Any operations that plow, till or perform no-till practices over 5,000 square feet must write an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan. In 2010, the regulations were amended to include Animal Heavy Use Areas (AHUA) that disturb over 5,000 square feet. These areas include locations where animals con-

tinue to congregate and vegetation cannot be established or maintained. Examples of these areas include barnyards, feedlots, exercise areas and pathways. The handout is available to assist operators to write their own plans for their operations. A Conservation Plan that is current to the practices on the operation exceeds the minimum requirements of the Erosion and Sediment Plan.

The Agricultural Conservationists at Berks County Conservation District will continue educational outreach to help make operators aware of regulations that pertain to their farm. If you are an operator that would like this information please contact the District to schedule a short visit and receive the helpful packet. The staff will continue traveling across the County in attempt to help the local operations to meet their minimum requirements.



WATER DROPS: SEVEN STEPS TO YOUR VERY OWN RAIN GARDEN!

Submitted by: *Kate O'Brien*

A rain garden is a planted depression that allows rainwater runoff from impervious areas (like roofs, driveways, walkways, parking lots, and compacted lawns), the opportunity to be absorbed into the ground. The seven steps below are a great outline if you are considering if a rain garden is right for you!

1) Choose a location.

Your rain garden should be at least 10 feet away from building foundations, underground utilities, and septic system drain fields. Keep a 1-2 foot grass buffer between any downspouts and your garden to prevent washout. The location should receive water from your roof, driveway, etc.

2) Measure your garden.

This is most often the most difficult part for home owners as the size of the garden depends on your

space limitations, soil, and drainage area. Some groups recommend that your rain garden should be 20-30% of the drainage area it is treating. Rain gardens are versatile – they can be any shape you want. It should be graded slightly so water flows towards the center, about six inches lower in the center than the edges. (this website can help you determine the size and depth of your garden: <http://raingardenalliance.org/>)

3) Check the drainage.

It is important that your rain garden drains quickly. Determine if water can infiltrate fast enough by digging a hole approximately 8 inches deep and pouring in a few inches of water. If the water drains slower than an inch an hour, you will need to add a layer of gravel to the bottom of your rain garden (at least 6 inches).

4) Prepare your soil (if needed).

The ideal soil is a mix of two parts sand, one part topsoil (no clay), and one part compost. Loosen the soil to a depth of 2 feet.

5) Choose your plants.

Select a variety of native, low-maintenance flowers and grasses that will provide color and interest and can tolerate both wet and dry conditions. Consider light and water preferences of the plants.

6) Plant your garden.

This is the fun part! Once all your plants are in their new home, give your garden a good drink of water.

7) Add mulch.

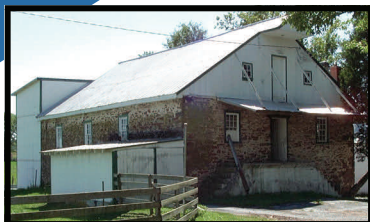
A 2-3 inch layer of shredded hardwood mulch is necessary to keep the soil moist and ready to soak up rain, and it helps reduce weeds. Chipped bark mulch tends to float when flooded.



Rain gardens can be any size and shape. They add a great presence to your landscaping while also reducing pollution that is associated with stormwater!



AG CENTER CORNER



Annual October Farm Tour in Berks County October 20, 2012

“Blaze the Trail ... Experience Birds, Boone & Browns”

Sponsored by the Berks Agricultural Resource Network.

Visit F.M. Browns' historic feed mill where the company originally got its start.... at the Annual Farm Tour!

To participate in the tour, purchase one \$10 booklet per vehicle the day of the tour and visit all the sites or select the ones you want to see. This year the tour features dairy cattle farms, a vineyard, a sheep farm, a horse farm, an alpaca farm, a gamebird farm and hatchery, a produce farm and market, a historic site, and both a new and historic feed mill. The booklet contains a map of all the host farm locations, along with local restaurants, sponsors, and B.A.R.N. information. There will be more than a dozen stops for tour participants to choose to visit at their own pace between 9 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Maps go on sale October 20th at 8:30 a.m. at three locations:

- ◆ F.M. Browns' Feed Mill, 123 South Furnace Street, Birdsboro, PA 19508, www.fmbrown.com
- ◆ Manatawny Creek Winery, 227 Levensgood Rd, Douglassville, PA 19518, www.manatawnycreekwinery.com
- ◆ Oley Turnpike Dairy, 6213 Oley Turnpike Road, Oley, PA 19547, www.oleyturnpikedairy.com

SPRING EDUCATION WRAP UP: Envirothon

Submitted by: Kate O'Brien

On May 1st and 9th 2012, The Berks County Conservation District held its annual High School and Middle School Envirothons at Nolde State Forest. A total of 27 teams from local schools participated 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, and Twin Valley. The participating Middle Schools were Conrad Weiser, Oley Valley, Exeter, Tulpehocken, and Fleetwood. Oley Valley High School swept first, second, and third place! The winning team was comprised of Kirk Turner, Matt Hughes, Lea Bartman, Sarah Christian, and Alex Barnett.

Oley Valley also won the Middle School competition and the team was comprised of Jeremy Chen See, Chris Kubitz, David Frantz,

Zach Nawrocki, and Sam Buzalewski. Last year's defending champions from Fleetwood took 2nd place. The 3rd place team, was also from Oley Valley.

The Berks County Conservation District also awarded a team from Governor Mifflin High School and Tulpehocken Middle School with the Spirit of the Envirothon Award as they proved themselves to be a team that works in great cooperation with others.

The Berks County Envirothon is lead by the BCCD's Watershed Specialist/Env. Educator who has strived to teach that the Envirothon is more than just memorizing

facts for a competition. It is about getting students to work together as a team, to realize that learning can take place outdoors, and finally to learn about the environment that we are so fortunate to have. The Envirothon utilizes math, science, history, and problem solving skills to form a great competition.

Congratulations to all of the students who participated in the 2012 Envirothon! The Berks County Conservation District would also like to thank the 2012 Envirothon Sponsors who made the event possible: Western Berks Water Authority, Boyer Engineering, LLC, and K & K Feeds, LLC.

Ann Sellers, Urban Resource Conservationist, talks to eager Middle School Students about Aquatic Ecosystems .



GREEN OFFICE CORNER



GOING GREEN TIP: Hang onto that coffee mug:

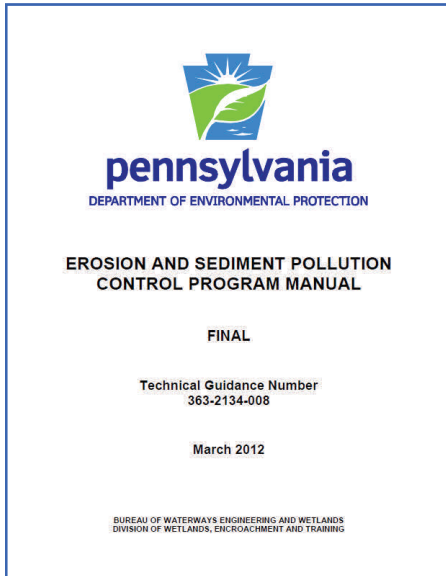
The "average" mug has a life span of about 3,000 uses, which means **30 times less solid waste and 60 times less air pollution** than disposable paper or foam cups



E & S MANUAL CHANGES

Submitted by: Eric Konzelmann

If you have not yet heard, the long awaited Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Program Manual (E&S Manual) has recently been released and is dated March 2012. DEP has indicated it will be phased in over the next few months. The new manual is now broken down into chapters such as sediment barriers in Chapter 4, sediment basins in Chapter 7 and stabilization



methods in Chapter 11. Sediment control BMPs are now ranked low, moderate or high in terms of sediment removal efficiency. They are also rated for use in certain watersheds. For example, a compost filter berm is listed as moderate for sediment removal efficiency and therefore allowed in High Quality (HQ) watersheds but not Exceptional Value (EV) watersheds. The new manual now includes many more BMPs and numerous appendices. The E&S manual, including all appendices and 66 pages of glossary is now 563 pages compared to 171 pages in the old manual. Some of the biggest changes are the ranking of BMPs for specific watersheds (non-special protection, HQ or EV), the inclusion of all 3:1 slopes for erosion control blanketing requirement (not just steeper than 3:1 as previously required) and several changes to the sediment basin criteria. The sediment basin section now allows for sediment forebays to replace baffles to meet flow-length requirements. This is a nice change and ties nicely into post-construction stormwater basin conversion, since most permanent basins should have sediment forebays. Also, seepage diaphragms are now an option in addition to anti-seep collars to help prevent piping failures in basin berms. Lots of time and input from many professionals with countless years of experience went into the manual. The staff at BCCD feels this is a tremendous upgrade and users are encouraged to read most or all of it despite its large size.

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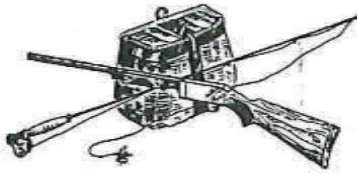


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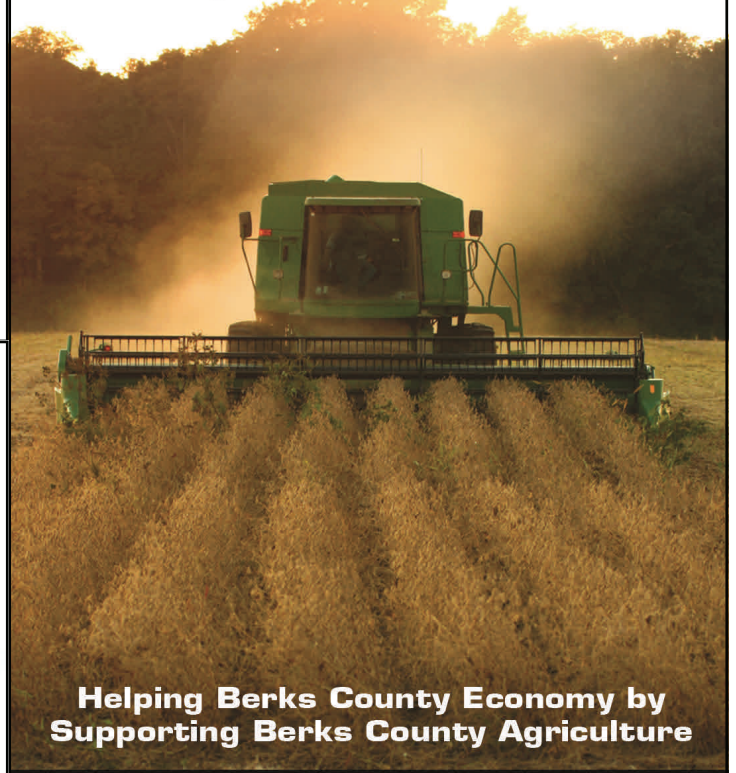
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FALL WORD SEARCH



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 word bank below.
2. Scan and email, fax, or mail the word search to the Berks County Conservation District.

Berks County Conservation District
 1238 County Welfare Rd, Suite 200
 Leesport, PA 19533
Kathryn.obrien@berkscd.com
 Fax: 610-478-7058

T	H	A	N	K	S	G	I	V	I	N	G
S	R	X	N	M	U	M	S	R	A	H	D
C	E	E	E	D	R	A	K	E	C	A	E
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C	T	L	L	N	B	V	T	F	U	A	B
R	P	O	L	F	T	E	A	N	C	C	M
O	E	F	A	I	O	S	E	U	O	K	E
W	S	U	H	R	O	T	W	S	P	K	V
C	O	R	N	E	F	X	S	O	I	E	O
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|------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| Acorn | Football | November | September |
| Bonfire | Halloween | Pumpkins | Sunflower |
| Corn | Harvest | Rake | Sweater |
| Cornucopia | Haystack | Red | Thanksgiving |
| Foliage | Mums | Scarecrow | |



CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER			
	26th	1:00PM	BCCD Board Meeting
			Berks Agricultural Center
OCTOBER			
	5th	7:00 AM	Legislative Breakfast
	11th	7:30AM - 5PM	Engineer/Designer Workshop
	20th	9:00AM - 4PM	Annual Farm Tour
	31st	1:00 PM	BCCD Board Meeting
			Berks Agricultural Center Alvernia University Berks County Berks Agricultural Center
NOVEMBER			
	28th	1:00PM	BCCD Board Meeting
			Berks Agricultural Center
DECEMBER			
	26th	1:00PM	BCCD Board Meeting
			Berks Agricultural Center
JANUARY			
	30th	1:00PM	BCCD Board Meeting
			Berks Agricultural Center
FEBRUARY			
	27th	1:00PM	BCCD Board Meeting
			Berks Agricultural Center



**BERKS COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

1238 County Welfare Road
Suite 200
Leesport, PA 19533

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