



# Conservation Matters



## Welcome Spring!

Have you ever heard the saying, “Spring into Action?” I think it’s suitable for this time of year for most. Our typical spring includes tree sale, Envirothon, and summer project preparations. But I think the most exciting thing about spring is the beautiful regrowth we witness after a cold winter. Just knowing that warmer weather is coming is enough to spring us into action!

We hope you enjoy this time of year as much as we do. Happy spring!

Sincerely,

*Judy Becker*

## Attention Farmers:

In the coming months, you may receive a visit for a farm inspection. The goal of the farm inspection is to make sure all PA agriculture operations are in compliance by having a current manure management and agricultural erosion and sedimentation plan. In order to be in compliance with the PA Clean Streams Law 1.) plans must describe current activities taking place on the farm and 2.) operators must be implementing described activities, i.e. applying manure at proper rates, following manure application setback guidelines, managing animal concentration areas, etc. If you are in need of these plans, you have several options. You can visit our website at [www.nccdpa.org](http://www.nccdpa.org), go to “Programs,” and then find “Nutrient Management”. In that section, you will find a link to the Manure Management Manual. This will give you step by step information on how to develop your own Manure Management Plan. You can also visit



[www.paonestop.org](http://www.paonestop.org) to create your own Ag E&S Plan. The NCCD currently does not have an Agricultural Technician, so we are unable to help write plans until we hire and train a new Technician. If you are unable to write a plan yourself, you will need to contact a private plan writer to assist you. You can call the NCCD office at 570-495-4665 to obtain a list of plan writers. **DEP has stated that being on a waiting**

**list for a plan will not meet compliance requirements.** We encourage all farm operators to make the necessary arrangements to ensure all updated plans are in place as soon as possible.

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**Our Programs:** Erosion and Sedimentation Control, National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), Dam Safety and Waterway Management, Environmental Education, Nutrient Management, Chesapeake Bay Program, Dirt & Gravel Roads, Agricultural Land Preservation, Watershed Protection and Education

Visit [www.nccdpa.org](http://www.nccdpa.org) for more information. We are also on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/nccdpa](http://www.facebook.com/nccdpa).

## NRCS Sunbury Field Office

by Janette Leshner, District Conservationist

"Where is my contract paperwork?" This may be a common lament when you have one or several long term government contracts that you need to keep organized or that have maintenance requirements to check on. You can call or stop in to the NRCS office.....OR.....try **Conservation Client Gateway!**

Conservation Client Gateway is a secure on-line website built for landowners and producers that makes doing government contracting work easier to establish and organize.

On Conservation Client Gateway you can:

- Request technical assistance
- Apply for financial assistance
- Review, sign, and submit applications and contracts
- Track your payments.

Client Gateway is only ready for individuals that are landowners and producers at this time. We look forward to when entities, businesses and large operations will be able to access their applications, contracts, and supporting documents through Conservation Client Gateway.

To get started, go to the following website:  
[www.nrcs.usda.gov/clientgateway](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/clientgateway)

Need help? Please feel welcome to stop in to the NRCS office at 441 Plum Creek Road in Sunbury, or call us at 570-286-7114.

## Intern Announcement

The Northumberland County Conservation District (NCCD) is currently accepting resumes for full time (40 hours per week) internship positions during the summer months of 2016 (May through August). The selected candidates will gain experiences in

the areas of project management, conservation issues and potential resolutions, environmental education, conservation practices, public relations, and working



in local government. The internship will take place from 8am until 4:30pm Monday through Friday. The interested candidates should currently be enrolled in either an undergraduate or graduate-degree program, preferably with an environmental or agricultural emphasis. The student must be highly motivated and have the ability to work independently. The interns may be required to use their own vehicles. This is an unpaid position. NCCD will work with the school's internship coordinator if this experience can be used for class credit. Students may submit a cover letter and resume directly to the Northumberland County Conservation District, Attn: Judy Becker, 441 Plum Creek Road, Sunbury, PA 17801.

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### Susquehanna North Branch Named Pennsylvania River of the Year

Steeped in historical and recreational value, the freeflowing Susquehanna River North Branch in northeastern Pennsylvania was voted the 2016 Pennsylvania River of the Year following a five-week public voting period.

The general public was invited to vote online. Results were announced jointly today by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pa. Organization for Waterways and Rivers (POWR).

DCNR and POWR will work with the Endless Mountains Heritage Region (EMHR) to create a free, commemorative poster celebrating the Susquehanna River North Branch as the 2016 Pennsylvania River of the Year. EMHR, the applicant nominating the waterway in close cooperation with the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership, will receive a \$10,000 Leadership Grant to help fund year-long River of the Year activities.

A 15-mile stretch of the Susquehanna River North Branch flows from New York into Pennsylvania's Northern Tier, and continues south 166 miles to join the river's West Branch at Shikellamy State Park in Northumberland County. The Susquehanna River North Branch is a prominent regional feature, running through Susquehanna, Bradford, Wyoming, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Colombia, Montour, and Northumberland counties. Once a major transportation corridor, the entire waterway still is navigable by kayaks and canoes, even during dry seasons.

To learn more about the River of the Year program and past winners visit [www.pariveroftheyear.org](http://www.pariveroftheyear.org). (article source: DCNR)

# WHAT IS EROSION?

By Michael McCleary, Erosion and Sedimentation Technician

Erosion is the natural effect of water, wind or glacial ice on soil, rocks and other elements of the earth.



The Grand Canyon is an example of the ongoing effects of erosion by water and wind. It is the result of millions of years of unchecked erosion.



Erosion begins with a single drop of rain. Additional rain drops combine on the ground and begin to flow across the land with the help of gravity. Stormwater run-off is constantly moving downhill seeking the lowest point in its path. The flow path is shaped by the contours of the earth's surface.

It has been said that water always seeks the easiest path to the lowest point available. Rain which falls in the mountains will eventually create streams which flow downhill into valleys where the streams join rivers and flow to the ocean.



This kind of erosion if not controlled, over time will move sediment into creeks and rivers. The sediment can kill fish who get it caught in their gills. It can settle on the stream bed smothering plants and micro-organisms that fish rely on for food and shelter.



Water always seeks the path of least resistance. If the stormwater run-off cannot move an object it will flow around it.

The purpose of PA Code Title 25 Chapter 102 is to require persons proposing or conducting earth disturbance activities to develop, implement and maintain BMPs to minimize the potential for accelerated erosion and sedimentation and to manage post construction stormwater. **102.2(a)**

# Growing Greener Projects in Northumberland County

by Jaci Harner, Watershed Specialist

Conservation districts across the state are working to help their local farmers reduce manure and soil runoff into local streams. During site visits with local farmers, district technicians identify areas of concern and discuss ideas and possible funding sources to improve land management techniques.

In 2011, the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Growing Greener grant program listed Little Shamokin Creek watershed as a priority area to receive funding. The Northumberland County Conservation District (NCCD) took advantage of this priority and looked for partners within that land area to install Best Management Practices (BMP's) on their farms. Wade Fisher and Rob Witmer agreed to work with NCCD, DEP, and Natural Resource Conservation Service engineers to install several BMP's to decrease the amount of nutrients and sediment flowing into 2 tributaries that flow into Little Shamokin creek.



Grant funded practices installed at the Fisher site include a 3,283 square foot concrete heavy use area underneath an existing bank barn with a waste transfer system. The heavy use area and waste transfer system eliminate the potential for agriculture pollution to enter the local stream. A watering system was installed in the new barnyard area so animals no longer have to travel up and down a steep hill to access the stream for a water source. In addition, gutters and downspouts were installed on the bank barn to prevent clean rain water from coming in contact with manure. Wade installed a larger pasture to place the animals during construction and continues to use it today as part of his livestock management.



Fisher barnyard during project construction

“Conservation Districts from across the state are working to help their local farmers reduce manure and soil runoff into local streams.”

## Growing Greener Projects, *continued*



*Fisher barnyard after project construction*



*Fisher pasture leading to stream water access area*



*Fisher hillside after project construction, this area is no longer used as a pasture nor for access to stream for a water source*



## HELP TELL YOUR STORY

*Pennsylvania farmers across the Chesapeake Bay watershed are invited to help capture many of the conservation practices that have been implemented throughout the state. This survey will inventory these practices, ensuring that the agricultural community receives the credit it deserves for improving water quality. Visit <http://src.survey.psu.edu/farmbmp/> by April 30th for more information.*

## Growing Greener Projects, *continued*



*Witmer barnyard before project construction*

Grant funded practices installed at the Witmer site include a 40' x 100' roofed concrete heavy use area with a 24' x 24' manure storage. The heavy use area eliminated a large unvegetated feeding area while the manure storage stockpiles manure so it can be land applied during acceptable times of the year. In addition, gutters and downspouts were installed on the new and existing buildings to prevent clean rain water from coming in contact with manure and dirt roadways. Rob installed streambank fencing in one of his pastures to eliminate animal access to the stream. Keeping livestock out of a flowing stream site limits the amount of manure entering the stream and reduces streambank erosion.



*Witmer barnyard during project construction*



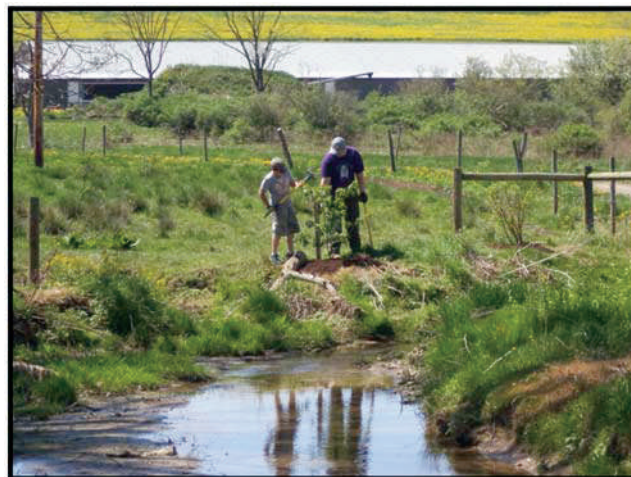
*Witmer barnyard after project construction*

**“Gutters and downspouts were installed on the new and existing buildings to prevent clean rain water from coming in contact with manure and dirt roadways.”**

## Growing Greener Projects, *continued*

The Little Shamokin Creek Watershed Association also obtained funds from a private foundation to install shrubs and trees along the streams on both properties. The tree roots absorb excess water during rain events and stabilize stream banks while tree canopies provide shade over the flowing water to keep water temperatures cool. 10 shrubs and 20 trees were installed on the Fisher property while 45 shrubs were installed on the Witmer property. Volunteers from the watershed group and Boy Scout Troop 331 assisted NCCD to help install the shrubs and trees.

*Volunteers planting trees at the Fisher site*



*Volunteers planting shrubs at the Witmer site*

We would like to extend a big thank you to both Wade Fisher and Rob Witmer for their time and patience with participating in this project. It is not unusual to experience challenges during the construction phase and everyone cooperated to make sure the project was completed successfully.



Thank you, also, to the Little Shamokin Creek Watershed Association and Boy Scout Troop 331 for their volunteer time to put the finishing touches on the project sites by planting trees and shrubs along the streams.

## Central Susquehanna Valley Throughway

by Michael McCleary, Erosion and Sedimentation Technician



Rendering of Proposed CSVT Bridge over West Branch Susquehanna River

The Central Susquehanna Valley Throughway has finally begun construction. The Northern Section runs from approximately 1 mile south of the Union County/Snyder County line to the top of the Winfield Mountain, thence across the river to the Mertz farm where it will turn north and tie into the existing 4 lane SR 0180 just north of the Chillisquaque Creek.

Phase 1 of the Northern Section is currently under contract. This contract is for construction of the proposed bridge and its approaches. An interchange with SR 0015 is currently under construction in Union County, and work has begun on the two access roads in Northumberland County. The access road on the south side of Ridge Road is being installed to provide fill for the access road from SR 0147 to the bridge. Please be extra careful when driving through these areas, due to an increase in truck traffic along Ridge Road and SR 0147.

## UGI Sunbury Pipeline

by Michael McCleary, Erosion and Sedimentation Technician



The UGI Sunbury Pipeline is also expected to begin construction in 2017. This 20" diameter gas line will enter Northumberland County in the vicinity of Pottsgrove (East Chillisquaque Township). It will cross SR 0045 just west of Frederick Road and travel over the mountain into Point Township. The pipeline is planned to cross Ridge Road near Cannery Road and then cross SR 0147 and the Susquehanna River approximately ½ mile south of the Central Susquehanna Valley Throughway.



## Spring Planting Season Reminders

As spring approaches and hours of daylight lengthen, farmers' chores will increase as planting season is just around the corner. During this time of the year it is crucial that your biosecurity measures are still implemented. The spring migration of waterfowl heading north will be in full swing over the next few weeks, and the threat of Avian Influenza being spread will increase during these migrations. Along with the increased chance of AI, comes the increase of manure applications prior to planting. Keep in mind setbacks to follow while applying manure. Stream setbacks are one hundred feet, unless there is a thirty-five foot permanent vegetated buffer. Setback distances from wells is one hundred feet, regardless if there is a buffer or not. It is important to calibrate your manure spreaders and sprayers to ensure the correct application rates of nutrients are being met. Over applying nutrients can affect water quality and further damage the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Soil samples, corn stalk tests, and plant tissue analysis are all great ways to ensure you apply the correct amount of nutrients that crops need that given year without under or over applying. Over applying not only effects water quality, but also your bottom line. To learn how to calibrate your manure spreader refer to Penn State fact sheet 68.



## Electronics Recycling

*A message from Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful*

In 2010, the Pennsylvania Legislature passed Act 108, which is the Covered Device Recycling Act. There are many shortcomings to this Act. Stakeholders from across the various sectors have been working to address those flaws. Keep PA Beautiful (KPB) has communicated with PA legislators about illegal dumping of electronics at recycling drop-offs, vacant lots, alleyways, riverbanks, streams and roadways. Many of you are actively engaged in electronics collections in your community and even if you are not, you know the toll the lack of access to recycling programs is taking. Many of you have shared those stories with KPB and they are grateful.

Ever since the Covered Device Recycling Act (Act 108) was enacted, there has been little to no broad consumer education on electronics recycling. While some communities did their best to fill the gap, overall- this is an area that desperately needs addressed now and in the future when the law is fixed.

Consumers want and need to know not only where to take their televisions and old monitors, but why is it worth taking those extra steps? There is now a website that makes it easy to obtain this information; [eWastePA.org](http://eWastePA.org) does exactly that.

With the help of [PPO&S, Integrating Marketing and Communications](#), Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has launched [eWastePA.org](http://eWastePA.org) - **A consumer guide to electronics recycling in PA. Educate. Empower. Engage.** The site not only explains why and how to recycle electronics, it links consumers to recycling programs in their community. It provides easy to use tools for consumers to advocate for access to convenient and affordable trash disposal and recycling in Pennsylvania by linking them with their local legislators as well as the manufacturers that are responsible for the cost of recycling of e-waste in Pennsylvania. Visit [eWastePA.org](http://eWastePA.org) today to learn more about electronics recycling in PA.

*(source - Keep PA Beautiful)*



## The Benefits of Securing and Implementing an Act 38 Nutrient Management Plan

Most operations do a very good job at managing their nutrients; therefore, having a nutrient management plan should not significantly alter their normal operations.

There is an old adage, “what happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas”. Farmers would like to think what happens on their farm stays on their farm, and it is no one else’s business. That would work if farms had domes over them and all external factors were controlled. In reality most factors; weather, prices, regulations and maybe the most important, neighbors, are beyond your control. It is so important to plan wisely. Planning is why you purchase insurance to manage unexpected risks. A Nutrient Management Plan is similar; your premium is the cost of the plan. Instead of an insurance company paying the claim, the state provides limited liability protection against lawsuits. There are more and more instances where farmers without a nutrient management plan, or they may have a plan but are not following it, are being sued. For a variety of reasons, it is much better to have regulators defending your operation rather than enforcing your operation. There is always someone downstream and downwind of your operation. It could be a non-farmer neighbor or a special interest group that may not understand animal agriculture.

Nitrogen and phosphorus are prime ingredients that have led to some of today’s regulations. Phosphorus is not an “escape” artist like nitrogen. Phosphorus generally binds to the soil, and if you minimize erosion and excessive application of phosphorus, you reduce phosphorus loss. Nitrogen on the other hand, may volatilize into the air, leaches into the ground water, and runs off if improperly managed or over-applied. High nitrates in ground water may lead to health concerns, especially with young children. Nitrogen and phosphorus have the ability to enter the surface water bodies creating algae blooms. When algae blooms die and decompose, they deplete the oxygen in the water, and as a result, kill aquatic life.

Years of research have gone into developing the requirements of the nutrient management plan needed to meet the state regulations. The purpose of the nutrient management plan is to balance the needs of realistic expected crop yields with the nutrients available in the soil and, when applied, whether manure or commercial fertilizer, the amounts needed to achieve those yields while minimizing the impact of nutrient pollution.

You do not wait until you have a claim to buy insurance. Why wait until you have a complaint or a regulator shows up at your door to have a sound nutrient management plan? By having an approved Act 38 Nutrient Management Plan and implementing it, you provide proof you are following the state requirements, being a good steward of the land, and you’re offered limited liability protection from nuisance lawsuits that are very costly and time consuming.

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### Applications Available for Pennsylvania Farm Conservation Tax Credit Program



Pennsylvania farmers who want to implement best management practices (BMPs) or purchase on-farm conservation equipment are encouraged to apply for remaining 2015-16 Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program tax credits.

REAP is a tax credit program for agricultural producers who install BMPs or make equipment purchases that reduce erosion and sedimentation that impacts Pennsylvania’s streams and watersheds. The program, administered by the State Conservation Commission, gives agriculture producers an incentive to purchase conservation equipment and materials to better protect the environment.

The deadline for farmers to submit applications for remaining FY 2015-16 REAP tax credits is April 22, 2016.

Applications for the 2015-2016 REAP program area available at [www.agriculture.pa.gov](http://www.agriculture.pa.gov) by clicking “protect,” then “State Conservation Commission,” then “REAP,” or by contacting Joel Semke at 717-705-4032 or [jsemke@pa.gov](mailto:jsemke@pa.gov). (source - State Conservation Commission)

## Support the NCCD!

There are many ways to get involved with our organization. We welcome your involvement, as well as your ideas and input! Visit our website at [www.nccdpa.org](http://www.nccdpa.org) to see how you can get involved with NCCD today, either through volunteering or becoming an affiliate member. We recognize our 2016 Affiliate Members and thank them for their support!

### Conservation Benefactor:

KW Enterprises, LLC, Milton



### Associate Members:

AET Consulting, Lititz  
Ag Choice Farm Credit ACA,  
Lewisburg  
Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc., Shamokin  
Blair and Mary Carbaugh, Danville  
Daniel Shingara Enterprises, Inc.,  
Paxinos  
Doli Construction Corporation,  
Chalfont  
First National Insurance, Selingsgrove  
Glenn O. Hawbaker, Inc.,  
Montoursville  
KPI Technology, Elysburg  
Kauffman Tractor & Implement  
Painting, Dornsife  
Keefer and Associates, Inc., Sunbury  
Larson Design Group, Williamsport  
Mark Ferster & Sons Excavating,  
Dornsife  
Pioneer Seed – Eric Moser, New  
Columbia  
RJ Hoffman & Sons, Inc., Mt.  
Pleasant Mills  
Robert C. Snyder Farms, Inc.,  
Northumberland  
Rovendale Ag and Barn, Inc.,  
Watsontown  
Scattered Acres Farm, Elysburg  
Trumbull Corporation, Pittsburgh  
Valley Ag & Turf, LLC, Watsontown  
Watson Excavating, Inc., Watsontown

### Friend of Conservation:

Hoffman Brothers Lumber, Inc.,  
Richfield



### Contributing Member:

Earthwork Services, LLC, Danville

### Affiliate Members:

Brewers' Outlet, Sunbury  
Central Builders Supply Company,  
Sunbury.  
Coleman Environmental Engineering,  
Zion Grove  
Fairchild Brothers, Inc., Winfield  
Kevin E. Raker Construction, LLC,  
Sunbury  
Mahantango Game Farm, LLC,  
Dalmatia  
Dennis Martz, Dalmatia  
Northumberland County Anthracite  
Outdoor Adventure Area  
Paul Q. Ross Construction, Inc.,  
Sunbury  
RHP Law Group, LLC, Selingsgrove  
Sunbury Animal Hospital, Sunbury  
Paul Q. Ross Construction, Inc.,  
Sunbury  
Pik Rite, Inc., Lewisburg  
RHP Law Group, LLC, Selingsgrove  
Sunbury Animal Hospital, Sunbury

## 4th Annual Winter Forum

On March 1, 2016, the NCCD held their 4th Annual Winter Forum at the Revival Tabernacle in Watsontown for farmers, municipalities and contractors. Attendees received 2 category credits and 1 core credit, as well as a delicious lunch from Crouse Catering of Williamsport. Presenters included Joel Imgrund and John Bray of Penn State Extension, Kurt Bond of Pheasants Forever, William Harshman of Penn State University, State Trooper Rick Blair, Michael Bender of PennDot, James Wheeler of PSATS, Beth Futrick of Blair County Conservation District, D. Robert Davidson of RHP Law Group, David Silbaugh of Trumbull Corporation, and Michael McCleary of NCCD. We had 15 vendors on hand including Crop Production Services of Bloomsburg; Pine Hurst Acres/Channel Seed of Danville; Dupont Pioneer; AgChoice Farm Credit of Lewisburg; LB Water of Selingsgrove; Hoover Tractor of Mifflinburg; KW Enterprises LLC of Milton; Rovendale Ag and Barn of Watsontown; Sunbury Motor Company; Valley Ag and Turf of Watsontown; PPL; McTish, Kunkel and Associates of Montoursville; American Excelsior Company of East Berlin; KIZ Resources LLC of Altoona; RHP Law Group LLC of Selingsgrove; and Pik Rite of Watsontown. We thank all of our speakers and vendors for their participation and sponsorship!



Farmers network in between sessions during this year's CD Forum.

*You may contact us at any time by email or phone to be added to, or removed from, our mailing list. Simply call 570-495-4665 or email [info@nccdpa.org](mailto:info@nccdpa.org). If you would rather "Go Green," email us with the words "electronic newsletter" in the subject line and we will send our newsletter to you electronically.*

PRE-SORTED  
STANDARD  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
WILKES-BARRE, PA  
18701  
PERMIT NO. 243

**Northumberland County  
Conservation District**  
441 Plum Creek Road  
Sunbury, PA 17801  
Phone: (570) 495-4665  
Website: [www.nccdpa.org](http://www.nccdpa.org)



### **Northumberland County Conservation District**

*The NCCD, formed in 1943 under the Conservation District Law, is a subdivision of state government and is one of 66 Conservation Districts throughout the state of Pennsylvania. The purpose of the Conservation District is to promote protection, maintenance, improvement, and wise use of the land, water, and other natural resources.*

## **Directors**

Richard Daniels: Chairman, Farmer  
Leon Wertz: Vice-Chairman, Farmer  
Richard Shoch: Commissioner  
Gary Truckenmiller: Farmer  
John Kopp: Farmer  
Dave Crowl: Public  
Mike Hubler: Public

Mike Erdley: Associate  
Dave Swank: Associate  
Blair Carbaugh: Associate  
Albert Mabus: Associate  
John Pfleeger: Associate  
Ted Carodiskey: Associate

## **Staff**

Judy Becker: District Manager, AgLand Preservation, Editor  
Shirley Snyder: Administrative Assistant  
Jaci Harner: Watershed Specialist, Nutrient Management Technician  
Michael McCleary: Erosion & Sediment Technician, Dirt & Gravel Roads  
Vacant: Agricultural Conservation Technician

**NCCD Board of Directors Upcoming Meetings:  
May 5th, June 2nd, and July 7th at 7:00pm  
in the NCCD EE Center**