

Conservation Horizons



*Since 1948 * 72 Years of Conservation, Education & Stewardship **

Our Annual Conservation Awards



Mitzi Eaton - Outstanding Citizen Conservationist
See all of our 2019 recipients on pages 12 & 13

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Hemp has returned to York County! pgs. 7 & 8



Water Quality Monitoring -
It's done for you!

See pgs. 13 & 14 for the
bold moves being made to
upgrade and improve York
County's water-quality
monitoring stations.



Our Annual Clay Shoot results page 11
Pictured - Team ARRC

York County Conservation District

Our purpose is to promote wise use and management of soil, water, air, plants, wildlife and other natural resources through four program areas: Agricultural Resources, Education, Erosion & Sediment Control and Watersheds

We have served York County since 1938, when a group of 554 farmers from 18 townships signed a petition to form the York County Conservation District. This petition was approved by the state Soil Conservation Commission in 1948. Like all Conservation Districts, we are a legal subdivision of state government like townships or school districts. Our budget is supplied by county, state and federal programs, as well as foundation grants & fees for services. And we are managed by a board of environmentally aware York County citizen volunteers.



We have traditionally assisted agricultural producers and other landowners in protecting soils & reducing erosion in our waterways. Today, the District also works with non-agricultural landowners, developers and local government officials to protect our natural resources.

We do this by coupling technical & financial assistance with conservation planning and permitting requirements.

Education is a cornerstone of the District and we target a wide audience about effective pollution-prevention techniques to farmers, landowners, local officials, watershed associations, conservation organizations, civic groups, churches, schools, teachers and youth.

Our Vision - We are committed to the improvement & protection of our environment and the wise use of our County's diverse natural resources.

Our Mission - To achieve that vision we will be proactive providing conservation education, technical services and financial assistance, to enable the citizens of York County be good stewards of our natural resources.

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Doug Hoke, Vice President, Christopher Reilly

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Jim Rexroth, Harry Bickel

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Beth Lucabaugh, Bruce Holbrook,
Rochelle Black,
Dan Innerst, Dan Paulus

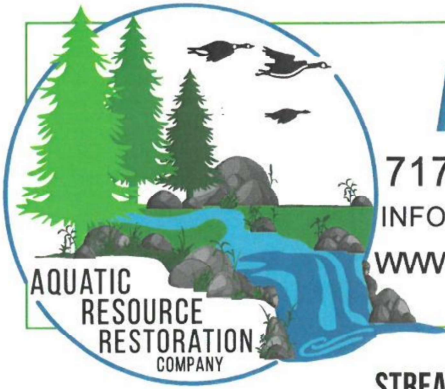
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Ellis Crowl, Keith Eisenhart

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Robin Sharp	Administrative Assistant II
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Michele Grove	Ag Resource Cons. Specialist II
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Gary R Peacock	Watershed Specialist
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Kim J Young	Education-Communications Coordinator
Jennifer Risser	Assistant Manager
Mark Kimmel	District Manager

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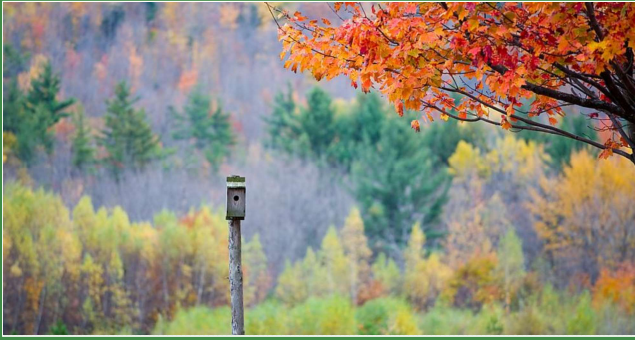
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York County Envirothon Coaches -
did you know there is also a Facebook page
just for our coaches? Check it out.

The York County Government is an Equal Opportunity Employer and shall in no way discriminate against employees or applicants for employment on account of age, religion, color, national origin, sex, ancestry, disability, and/or any political or union affiliation.



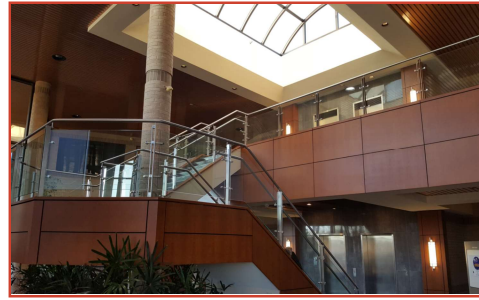
Around the District

This year marked the service anniversaries of numerous District Directors and staff. Pictured at right is Chair Jeff Gossert presenting Associate Beth Lucabaugh with her 10-year certificate & pin. Also recognized over the past several months are Directors Jack Dehoff - 35 years; Harry Bickel - 20 years; Asst. Treasurer Gordon Brown - 20 years; Associate Leroy Bupp - 15 years; Associate Bruce Holbrook - 15 years; Vice Chair Travis Sherman - 15 years; Associate Kenyon Miller - five years. Staff are Rob Fetter - 30 years; Eric Jordan - 20 years; Gary Peacock - 20 years; Jennifer Risser - five years.



The Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Inc. (PACD) and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), presented Eric & Jessica Gemmill of Belview Valley Farms in Delta PA with the Clean Water Farm Award during its annual conference on July 17, 2019 in Williamsport, PA. The honor is awarded annually to farmers who manage their daily farm operations in an environmentally conscious manner that helps to protect Pennsylvania's water quality. Belview Valley Farms was nominated for the award by the York County Conservation District. Theirs was one of only five awards given this year.

The York County Conservation District offices are moving to a new building on Pleasant Valley Road in York (old Graham Packaging building) in late December/early January, along with Penn State Extension and the York County Ag Land Preservation Program.



Please check our website & Facebook pages at the end of the year for updates, our new mailing addresses, suite #s, and when our new offices will be open to the public. In the meantime you may continue to contact us at 118 Pleasant Acres Road, York PA 17402, or 717-840-7430, or go to our website at: www.yorkccd.org.

Our 2020 Annual Seedling Sale is coming soon!

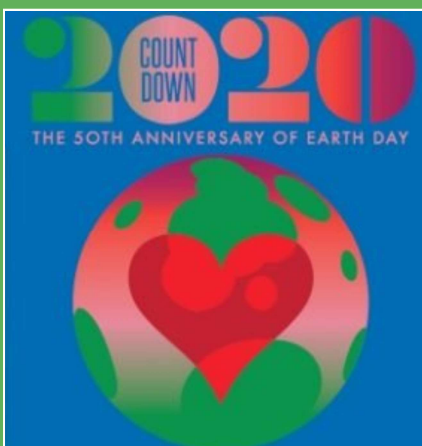
Sponsored by the York County Conservation District & hosted by the York County Parks
Newsletter subscribers will receive their order form by mail mid-late January

**Order Deadline: March 23rd / Pick up Orders on Thursday, April 16th
10:00 am - 6:00 pm @ Rocky Ridge Park (off Mount Zion Road)**

We plan to offer a variety of 2-3 year-old bare-root seedlings between 8-24 inches tall. This year's varieties will include white oak, dogwood and persimmon (at right), along with numerous other deciduous species. Our peach & apple trees run about 4-6 feet tall.

In addition we offer blueberry & raspberry bushes, pachysandra ground cover, and more.

Please note we do not offer mature trees as sometimes pictured.



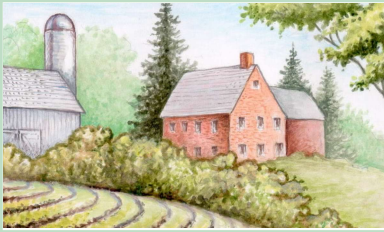
The year 2020 also marks the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day - the largest environmental movement, and largest day of civic action in the world. Since its inception, one of their most successful campaigns has been the Canopy Project, planting tens of millions of trees across the planet.

The benefits of trees are well-documented. Of paramount importance today: the knowledge that **Trees are carbon reservoirs!** Trees absorb carbon from the air, store it & release it slowly back into the atmosphere at natural rates - helping mitigate excess carbon in our atmosphere. You can help combat the highly accelerated speed at which carbon is currently released into the atmosphere (the burning of fossil fuels, our demand for industry & some of our agricultural practices are all driving causes of changes to our climate). **Trees can help reverse the impacts of climate change.**

Trees have always provided food, oxygen, energy and income. They filter and clean our air. In just one year, a mature leafy tree produces as much oxygen as 10 people inhale! For the 50th anniversary of Earth Day their goal is to plant 7.8 billion trees - one for every person on earth.

Wanna help? Plant a tree in your own backyard.

Or plant ten! Participate in our Annual Seedling Sale. Be a part of the solution.



Ag Resources

The Return of Hemp, part 1

Hemp is back in York County! There is an exciting “new” crop being grown and harvested in York County this year, and across the country. It’s *Cannabis sativa*, more commonly known as hemp. Driving our rural roads this summer you can be forgiven for thinking you were seeing acres of marijuana suddenly growing where you remember corn and soybeans from last season.

Hemp and marijuana are the same species. But an important distinction is that hemp varieties have little to no THC, the chemical in marijuana that causes a “high.” Hemp, especially hemp grown for CBD oil, is highly regulated for levels of THC.



Hemp is one of the earliest-known agricultural products in human history. Hempfield Township in Lancaster County got its name from their historical production of hemp. The crop was once grown abundantly in the United States until 1937, when it became competitive with textile and lumber industries. Those industries started lobbying hard against hemp and helped to put in place a prohibitive tax. Shortly afterwards, by pushing its association with marijuana, and unfairly grouping it with what at the time were considered harmful drugs, it became illegal to grow hemp.

However, a change in regulatory status last year occurred when a new federal farm bill passed, removing hemp from the list of controlled substances. That quickly, York County farmers were ready to bring hemp back. In partnership with Groff North America, who is building a hemp processing plant in Red Lion this year, York County farmers planted almost 2,000 acres of hemp this summer. It is an exciting prospect for farmers, the business community, and the environment alike!



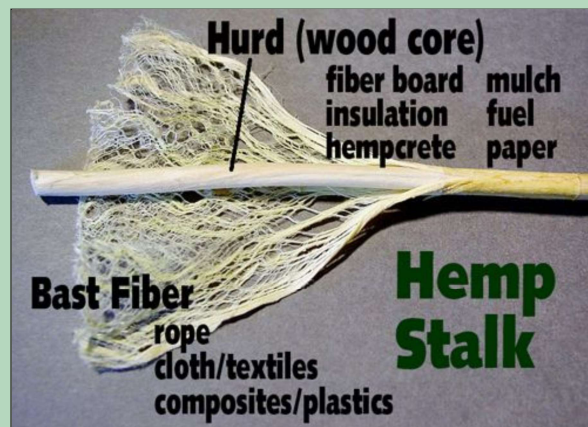
At left: YCCD Associate Directors Dan Innerst and Beth Lucabaugh spent a Sunday this summer inspecting Dan's new Hemp fields.

While numerous York County farmers sowing this “new” crop have received phone calls all summer curiously asking them what they were growing, hemp was so widespread in the 1930s that Popular Mechanics magazine published an article elaborating on the 25,000 different uses for hemp and its products.

Historically, hemp was grown for rope, canvas, clothing & paper. The hemp fiber, or bast, is extremely strong. Today it is in demand for CBD oil, paper diapers, cement strengthener and so much more.

First traced back to ancient civilizations, in the 1700s American farmers in several colonies were actually required by law to grow hemp. Our founding fathers, Thomas Jefferson and George Washington, were hemp farmers, and the first draft of the Declaration of Independence was written on hemp.





Hemp is a tall slender leafy plant that contains fiber (bast) and an inner stem (hurd), along with flowers and seed that rival any plant for the variety of things that it can be used for. Hemp can bring an economic benefit to growers and business while at the same time causing less pressure on the environment.

In addition to the strength of its fibers, hemp is completely biodegradable, as opposed to plastic packaging. Hemp is also a competitive plant that can often be grown without herbicides because it grows more quickly than the weeds around it. It has a deep taproot that improves soil tilth, and the growing conditions for crops that follow. Hemp also helps to sequester carbon, storing it in its roots and the fiber that is used to manufacture various products. Hemp paper is stronger than paper made with wood pulp and can be recycled multiple times. And the entire hemp plant can be utilized to produce various products, increasing its economic value and attractiveness for growing and selling.

For more information go to: <http://www.hemptrade.ca/eguide/background/hemp-environmental-impact>

In our next issue we will talk to some local farmers about their challenges and successes during this first season of growing hemp, and how it is being marketed. Stay tuned!

AGRICULTURAL PLANNING REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

We have good news: The Agricultural Planning Reimbursement Program is extended for a third year!

This program is open to all agricultural operators/landowners in Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay watershed. Through this program, they can be reimbursed for fees they've paid to consultants to create:

- **manure management plans**
- **nutrient management plans**
- **agricultural erosion and sediment control plans.**

Reimbursement funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The registration deadline is April 1, 2020.

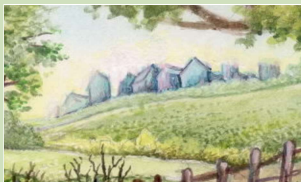
Information is available on DEP's website:

<https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Water/Pennsylvania%20Chesapeake%20Bay%20Program%20Office/agriculture/Pages/Funding-Programs.aspx>

Note: There's a \$6,000 limit per farming operation in this program cycle. Planned acres reimbursed previously aren't eligible to be reimbursed again. Coordinators are ONLY accepting the updated forms dated 8/2019. They will not accept anything on the old forms.

Free MANURE MANAGEMENT PLAN WORKSHOP

Mark your calendars - Friday, March 6, 2020, 8:00 am – 3:30 pm
All farms generating or using manure are required by law to have a Manure Management Plan (MMP). Farm operators can write their own MMP and this workshop will guide you through the process. To receive workshop details when available, contact Michele Grove at 717-840-7430 or mgrove@yorkccd.org



Erosion & Sediment Control

E&S Program Accomplishments for June - August 2019

Preconstruction meetings - 6
Total Project Acres - 4,088
Complaints Investigated - 52

New Plan Reviews - 72
Total Disturbed Acres - 175
Total site inspections - 163

Revised Plan Reviews - 54
General NPDES Issued - 40
Sites in compliance - 50

On-Lot Post-Construction Stormwater Management (PCSM) & Best Management Practices (BMPs)

Maintaining On-Lot PCSM & BMPs is important. Homeowners, builders and developers who disturb one acre or more of land are required to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit prior to beginning construction. The NPDES permit requires an Erosion and Sediment (E&S) Pollution Control plan when fully implemented that is designed to minimize accelerated soil erosion on-site, and minimize any resulting sedimentation to receiving streams, wetlands, and downslope properties throughout the duration of construction activities.

The NPDES permit also requires a Post Construction Stormwater Management (PCSM) plan when fully implemented that is designed to prevent an increase in the rate of stormwater runoff, minimize any increase in stormwater runoff volume, and protect the water quality of our receiving streams and wetlands.

Many large land development projects, including residential subdivisions, have large stormwater basins designed to infiltrate or to detain stormwater for a period of time in order to recharge groundwater and reduce downstream flooding.



While these basins are the most visible and recognized stormwater BMPs, there are often many other less obvious stormwater BMPs, such as underground seepage pits or trenches, amended soils, porous pavement or small bio-retention/rain gardens often located on individual residential lots. *A small rain garden is pictured above on the front lawn of a single family home.*

Throughout construction of the land development, the NPDES permit holder(s) (typically the developer and/or builder) are responsible for the proper installation and maintenance of these on-lot BMPs. The permit holder's responsibilities cease upon completion of construction and termination of the NPDES permit, at which time the long-term operation and maintenance obligations often fall upon a Homeowner's Association (HOA) and/or the individual homeowners.

Maintaining On-Lot PCSM & BMPs cont.

Are you responsible for any PCSM BMPs located on your property? If the construction of your home or subdivision required a NPDES permit, the permit holder was required by PA Chapter 102 regulations (§102.8(m)(2)) to record a PCSM Instrument (prior to transferring the property to you) with the County Recorder of Deeds Office. This assures disclosure of any PCSM BMPs on your property and related obligations in the ordinary course of a title search of your property. The recorded PCSM Instrument must identify any PCSM BMPs located on your property, provide access to the PCSM BMP for long-term operation and maintenance, and provide notice that responsibility for the long-term operation and maintenance is a covenant that runs with the land (§102.8(m)(2)). Additionally, NPDES permit conditions (Part C.14.g) require the permit holder to notify you (the purchaser) upon the sale or transfer of any lot or parcel of the location, and access to any PCSM BMPs on your property. They also must notify you of your long-term PCSM BMP operation and maintenance requirements, and obtain your approval through a signed notification/operation and maintenance agreement.

What are typical operation and maintenance PCSM BMP items that you should be checking for?

- Be sure Stormwater Runoff during and after a significant rain event is being captured/ponded and allowed to slowly infiltrate into the underlying soil. Most BMPs (with the exception of wet ponds and constructed wetland filters) should completely dewater within 72 hours through infiltration into the underlying soil or through a perforated underdrain pipe. Avoid sedimentation to and compaction of infiltration BMPs (ex. avoid parking and driving vehicles over the BMP similar to on-lot septic drain fields).
- Establish Vegetation to prevent accelerated soil erosion and sedimentation. Native plants suited to varying wet and dry soil conditions (which provide wildlife and pollinator habitat) are often required and strongly recommended. Non-native, invasive vegetation is strongly discouraged and should be removed as part of routine maintenance.
- Keep Rain Gutters, Downspouts, Catch Basins, Pipe Inlets, Driveway Trench Drains, and Swales free of litter and other obstructions to allow stormwater runoff to enter the intended PCSM BMP.
- Clear Outlet Structures of litter and other obstructions with the exception of emergency gate valves that typically are to remain closed during normal operations and only opened to allow the BMP to dry for routine maintenance and clean out activities.
- Check that Porous Pavement, Concrete, and Pavers are not clogged preventing stormwater infiltration into the porous material. Periodic vacuuming is typically required.

Education & Communication



Our 2020 Envirothon Season is upon us. As we begin our 35th year of environmental education competitions, it is worth noting that at this moment over half a million high school students across North America and China are getting ready to form school teams, receive their new study resources, and prepare to represent their schools in next spring's environmental educational contests. Again, York County is still one of the few counties throughout North America to offer the Envirothon beginning in the 3rd grade.

Our Annual Coaches Meetings, Open Houses - and new this year - our county-wide resource pick-up-locations are coming up in November. All Envirothon coaches - new & returning - must register for one of these options. Invitations and registration forms have been sent to all York County school buildings and emails to all returning Envirothon coaches.

October also marked the start of our 2020 Envirothon Sponsorship Drive. We hope you will consider donating to this worthy cause if you receive a sponsorship packet in the mail. Or contact the Envirothon Co-ordinator at kyoung@yorkccd.org. Your support helps make this event free for all participating schools.

Annual Clay Shoot Envirothon Fundraiser

The York County Conservation District held their **12th Annual Clay Shoot Envirothon Fundraiser** on Friday, September 20th at Central Penn Sporting Clays in Wellsville. The day included a catered barbecue lunch, an afternoon shoot, door prizes, awards and gun raffle. All proceeds benefit the York County Envirothon. Trophies were awarded to **the five top-scoring individual shooters**: David Simmons (1st), Justin Challenger (2nd), Donald Meckley (3rd), Ryan Bailey (4th) and Rick Myers (5th).

The **North Mountain** team, pictured below, took the **High Score Trophy** for the fifth year in a row. The **High Score Youth Trophy** was presented to **Red Lion Senior High Envirothon Team**, and our gun raffle - A300 Outlander 12-gauge Semiautomatic shotgun - was won by Rob Bertram. Certificates were also awarded to the individual shooters in 6th – 10th place overall.



Shannon Wehringer on Team PACD had a fine day afield!



High Score Team Awarded to North Mountain (l-r): Nate Wertz, Chip wertz, Andrew Allbeck, Scott Wertz, Lynn Reece,



Ryan Bailey from Team Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson took 4th Place Individual Shooter



Thank you to our Gun Raffle Sponsors: Senator Mike Regan, and Representatives Dawn Keefer (at left, who helped organize the gun raffle support) Keith Gillespie, Kate Klunk, Stan Saylor, and Mike Jones.



We had a record 103 shooters participating in this year's Clay Shoot. Among them the senior high Envirothon team from Red Lion high school, who won tickets to the event at last spring's Envirothon competition. After a morning practice session with a professional, their safety equipment checks, and shooting chaperones assigned, they took to the course with our registered shooters. After a hearty barbecue lunch, an afternoon shoot, and door prizes aplenty - we don't think they could have had a better day out of class!



Thank you to this year's Clay Shoot Sponsors:

Event Sponsors \$2,000.00: Aquatic Resource Restoration Company **Event Partners \$1,000.00:** Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc., Mr. & Mrs. Randy Barnes, Resource Environmental Solutions, Lauer Construction Services **Station Sponsor \$500.00:** Keystruct Construction, York Ag Products, PPL Electric.

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The YCCD Annual Conservation Awards

The District held its **Annual Conservation Awards Picnic** on Thursday, August 8th at Rocky Ridge Park to present their 2019 Conservation Awards. Each year a committee selects individuals and businesses in York County for recognition of their stewardship and commitment to local conservation efforts. Award recipients were presented with a signed, limited edition framed print by Millicent Neill Decker, while guests enjoyed a catered picnic dinner. This year's recipients were:

Outstanding Ag & Education Educator: Jon Darby. As Education Director of The Horn Farm Center, Jon (at right) is dedicated to educating people about the connectiveness of farming and ecology, and to building community. He has been involved at the Horn Farm since 2008 when he helped conceive of and create their Incubator Farm Project. Jon holds a Permaculture Design Certificate, Permaculture Teacher Certificate and Edible Forest Garden Design Certificate. He currently oversees the Incubator Farm Project, Beekeeper Training Program, the Regenerative Farming Internship, as well as the entire farm's classes and workshops, including helping to teach our senior high Envirothon students.



Representative Stan Saylor, Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill, Mitzi Eaton (and barred owl, Teddi), Kim Young

Outstanding Citizen Conservationist: Mitzi Eaton. Mitzi is one of the few licensed Raptor Rehabilitators in Pennsylvania, licensed by both the PA Game Commission and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. She has been providing this service as a volunteer in York County and our surrounding counties for over 30 years. In addition to Mitzi's efforts caring for injured hawks, owls, eagles, and other birds of prey, in an effort to return them back into their natural habitat, she has provided outstanding public educational programs continuously for over three decades. Her programs focus on her work as a raptor rehabilitator as well as focusing on the importance of preserving the biodiversity of York County.

Outstanding Conservation Farmer - North: Dale & Sondra Bentz, Wellsville (at right). It's always been important to the Bentz's to do things "the right way." They have worked hard to improve waterways on his farm to provide preferred shape, width and grass cover. Along with grass hay, he grows no-till soybeans and no-till wheat in contour strips. His well-maintained farm has also been recognized by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture with the distinction of a Pennsylvania Century Farm. For this recognition the same family must have owned their farm for at least one hundred years consecutively and a family member must reside on the property of at least 10 acres and gross over \$1,000.00 annually from farm products.



Commissioner Susan Byrnes, seated with award, YCCD Board members and Commissioner Doug Hoke (standing 3rd from right)



Distinguished Service Award: Commissioner Susan Byrnes.

Since serving as a County Commissioner and District Board Member, Commissioner Byrnes has faithfully attended Board meetings and District Functions, and been completely engaged with the District's Mission and its unique natural resource conservation issues. She has taken a leadership role in York County employee recruitment and retention, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Planning, Water Quality & Stormwater Management issues, and Land Preservation & Protection concerns, to name just a few. Commissioner Byrnes reviews the issues, asks thoughtful questions and seeks solutions, always willing to take the lead in engaging local, state and federal elected officials and agency staff. Admired for making decisions and taking positions on issues based on what is good for the citizens of York County and future generations, instead of what might be popular in the next election cycle. Not seeking re-election, her sense of duty will be missed.

Outstanding Conservation Farmers: James & Janet Archer.

The Archers operate a 200-milking-cow dairy in MD & PA with their York County farm housing about 50 heifers. Best Management Practices (BMPs) installed on this particular portion of their farm are a Barnyard Heavy Use Area Protection, a Heavy Use Area Protection to control manure & runoff, a Waste Transfer System, a Roof Runoff Control Structure, and a Diversion is present on the farm to divert clean water. The BMPs are well maintained, their Manure Management Plan is followed, and their records are well-kept. Preserving their soil for a productive farming operation is important to them. They have faced challenges, but feel their conservation efforts have helped them weather those challenges and now their daughters are involved in the farming operation and have diversified with a wedding barn and educational tours.



Standing: Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill, Commissioner Doug Hoke, Director Kenyon Miller. Seated: James & Janet Archer



Watershed Specialist

Water Quality Monitoring, by Gary Peacock

KEEPING YORK COUNTY'S CLEAN WATER CLEAN

York County's Commissioners have made a bold, cost-savings investment in water-quality-monitoring to protect and enhance the health, welfare and quality of life important to all county residents. **York County is partnering with the United States Geologic Survey to upgrade three existing water-quality and water-quantity monitoring stations.**

They will also install three new water quality monitoring stations, to measure and collect continuous, in-stream nutrient and sediment data in 90% of York County's streams in real-time. The water monitoring network is expected to be installed and operational in early 2020. This will provide county government and agencies water quantity and quality information every 15 minutes, 24-hours each day, 365 days per year, for five years. *Continued on next page.*

Water Quality Monitoring continued.

Our increasing county population, changing weather patterns, and more intense land and water resource demands by businesses, farms, homes, roadways, etc. have accelerated soil and water erosion and polluted our local creeks, lakes, ponds, and wetlands with excess nutrients and sediment. The Commonwealth is looking to York County to reduce its nitrogen loading in local waterways by 4 million pounds by 2025, at an estimated cost of more than \$20 million dollars.

Commissioner Susan Byrnes says she voted for the “very important real-time water quality monitoring because clean water is vital to the health of our community.” Commissioner Doug Hoke agrees, adding, “This investment is a positive step and will provide accurate data which will help York County keep our water clean.” Clean Water is everyone’s responsibility! What can residents do? Stop using chemicals on your lawns, empty your septic tanks, remove debris from storm water drains and educate yourself about the importance of clean water. Both agree that together we can save taxpayer dollars and have clean water in York County and the Chesapeake Bay.

Local municipal governments can improve stormwater management by reducing any polluted runoff and accelerated streambank erosion in their townships and boroughs. Farmers can save time and money by using less nitrogen & phosphorous fertilizers, and less pesticides on crops by timing split applications. They can also maintain soil health, use cover crops, plant streamside vegetative buffers, fence livestock and horses out of their streams, and continue barnyard improvements.

At right: USGS Station #01575585 Codorus Creek at Pleasureville (upstream side of Sherman Street bridge - State Highway 24.



Water-quality-monitoring enhancement will continue to help York County and Pennsylvania meet the Chesapeake Bay clean-up mandates in 2025 and save taxpayers money too! With actual water-quality data, if positive seasonal and geographical trends show improving water quality, then some permitting and regulatory nightmares can be reduced or even eliminated. Conversely, if trends show high nitrogen concentrations in the water, we can target nutrient reduction efforts based on source identification (who is responsible), and then knock on doors to keep additional regulatory requirements at bay (no pun intended).

Clean water, less taxes, and less government are a win-win for healthy communities & vibrant economies. Environmental quality is to be enjoyed and shared by all of York County’s residents today, and future generations.

Pictured with a York County Community Foundation Grant check to help fund the Water Watershed Stewards Fun Family Fishing Day in the city of York. (L-R): Gary Peacock, Watershed Specialist; Roth Preap, Grants Program Associate; Jodi Sulpizio, PSCE Water Educator/Master Watershed Stewards Coordinator; Ted Evgeniadis, Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper



The York County Ag Preservation Program

Patty McCandless, Program Director
118 Pleasant Acres Road, Suite F
York PA 17402
717-840-7400 / Monday-Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm



As of September 2019, the County Ag Land Preserve Board reports the preservation of 288 farms, covering 43,055 acres in 29 municipalities across York County. Claire, Dave and I wrapped up a busy season of reviewing easement applications. A grand total 48 applications, covering 5,118 acres applied throughout 2019. We received an additional 19 inquiries to the program during the year. The County Board selected 2 farms, on 500 acres, to begin the year.

Other efforts in the office include the preparation for our move to the new location. Our new address will be 2401 Pleasant Valley Road Suite 101, York PA 17402. The facility is to be called York County at Pleasant Valley Road. As we pack 30 years of files and records for the move, it remains clear we never threw anything away.

The Ag Land Preservation Board has also been busy reviewing our Program Guidelines. Recently during the September Board meeting, additional changes to the program were approved. Major changes include; replacing the current continuous application sign up with a deadline of February 15 each year. The ranking list will be released once following evaluation of all easement applications. Applicants are limited to two revisions of the application during each application cycle. Additionally, in an effort to reduce our extensive backlog, the County Board includes an option to freeze the ranking list for up to three years. We believe this will allow a wider variety of farms into the program. The County Board shall determine during the first board meeting of each year, if the ranking list shall be frozen and the duration of the hold on the list. Another change under discussion involves applications where dwelling rights have been removed or transferred by the current owner for speculative purposes. Applications will be considered however for allocated dwelling rights used for immediate family members. The easement purchase cap was reduced to \$3,000 per acre. The recent passage of Act 33 amends the easement program statewide to allow the owner of a preserved farm to relinquish the one additional residential right granted by a conservation easement or exclude an existing farmhouse. The full details of the program changes will be shared during a fall informational meeting, Wednesday, December 11, 2019 at 7 PM in Room 1 of the County Annex Building located at 118 Pleasant Acres Road in York.

A recent public opinion poll was conducted by the York Land Protection Committee through a grant from York County Community Foundation and Powder Mill Foundation to gauge the interest of York citizens relating to continued land protection efforts. That deadline closed September 20 and the results will be examined by the workgroup. It is important to note, preserved farms in York County are privately owned and pay real estate taxes to their municipalities which help balance a community's budget. Farms overall require few public services beyond fire protection. Farms provide food and fiber while helping to offset the costs of growth within a community. A recent YouTube Video, Losing Ground, does an excellent job of illustrating the situation we face in our country. They report, only 1% of the US population is feeding the other 99%. We are losing three acres of farmland every minute.

Landowners interested in preserving their farmland may contact the agency at (717) 840-7400, or visit www.YorkCountyPA.gov.

Office Hours are 8 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday. We are located in the County Annex Building at 118 Pleasant Acres Road, York.

STAY TUNED for our move in December to 2401 Pleasant Valley Road York.





Conservation Horizons
York County
Conservation District
118 Pleasant Acres Road
York PA 17402

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York, PA

"I speak for the trees,
for the trees have no tongues.
And I'm asking you, sir,
at the top of my lungs."

— The Lorax
by Dr. Suess

Would you like to be on our mailing list?

Our newsletter, *Conservation Horizons*, is published three times each year - free - to over 8,000 homes & businesses. To be put on our mailing list call 717-840-7430 or email yorkccd@yorkccd.org.

If you would rather **"Go Green"** and save paper, send us an email request and put "electronic newsletter" in the subject line.

Need to change your address or your status on our mailing list? Just let us know. **And by the way - we never share our mailing list with anyone!**

YCCD District Calendar

November 2019

Nov 5 Office Closed - Election Day
Nov 11 Veterans Day - Office Closed
Nov 13 Sr High Envirothon Coaches Meeting
Nov 14 YCCD Board Mtg – 7:00 pm Annex
Nov 19, 20 3rd - 8th Grades Envirothon Coaches
Open Houses (Nixon Park)
Nov 28, 29 Thanksgiving Holiday - Office Closed

December 2019

Dec 13 YCCD Board Mtg - 11:00 am Annex
Dec 19 DGLVR QAB Meeting
Dec 25 Christmas Holiday - Office Closed

January 2020

Jan 1 New Year's Day - Office Closed
Jan 10 YCCD Board Mtg. 11:00 am Annex
Jan 20 Martin Luther King Day - Office Closed
Jan 22, 23 PACD/SCC Winter Mtg.
Wyndham Garden, State College

February 2020

Feb 8-12 NACD 2019 Annual Meeting,
Las Vegas, Nevada
Feb 14 YCCD Board Mtg, 11:00 am Annex
Feb 17 Presidents Day - Office Closed