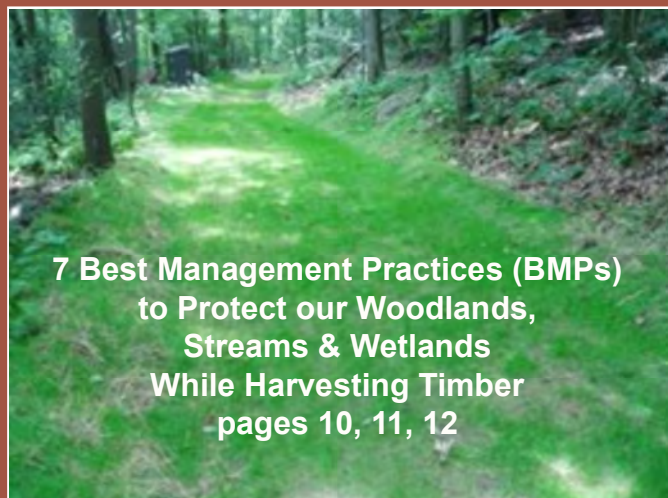


# Conservation Horizons

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**7 Best Management Practices (BMPs)  
to Protect our Woodlands,  
Streams & Wetlands  
While Harvesting Timber  
pages 10, 11, 12**

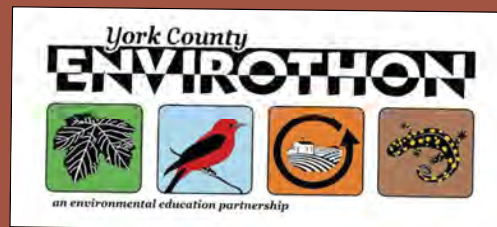
## Annual Seedling Sale Coming Page 9



**Changes to REAP  
&  
Conservation Excellence  
Grant Applications now  
being accepted  
See Ag Resources - 8 & 9**

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## **The Envirothon Goes Virtual!**

Turn to page 13 for details on our 2021 Envirothon Season. It will be different for sure - but there will be a 2021 Envirothon for all four of our grade levels.

## 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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Robin Sharp	Administrative Assistant II
Eric Jordan	Assistant Manager for Programs
Robert Fetter	E&S Resource Conservationist/ Network Administrator
Tiffany Crum	Engineering Technician II
Zachary Fry	Engineering Technician I
Tom Smith	Engineering Technician I
Nicholas Hoffman	Engineering Technician I
Mark Flaharty	Sr. Ag Resource Conservationist
James Myers	PRN Ag Resource Conservationist
Joe Rebert	Ag Resource Cons. Specialist II
Brita Runkle	Ag Resource Cons. Specialist II
Stephen Miller	Ag Resource Cons. Specialist I
Troy Zirkle	Ag Resource Cons. Specialist I
Melodie Jones	Ag Resource Cons. Specialist I
Emily Neideigh	Watershed Specialist
Alyssa Swartz	Watershed Program Technician
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# Around the District

*Introducing new faces & saying goodbye*



**President Commissioner Julie Dietz Wheeler** (at right in center, on a recent farm visit with the Leroy Walker family) serves as one of the directors on our board. Born and raised in York County, she graduated from Dallastown High School, where she has served on their Dollars for Scholars Board, volunteered with Dallastown's Ethical Decision-Making Program, and been a member of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. In 2013 she was honored their "People Who Make a Difference Award," and in 2015, a scholarship was presented in her honor.

A graduate of Randolph-Macon Women's College, she's done research at The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, worked at Adhesives Research as a chemist, and for the past 23 years served with General Electric (GE). During this same time she has been active as a mentor to women in business through numerous organizations.

Leaving the corporate world to run for public office in 2019, Wheeler believes real world experience, business acumen, and servant leadership are essential skills for public leaders. She is now our President Commissioner, overseeing a nearly \$600 million annual budget and over 2,000 employees.

Enjoying her position on our board, she has spend numerous days visiting and learning from local farmers. Commissioner Wheeler says, "Agriculture is a huge of part of not only our past, but our present, and our future. It is part of York County's Legacy and Heritage."



## Around the District *continued...*



Our newest Ag Resource Conservation Specialist I is **Melodie Jones**. The fourth generation to grow up on her family's Danville beef farm, Melodie has been involved in 4-H, raising market goats and pigs, and some crop farming. But her first love is cows.

Her family has about 70 head of Angus cows. She has also worked on a small dairy farm while in high school and interned with both Penn State Extension and the York County Parks.

Melodie is not new to the work of Conservation Districts, as her family did a significant amount of work with Montour County District, where their farm is located, and with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS).

She has witnessed first-hand the benefits and aid provided to farmers by these organizations and wanted to be a part of their work. But first she thought she may go into the field of education, changing her major between education and sustainability numerous times at Messiah. In the end, she chose conservation, which she has since discovered, involves a great deal of teaching sustainability practices to the people she comes into contact with through her work. So she really is doing both.

Currently living in Gettysburg, in her free time Melodie enjoys cooking, baking and gardening. But her new go-to-hobby in the time of Covid-19 is crocheting, and of course, those cows! We welcome Melodie to our team.

**Alyssa Swartz is our new Watershed Technician.** For a position that requires a great deal of field work, this seems like a perfect fit. Alyssa loves to spend time outdoors walking, running, hunting & fishing, or simply reading a book in her hammock.

A graduate of Northern High School, and McDaniel College - where she majored in Environmental Biology and Environmental Policy & Management, she lives on Beaver Creek, her family's property in Dillsburg.

Alyssa has both national and international experience in watersheds, having traveled to and studied in the southeast Peruvian Amazon, and the Flathead River in Montana and British Columbia. She also completed semester-long riparian buffer zone projects and spent time teaching oceanography in Long Island Sound before completing her degrees and joining us.

Growing up in York County, Alyssa has a strong connection to the region, and wants to serve the community and land she says has been a part of her entire life.

She was drawn to the District because she wanted to devote herself to a team that works as environmental stewards.

Welcome aboard Alyssa!







**Troy Zirkle** is also a new Ag Resource Conservation Specialist I with our Ag Department, but he start work with us several months ago. Troy graduated from Northeastern High School and graduated from West Virginia University. He and his wife Kathy operated a dairy farm in his hometown of Strinestown, while raising four children.

Although recently retired from dairy farming, Troy and Kathy are still cropping, with an emphasis on grass hay production. Kathy also works as an administrative assistant at Church of the Open Door in York, where they have attended for many years.

Troy's experience for this position comes from a lifetime of farming, and the transition from a dairy farmer to a crop farmer. He loves interacting and working with people who care for their animals and their land, and believes working for the District will give him the opportunity to use his past experiences to be a resource for those he is serving as a District employee.

Troy says, "Farming the same ground that our family has farmed for three generations have given me an appreciation for conservation. I strongly believe that while the use of resources must provide a profitable margin for today's operators, the resources must be managed with the wellbeing of future generations in mind."

**After fifteen years as Education & Communications Coordinator, this is my last issue of the Conservation Horizons newsletter.** While my retirement has been planned for some time, this was not how I envisioned my last year of full-time work. Being the Envirothon Coordinator is a large part of my responsibility with the District. We had a lot planned for the 35th Anniversary of this long-running international environmental competition last year. But Covid-19 had other plans. All our spring events were cancelled, and shortly after, I was furloughed for most of spring and early summer (missing the summer newsletter). But even after I returned to the office, "normal" was still out of our grasp.

No doubt there is a lot of change underway, but a great deal of that change is positive. All of which should bring fresh, new energy into both our office and our programs. Check out our Education section in this issue for details on how our 2021 Envirothon Season will proceed – and I am happy to say it will proceed. And then look for news about the new Education & Communications Coordinator in the next issue of our newsletter.

While I have thoroughly enjoyed my role as Envirothon Coordinator, I have also had great fun producing these newsletters. Thanks to the beautiful artwork of Millicent Neill Decker, putting together the newsletters has especially been a joy. Her egg tempera paintings have graced the cover of almost every issue I have worked on, including this one. Creating a publication around these images would make anyone's work look good. So, to Penny, thank you again for allowing me to benefit from your talents, and for always donating a share of your profits to the District's educational programs. It has been a gift.

Thank you to the District and our board for providing such a supportive and pleasant atmosphere for work. That's a hard thing to accomplish, and we all have our manager, Mark Kimmel, to thank for keeping the pieces of the puzzle intact and keeping up the good fight. It takes a lot of passion and commitment to work in conservation these days. After nearly 40 years in this career, I am ready to move on into the volunteer community, but I am happily relieved and incredibly impressed with the quality of people coming into this field. I think you will be too. It has been a pleasure to play my part . **Kim J Young**



# Ag Resources

By Stephen Miller -Ag Resource Conservation Specialist



## Conservation Excellence Grant Program Applications Currently Being Accepted

The District is currently accepting applications for the Conservation Excellence Grant (CEG) Program. The CEG Program was rolled out by the State Conservation Commission in June and local response has been positive. The CEG is a new state-funded program with the purpose of providing financial & technical assistance for the implementation of best management practices (BMPs) on agricultural operations. Financial assistance is provided to program applicants through grants, loans and tax credits, or a combination of all three. A single grant awarded by the district to an eligible applicant may not exceed \$250,000. Projects with total costs exceeding \$25,000 are subject to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage Act. Grant funding is available for small projects with costs totaling less than \$25,000.



*Stream Crossings are a priority practice*

CEG Program applications are available now from the Conservation District. Applicants can also find more details on eligibility, priority projects, and program guidelines and requirements for program participants on the Conservation District website at [yorkccd.org](http://yorkccd.org).

**For information or if you need help completing an application**, email Stephen Miller @ [smiller@yorkccd.org](mailto:smiller@yorkccd.org) or Mark Flaharty @ [mflaharty@yorkccd.org](mailto:mflaharty@yorkccd.org). Or call the Conservation District at (717) 840-7430 and ask for either Ag staff member.

CEG Program funds are to be used for proposed projects, such as, implement planned BMPs from an Ag E&S Plan, Conservation Plan, Nutrient Management Plan or a Manure Management Plan that has been developed for an agricultural operation. Priority practices include livestock exclusion fencing, off-stream livestock watering facilities, stream crossings, riparian buffers, barnyard and feedlot runoff abatement, waste storage facilities, streambank protection, cover crops, and planning BMPs (Ag E&S Plan, Conservation Plan, Nutrient Management Plan, Manure Management Plan). Combining multiple priority practices improves application scoring. For those thinking ahead to 2021, CEG can be a good option for financial assistance to implement cover crops. Contact us early if you are considering submitting a CEG application for fall 2021 cover crops.





## Changes to the REAP Program

The Resource Enhancement and Protection program, otherwise known as REAP, is a Pennsylvania state tax credit program through the State Conservation Commission to help cover costs for best management practices (BMPs) related to plan writing, construction of practices, equipment for no-till and cover crop plantings, cover crop installation, and nutrient application. Applicants are eligible for 50%-75% reimbursement for BMPs to be used as credit towards taxes. If using REAP for something other than plan-writing costs, the program does require the applicant have an Ag Erosion & Sediment/Conservation Plan and manure/nutrient management plan on all farms under management control. This includes both owned and rented land.

Recently the program was updated to target agriculturally impaired watersheds classified as TMDL (totally maximum daily load) areas.

This includes all of York County as it is located in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. For these TMDL areas, like York County, the program enhanced the tax credit return to 90% for the installation of riparian forest buffers, buffer maintenance, and associated practices related to livestock exclusion and stream crossings (at right).



The application period is open. The state has been allocated \$10 million for tax credits for applicants on a first-come, first-serve basis. To find out more about the REAP program you can contact Joel Semke with the State Conservation Commission at 717-705-4032, Brita Runkle with the York County Conservation District at 717-840-7430 or visit our website at <https://www.yorkccd.org/>.

## Our 2021 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 forms will also be available on our website @ [www.yorkccd.org](http://www.yorkccd.org)

**Order Deadline: March 22nd - Pick up Orders Thursday, April 15th  
10:00 am - 6:00 pm @ Rocky Ridge Park (off Mount Zion Road)**



We offer a variety of 2-3 year-old, bare-root seedlings between 18"-24."  
Peach & apple trees run 4'-6'.  
This year's choices include white oak, dogwood, and persimmon, with many other deciduous and evergreen species available. We will also have blueberry & raspberry bushes, pachysandra & more.  
*Please note we do not offer mature trees as pictured.*



# Erosion & Sediment Control

E&S Program Accomplishments for February - August 2020



Preconstruction meetings	36	General NPDES Issued	68
New Plan Reviews	155	Complaints Investigated	125
Revised Plan Reviews	93	Total site inspections	657
Total Project Acres	2,890	Total Disturbed Acres	650

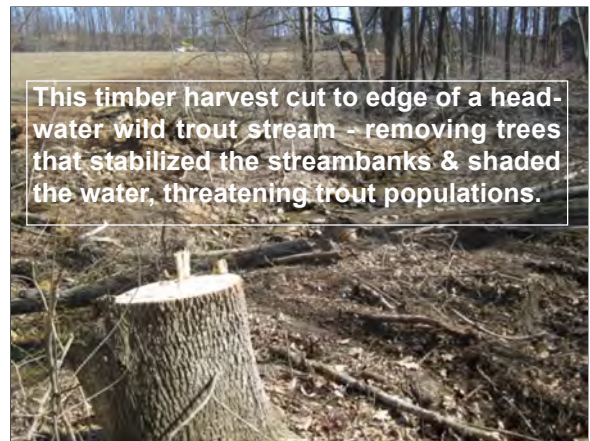
## Seven Best Management Practices (BMPs) To Protect Our Woodlands, Streams & Wetlands While Harvesting Timber

*by Eric Jordan, Assistant Manager for Programs*

**Considering selling your timber? Please follow these BMPs to ensure good forest stewardship:**

**1) Resist selling your valuable timber to the first buyer who knocks at your door.** Avoid the all-too-common practice of “high-grading” which involves harvesting only the larger diameter, highest value timber and leaving the lowest value, undesirable trees to regenerate the future stand. Contact your PA DCNR Service Forester (Matthew Kern, 717-637-1770, [mkern@pa.gov](mailto:mkern@pa.gov)) and/or select a private consulting forester who can assist you in managing your woodland for short and long-term benefits. The PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Bureau of Forestry maintains a list of private consulting foresters at [www.dcnr.pa.gov](http://www.dcnr.pa.gov). Be mindful of the presence of invasive species such as Tree-of-Heaven, mile-a-minute vine, Japanese stilt grass, and multiflora rose and consult with a qualified forester to determine what control measures can be taken to keep your harvested woodland from becoming an unsightly thicket that chokes out the natural regeneration of beneficial native species. Take the long view over short-term economic gain to ensure that you leave your woodlands a better place for future generations.

**2) Develop and implement an Erosion and Sediment (E&S) Pollution Control plan as required by State Chapter 102 regulations.** Timber harvesting, especially during wet conditions and on steep wooded slopes, can result in significant sediment pollution to otherwise clean streams. Refer to DEP’s “Erosion and Sediment Control (E&S) Plan Template for a Timber Harvesting Operation” located on our website at [www.yorkccd.org](http://www.yorkccd.org) under the Erosion and Sediment Control tab for assistance in developing an E&S plan. The E&S plan will outline the sediment control BMPs to be used during the timber harvest.



Typical BMPs include, but are not limited to, a rock construction entrance to prevent mud from being tracked out onto public roadways from logging trucks; silt fence, filter socks, or strawbale barriers located downslope of log landings to prevent sediment-laden runoff from entering any receiving streams or wetlands; and waterbars (i.e. earthen berms that look like speed bumps) across skid trails and haul roads to dissipate sediment-laden runoff into wooded filter strips rather than allowing runoff to concentrate down skid trails and erode into the nearest stream or wetland. Please feel free to contact the District E&S staff well-in-advance of your timber harvest if you need technical assistance in developing the E&S plan. We would much rather be proactive and work with you as opposed to reacting to complaints on sites that have significant erosion and sedimentation issues due to a lack of planning.



## **BMPs While Harvesting Timber, *continued***

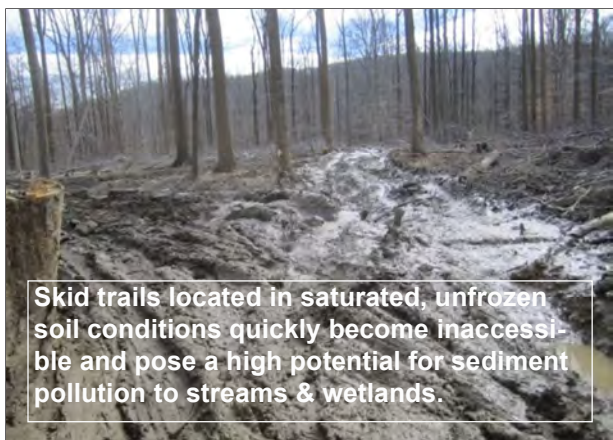
**3) Protect riparian forest buffers.** A riparian forest buffer is a forested area along both sides of a stream that serves as a filter strip to allow sediment to settle out before reaching a stream. As a timber harvesting BMP, riparian forest buffers provide the “most bang for your buck” as they not only filter and process pollutants, but also provide valuable wildlife and aquatic habitat, stabilize streambanks, and shade and cool the stream. Colder water holds more dissolved oxygen which is critical for trout survival and reproduction. As of July 2020, the PA Fish & Boat Commission has surveyed and identified 59 streams totaling nearly 266 miles in York County that have naturally reproducing wild brown trout populations indicative of relatively clean water. Many of these wild trout streams are headwater streams concentrated in the southeastern portion of the county that are mostly bordered by riparian forest buffers often located on steep slopes. This demonstrates how critical riparian forest buffers are to providing cold, clean water. While trees may be harvested from riparian forest buffers or filter strips, extreme care should be taken as Chapter 102 regulations require BMPs to avoid and minimize thermal impacts to streams. DEP recommends an average minimum 100' riparian forest buffer width and a minimum 150' buffer width along streams designated as High Quality or Exceptional Value. For more information on protecting and managing riparian forest buffers, please see DEP's “Riparian Forest Buffer Guidance” located on our website at [www.yorkccd.org](http://www.yorkccd.org) under the Erosion and Sediment Control tab.



**4) Avoid disturbing wetlands.** Surface depressions where water collects and ponds for part of the year (known as “vernal pools” where tadpoles are often found), spring seeps and other low-lying areas where wet loving plants occur may be “wetlands” that are protected by state Chapter 105 regulations and Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act. Skunk cabbage, jewelweed, sensitive fern, alder (shrub), willows, and sycamore trees are just a few common forested wetland indicator plants. Wetlands located in or along the floodplain of wild trout streams (as discussed above) are considered “Exceptional Value” and deserve special protection as they are critical to maintaining water quality, base flow to streams during times of drought, and critical habitat. Disturbing wetlands for construction of haul roads and placement of fill may require Chapter 105 and/or Section 404 permits. Avoid getting bogged down with permits and stuck up to your axles in mud by steering clear of wetlands!

**5) Carefully locate your log landings, haul roads, and skid trails.** The act of cutting trees at the stump creates little to no earth disturbance but the installation of log landings, haul roads, and skid trails - especially near streams and wetlands - is where most erosion and sedimentation issues occur. Whenever possible, log landings and haul roads should be located on the high and dry portions of the site to avoid impacts to environmentally sensitive areas and to allow for better drainage which will provide for better access and less soil compaction as compared to low lying areas. It is recommended that haul roads and skid trails follow the contour as much as possible with grades no less than 2% and a maximum of 10%. Grades of up to 20% can be used for short distances where necessary. Waterbars are a critical BMP and should direct runoff off of haul roads and skid trails and into wooded filter strips. Waterbars should never discharge sediment-laden runoff directly into streams or wetlands.

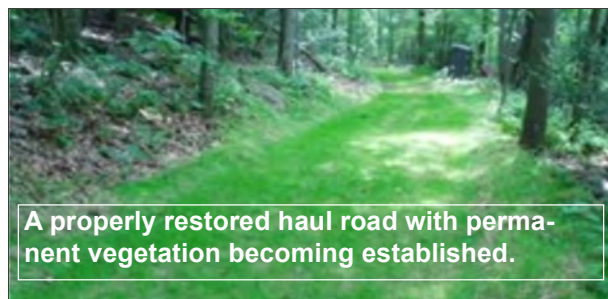
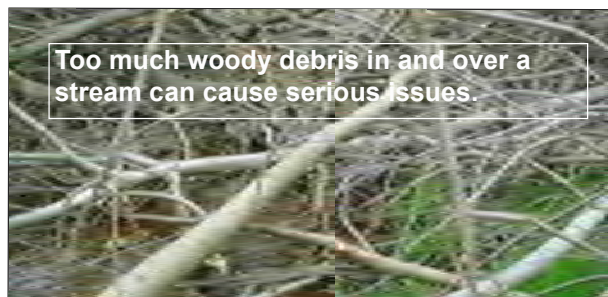
Stream crossings should be avoided or minimized when laying out the road system. **Skidding timber through and across streams is not permitted.** If stream crossings are needed, a temporary timber bridge should be used. Stream crossings will most likely require a PA DEP Chapter 105 General Permit (GP) 7 for minor road crossings or a GP-8 for temporary road crossings. The York County Conservation District does not administer the Chapter 105 permitting program for DEP. If you have any questions regarding the need for DEP Chapter 105 permits you should contact Jonathan Chapnick – Biologists/Soil Scientist (ph. #717-705-4821, [jchripczuk@pa.gov](mailto:jchripczuk@pa.gov)) or Adam Hackenberger – Engineer (ph. #717-705-4822, [adhackenbe@pa.gov](mailto:adhackenbe@pa.gov)) with the DEP Southcentral Region Office Waterways and Wetlands Permits Section. Equipment should not enter wetlands. If timber must be removed from wetlands, skidding should occur during the drier seasons or while the ground is frozen to avoid rutting.



**6) Remove felled treetops, branches and slash from stream channels.** While woody debris is a critical component of in-stream trout habitat, too much of a good thing can create other problems as the debris reduces access for fishing and swimming; and clogs the stream resulting in blocked road culverts, flooding, and accelerated erosion of streambanks. Before your logger leaves the job make sure he/she has removed excessive woody debris from bank to bank, removed and stabilized all temporary stream crossings, and has collected all oil and fuel containers and any other trash that could enter stream and wetlands.

**7) Restore and permanently seed log landings, haul roads, and skid trails.** Immediately upon completion of logging activities all ruts should be removed from log landings, haul roads, and skid trails and they should be permanently seeded. Grass species that grow well in partial shade and acidic conditions, such as creeping red fescue and redtop, are recommended.

Permanent waterbars are strongly recommended on steep haul roads and skid trails to dissipate runoff into downslope wooded filter strips. Properly restored “logging roads” can provide for access to your property for outdoor recreation such as hunting, fishing, and horseback riding, and future timber management activities while retired log landings can be planted into beneficial wildlife food plots. Let us be good stewards and leave our woodlands, streams, and wetlands better than we found them.





# Education & Communication



Please note that due to Covid-19 precautions, our Annual Conservation Awards Picnic, held each August, and our Annual Clay Shoot Envirothon Fundraiser, held each September, were both cancelled. We thank everyone for their understanding.

The **Annual York County Conservation District's College Scholarships Program** has been extended to due Covid-19. The deadline for applications is now **December 31, 2020**. Each year the District provides two \$1,000.00 College Scholarships to York County residents pursuing degrees in conservation or related areas. **For more information & a full application packet**, please go to our website @ <https://www.yorkccd.org/education/college-scholarships>.

Last year's scholarship recipients were Alyssa Swartz, profiled in our spring newsletter and a recent hire to our Watershed Team, and **Patrick Trostle**. Patrick (at right) is a graduate of Northeastern High School, currently attending York College, majoring in biology. Patrick says his passion for conservation was fueled by a high school biology teacher whose mentorship helped him understand how the preservation of our natural world is a fundamental & important part of our everyday lives. The experience molded his decision to major in this field in hopes of making a difference in his community's efforts to preserve its natural resources. Most recently, he has trained and volunteered with the Penn State Master Watershed Stewardship Program, enabling him to connect with people with different viewpoints from all walks of life.



York County

# ENVIROTHON



Despite all our grand intentions, **Envirothon 2020 - the 35th Anniversary of the York County Envirothons, was cancelled due to Covid-19**. It was a disappointment, of course. But thanks to our generous sponsors, we were still able to reward the over 1,000 students who had been preparing for their spring competitions all year. Over the summer all of the Team T-shirts were delivered to coaches in almost every building in almost every School District in the county. Tests, Study Resources, Study Session Programs and more are all being rolled over to our 2021 Season. **Envirothon 2021 will be a Virtual Competition** for each of our four grade-level events.



The Pennsylvania Envirothon will also be going virtual for their spring competition, so we will be following their lead and using their templates for timed online tests. **Registered coaches & teams will receive a link on specific days at specific times in order to take their tests and compete for trophies, ribbons and prizes.** There is still much to be organized & announced, but we are pleased to be able to still offer the Envirothon to so many deserving students.

We also want to congratulate **Anna Hawkins** - pictured at left. Anna was the **recipient of the Paul Wilson \$500.00 Conservation Award**, presented to a student on their Senior High Envirothon team. A York Homeschool team member, Anna plans to use her award for her college education.

# Watersheds

Emily Neideigh, Watershed Specialist



## What can you do to protect groundwater resources?

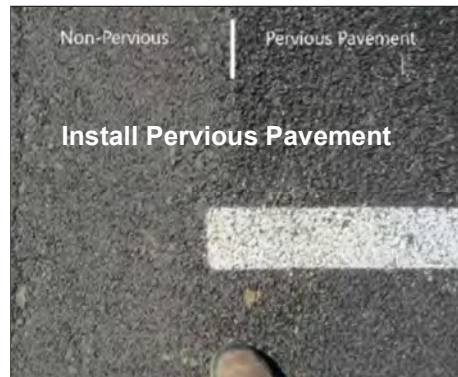
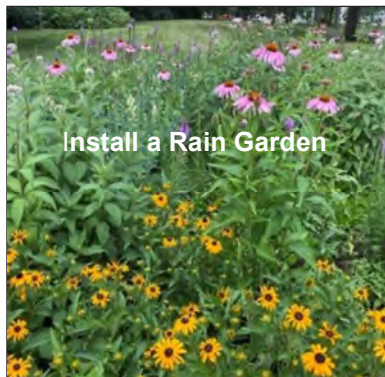
Groundwater protection strategies can fall into two categories: structural and behavioral. Structural practices are those based on modifications in plumbing, fixtures, or water supply operating procedures, while behavioral are practices based on changing water use habits. Below are some examples of each as they apply to different sectors. Implementing one or several of either the structural or behavioral practices can go a long way in protecting our vital groundwater resources.

### Structural practices:

**1. Residence:** Indoor water use accounts for 60% of all residential use, with toilets, showers, and faucets representing two-thirds of the total indoor use. Consider installing low-flush toilets and low-flow shower-heads.

**2. Business:** Pervious pavement

**3. Farmer:** No-till Practices & Cover Crops



### Behavioral practices:

**1. Residence:** Run dishwasher only when it's full; Turn off water when brushing teeth; Take shorter showers; Turn off water when soaping in the shower; Wash car on lawn to reduce runoff.

**2. Business:** Irrigate lawn in the early morning or evening.

**3. Farmer:** Apply fertilizer as needed.



Utilizing a shower timer can encourage mindfulness of water consumption (left). Introducing a timer-run irrigation system simplifies focusing on dawn & dusk irrigation (center). Discolored/yellow leaves indicate nitrogen deficiency in corn crops (right)



## The York County Ag Preservation Program

Patty McCandless, Program Director  
2401 Pleasant Valley Road, Suite 101, Room 145  
York PA 17402  
717-840-7400 / Monday-Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm



The Ag Land Preservation staff has settled nicely into our new office with ample work space. We sadly had to say goodbye to Claire last spring when she moved to South Dakota, and are currently searching for a new Farmland Preservation Monitor to assist us with easement provisions and help with farm visits. To date, our agency has preserved 290 working farms, covering 43,565.86 acres in 29 municipalities. Those preserved farms are required to have an inspection visit every other year, so we will welcome the additional help.

Our office wrapped up a busy winter reviewing easement applications. A total of 79 applications and inquiries, covering 6,951 acres, have been received in 2020. In May & June 2020, the Board selected 16 farms on an estimated 1,507 acres for preservation using 2020 and 2021 county and state funds. In comparison, only two farms on 500 acres were selected in 2019. The next application round for landowners will begin February 15, 2022, as we use 2020 and 2021 easement funds to process the 50 applications ranked in 2020.

Interested landowners are encouraged to learn about eligibility requirements and submit their preliminary application early, preferably by appointment. Staff will review with landowners to determine if their farm qualifies for preservation. Qualifying applications must be enrolled in an Ag Security Area (ASA), have a conservation plan 50 % completed, and have a gross farm income of \$10,000 per year as a three-year-average. In addition, each farm must be greater than 50 acres in size or over 10 acres of production land and touch a preserved farm. Finally, the farmland tract must contain 50% or more soils in class 1-4 which is available for crop production or grazing purposes. Serious conservation concerns can also disqualify a farm from the program. Eligibility requirements must be met by February 15, 2022.

A public meeting this winter will kick off the 2022 round. Landowners will learn about program requirements, easement restrictions, and receive help with the application. Conservation plans and current conservation law will also be discussed by USDA-NRCS and YCCD Partners. We will also offer assistance with ASA or conservation plan applications. Since it can take 6 months or longer to get in ASA or obtain a conservation plan, starting early is key to a successful application.

Applicants who were ranked in 2020 must reapply to update their application for the 2022 round. A few reminders to all applicants is the YCALPB's 2019 Cap Policy which prohibits easement purchases over \$ 3,000.00 per acre. Also the passage of Act 33 of 2019 by the PA General Assembly amends the easement program regulations to allow owners of a preserved farm to exclude an existing farmstead in lieu of the one additional residential right granted by a conservation easement. All of these program specifics and updates will be shared during the Winter 2021 public meeting.

Did you know? Preserved farms are privately owned and pay real estate taxes which help balance community fiscal budgets - offsetting costs of growth? Farms require fewer public services than developed lands. Farms provide food, fiber, and jobs. Farms recharge our groundwater, and farms provide important wildlife habitat.

A YouTube Video, "Losing Ground," does an excellent job of illustrating the situation we face in America. Farmers are only 1% of the US population but feed the 99%. Yet, we still lose three acres every minute in the U.S. to nonagricultural uses.



Landowners interested in preserving their farmland may contact us during normal business hours:  
Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm. Or visit us on the county website at [www.YorkCountyPA.gov](http://www.YorkCountyPA.gov).  
Address & contact information above.



**Conservation Horizons**  
York County  
Conservation District  
2401 Pleasant Valley Road  
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York PA 17402

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York, PA

*"Never doubt that a small group of  
thoughtful, committed citizens can  
change the world; indeed, it's the only  
thing that ever has."*

— Margaret Mead

### **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](mailto: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 2020**

Nov 3 Office Closed - Election Day  
Nov 11 Veterans Day - Office Closed  
Nov 12 YCCD Board Mtg – 7:00 pm Annex  
Nov 19 Dirt Gravel Low Volume Road App Due  
Nov 26, 27 Thanksgiving Holiday - Office Closed

#### **December 2020**

Dec. 4 Ethon School Registrations Due  
Dec 11 YCCD Board Mtg - 11:00 am  
PVR Office Rm 148  
Dec 17 DGLVR QAB Meeting  
Dec 25 Christmas Holiday - Office Closed

#### **January 2021**

Jan 1 New Year's Day - Office Closed  
Jan 8 YCCD Board Mtg. 11:00 am  
PVR Office Rm 148  
Jan 18 Martin Luther King Day - Office Closed

#### **February 2021**

Feb 6-10 NACD Annual Meeting - New Orleans  
Feb 12 YCCD Board Mtg, 11:00 am  
PVC Office Rm 148  
Feb 15 Presidents Day - Office Closed