

God's Country Chronicle

Newsletter of the POTTER COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Watershed Work

Vic Vena Project—Bell's Run



This restoration project included 5 Sections of Modified Mudsill, 2 Single Log Vanes, Many thanks to the Vena Family for gathering a great group of volunteers that allowed this project to move quickly!

Howard's Project—Sartwell Creek



This project included 3 Sections of Modified Mudsill, 2 Single Log Vanes. Seneca Chapter of Trout Unlimited received a Western PA Conservancy Dominion Mini Grant to fund a portion of the project. Pictured left is the completed mudsill project. In addition to in-stream structures, this property owner has expressed interest in the DCNR Multi-functional Riparian Buffer grant opportunity. Next Spring, we'll be working with our DCNR service forester to plant a few hundred feet of fruit trees. This will help shade the stream and protect the bank from accelerated erosion. Thanks goes out to another team of great volunteers— Howard family and friends. Their involvement made this project very enjoyable and swift!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Stream Projects	1
DG/LVR highlights	2
Outreach and Education	3-4
Bird Seed Sale	5
Agricultural Activities	6
Big Level Wind Project Tour	7



STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!

Be A Good Steward. Clean. Drain. Dry.

StopAquaticHitchhikers.org

Dirt and Gravel / Low Volume Roads Program

Gravel Lick Run Project

Trout Unlimited, with assistance from the District, recently completed this project in Cross Fork, on Gravel Lick Run. The stream was suffocated through the aged, inefficient small pipe crossing under the road, but was upgraded to a large bottomless arch culvert, allowing for better aquatic organism passage and better road condition.



Big Moore's Run—Homer Township

Big Moore's Run Road is located in Homer Township and runs adjacent to Big Moores Run, a Class A trout stream. Water flowing in ditches causing saturation in the road base was addressed through a new pipe and 400 feet of under drain. A catch basin made of large stone was installed to collect sediment before ditch water discharges to the stream. A large stretch of unstable road bank also actually functioning as the stream bank, and was stabilized. This was accomplished through rip rap and log structures, which also provide habitat for fish. The road was graded with 4-6% crown to achieve sheet flow during storm water events. The road was then surfaced with driving surface aggregate (DSA) because of its close proximity to the stream. Limestone DSA greatly reduces the amount of sediment leaving the road and entering the stream. It also provides an excellent driving surface. The total cost of the project was \$79,000.00 and covered a span of 2,500 feet.



Education and Outreach

Potter County Junior Conservation School Lessons

Each August, the Black Forest Conservation Association hosts the Potter County Junior Conservation School—a summer camp in which students ages 13-15 can get a taste of concepts in conservation and outdoor recreation activities. Their days at camp might include kayaking, visiting a landfill or hatchery, learning about birds, and more. The Conservation District typically teaches 3-5 lessons during this camp. This year, the classes consisted of Archery, Soils Class, Wetland and Stream Ecology, Astronomy, and Invasive Plants. Soils, Archery, and Astronomy took place at the BFCA, while Wetland and Stream Ecology and Invasive Plants took place at Sinnemahoning State Park. Many thanks goes to Coordinator Paul Lilja and the BFCA for another enjoyable year!



Left, campers exploring Sinnemahoning’s wetland area for macroinvertebrates. Right, teams assessed soil textures and types at the BFCA clubhouse pavilion.



2019 Summer Reading Programs

With this year’s theme focused on astronomy, Emily presented four moon lessons at Coudersport and the Oswayo Valley Memorial Libraries. Students learned about the moon’s phases, craters, and moon landing missions. In total, 82 enthusiastic students attended these programs. Looking forward to next year!



Pollinator Education and Volunteering—Showstoppers 4H Club

Pollinators such as bees, butterflies, bats, moths, birds, and beetles are a vital part of our world - responsible for both the success of our food system and the health of entire ecosystems. This fall, the District took part in Project Wingspan, an endeavor aiming to restore pollinator habitat through wild, native seed collection and dispersal to areas of PA lacking in habitat connectivity. The local Showstoppers 4H Club, led by Sheila Gabreski, volunteered October 12th in collecting Common Milkweed seeds from local fallow farm ground of the Snowman Family, which will be donated for habitat restoration. At the beginning of September PCCD Educator Emily also met with the group to provide an introduction to pollinators, the seed collection project, and tagging Monarch Butterflies—one of the focus pollinators benefitting from Project Wingspan’s mission. For more information on how to donate seed, Monarch Butterflies, and Gardening fro pollinators, contact Emily at 814-320-4017 or email her at e.shosh@pottercd.com

RIGHT: Educator Emily and a 4H volunteer tag a butterfly and share their view with the entire club through the use of a digital microscope.



Water Quality Monitoring and Education at GASD

In early September, The District and Stroud Water Research Center representatives installed a Mayfly Data-logger Station in Pine Creek, at Galeton School District. The station project was made possible through a Chesapeake Bay Trust Environmental Education Mini-Grant and District in-kind supplements. The grant also afforded for new stream equipment for Galeton High School teachers including waders, a slew of macroinvertebrate sampling tools, handheld pH and Temperature meters,

kick nets, and gloves for future invasive plant removal. The project was organized by District Educator Emily Shosh, in cooperation with Galeton high school science teacher Renee Root. The Mayfly system, developed by Stroud Water Research Center, is made to be very user friendly, and streams live, public data to the classroom via the site Monitor My Watershed. With an audience of representatives from the Potter County Water Quality Workgroup, Stroud representatives

were on site to provide an intro to the station elements, maintenance, and online data interpretation. Later in the day, David Bressler, Citizen Science Project Facilitator for Stroud, also provided an in-class introduction of the equipment and data to both Renee Root's Environmental Science Class and Ben Heyler's AP Biology class. Thanks to all who made this project a success! For more info, please contact Emily Shosh at 814-320-4017.



Above, Stroud's David Bressler presents to students an intro to Galeton's new Datalogger Station and online data portal.



Right, the Potter County Water Quality Workgroup attendees of the Station overview presentation and installation process. (L-R: Jim Weaver, Darrell Davis, Debbie Ostrom, Danielle Rhea, Shannon Hicks, Jason Childs, Emily Shosh, and Charlie Tuttle.)

Spring 2019 Riparian plantings update!

Presently, most seedlings and/or willow cutting plantings have survived the summer, and we have not needed to schedule fall re-plantings at these sites. Below are a few pictures of this summer's growth!



Northern Bayberry



Highbush Cranberry



Gray stem Dogwood

Coming Soon!



POTTER COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Annual Bird Seed Sale

Support
overwintering
birds in your
backyard!

Proceeds benefit our education programs and related equipment.
Thanks for your support!

Our inventory includes:

Cob corn (available after Deer season)—70 lb bags, \$10 each

Birdseed Mix— 50 lb bags, \$22 each

Black Oil Sunflower Seed—50 lb bags, \$22 each

Stop in and see us for your birdseed! 107 Market Street, Coudersport PA. Call 814-274-8411 ext. 4 for more info and updates on availability!

Agriculture

Rotational Grazing Field Day Event

On August 28th, local beef and livestock producers were brought together for a demonstration on how rotational grazing can benefit their farm both financially and environmentally. Rotating livestock between paddocks designed in a grazing plan can reduce or eliminate animal concentration areas (ACAs) and allow for more vegetation/food over the growing season. This minimizes the amount of sediment and nutrients that would otherwise likely reach local streams and rivers. In addition farmers can move away from growing traditional row crops and establish permanent grass hay fields/pastures which further help reduce nonpoint source pollution to local waterbodies. The Potter County Conservation District partnered with NRCS and Penn State Extension to develop a grazing plan and to take representative soil samples to test the biological activity of continuously grazed and rotationally grazed pastures with the same soil type. Temporary fence, reels, posts, and automatic gate (Batt-Latch), and other basic supplies were purchased and made available to the local beef farmer in early July. On August 28, 2019 a field day was held at the farm to show case the project and to discuss the benefits and challenges of rotational grazing. In the future the District hopes to expand the rotational grazing kit to include other basic equipment such as hose and pumps to supply water.



PCCD Manager Jason and NRCS Civil Engineer Technician Sean Rukgaber lay posts. Rotating livestock between paddocks designed in a grazing plan can reduce or eliminate animal concentration areas (ACAs) and allow for more vegetation/food over the growing season.

REAP Applications are being Accepted Now!



REAP, or the Resource Enhancement and Protection program, is a tax credit opportunity for farmers and landowners implementing water quality conservation practices such as no-till, Nutrient management plans, Animal concentration areas, manure storage, cover crops, Riparian buffers and stream restoration projects, and more! The program can offset costs associated with engineering, contracting, acquiring materials and labor, and other planning water quality conservation-related actions. Contact us for more information!

2019 NO-TILL ACERAGE UPDATE

As of September 30th, 2019, here are the usages for each no-till drill rental we offer to the public.

Great Plains 1006— 233 Acres

John Deere 1590— 167 Acres

John Deere 7000 Cornplanter—50.5 Acres

TOTAL = 450.5 acres of No-till implementation!

Land Development

District staff and board members attend Big Level Wind Site Tour



The entire tour group, consisting of District board members and staff, and other county-affiliated agency personnel. Behind them stands one of 25 windmills of the Big Level Wind project in Hector Township. Visit TransAlta's website for more information on the company's goals and projects: <https://www.transalta.com/> (Photo courtesy of Nancy Grupp)

A tour of the near-complete site for TransAlta Corp's Big Level Wind project took place in early September. Attendees included County Planning and GIS staff, Education Council representatives, District board members and staff, and more! The group received an overview of the project's deliverables, some setbacks, and timeline of future events. In total, 25 windmills now stand at the site in Hector Township, 19 of which are 131 meters in height, and 6 which are 110 meters in height. The array will have a 90 MW nameplate capacity (or, 90 MW produced at any given time, when maximum capacity conditions are experienced.) For perspective, 90 MW is enough to power about 14,000 homes. The District is continuing follow through for monitoring site conditions and any Rehabilitation and Erosion and Sediment control implementation.

Teaming up with County GIS on new Field Work Data Collection system

The District has teamed up with our county GIS Department for a new system of field sites data collection, which integrates internet-based Survey 123 data entry and storage with GIS technology. In early September, three Pa. Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP) officials came to Coudersport for a demonstration of the new system, and returned home excited to share the idea with others State-wide. The streamlined data entry portal will save time and increase efficiency for District staff. During the demo, Will Hunt and Charlie Tuttle from the county's Planning/GIS Department were joined by PCCD Manager, Jason Childs, and Glenn Dunn II, Resource Conservationist. Glenn especially will benefit from the system while completing inspections and visits of various working project sites.



(L-R) - Steve Kardohely, DEP Northcentral Office, Will Hunt, Potter County Planner / GIS Department, Glenn Dunn II, PCCD Resource Conservationist, Jason Childs, PCCD Manager, Steve Putt, DEP Northcentral Office (Photo courtesy of Potter County Today)

POTTER COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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District Directors

- Earl Brown, *Chairman*
- Phil Lehman, *Vice-Chairman*
- Jon Blass, *Treasurer*
- Stan Hess, *Alternate Treasurer*
- Doug Morely, *Commissioner Director*
- Kevin Smoker, *Farmer Director*
- Chris Robbins, *Farmer Director*

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Associate Directors

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Dr. Peter Ryan | Bart Ianson |
| Jeff Cady | Charlie Tuttle |
| C.C. Felker | Don Heiner |

Mission: The Potter County Conservation District will provide leadership to ensure the protection of the natural resources of Potter County through project implementation, educational programs, technical assistance, and by fostering public and private partnerships.

Vision: The Potter County Conservation District is dedicated to establishing innovative conservation practices with leadership and education through partnership with the community we serve. It is our goal to foster stewardship of our natural resources by inspiring current and future generations to preserve the legacy of conservation.



