

# District Manager Retires



"In the Spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt."

~Margaret Artwood~

Editors  
Mary Ellen Bard  
Courtney McCallay

Robert W. Piper, Jr has retired from his job as Cambria County Conservation District Manager. Robb started his career with the district in 1984, when he was hired on as their first Erosion Control Technician. After making his way through the ranks, he was named District Manager in 1997. His duties included administration, management and oversight of a wide variety of soil and water related projects through fifteen different local and regional programs.

In 1999, Robb started the Cambria County Geographic Information System (GIS) Center. He is a charter member of the work group that developed the *Pennsylvania DEP Timber Harvester's Action Packet*, a tool to assist the forest industry in complying with PA Clean Streams Law. Robb continually developed working relationships with area legislators, beyond county boundaries, for statewide district funding with personal contacts, local and capital office visits over the years.

Some of his state wide Conservation District professional activities included the PA Water Resources Committee, PA State Conservation Commission Manager Advisory Committee, PACD Conservation Committee Member and Chair, PACD Forest/Recreation & Wildlife Committee, Penn State Center for Dirt & Gravel Roads Studies where he served on several committees. He was a delegate and Vice Chair for the Pennsylvania Assoc. of RC&D Councils, life member of the PA Forestry Association, PA Council of Professional Foresters, and PA Tree Farm State Committee Member. On the local level he is active with the Cambria-Somerset Conservancy, SCRIP, Southern Alleghenies Conservancy and Western PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation.

Robb is a native of Duncansville, Pennsylvania. He attended Hollidaysburg High and later Penn State where he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Forest Science. In his retirement he plans to continue his profession as a Forester, better known as Piper Forestry Services, Inc.

Grandchildren, hunting, fishing and enjoying the great outdoors are on his list of things to keep he and his wife Pam occupied in his retirement. Our congratulations, thanks and best wishes to Robb!



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## Special Dates to Remember

May 30:	Holiday—office closed
Jun 1:	Conservation Awards Banquet, 6:00 pm
Jun 2:	Board Meeting 10:00 am
Jul 4:	Holiday—office closed
Jul 7:	Board Meeting 10:00 am
Jul 15:	Invasive Species/Farmer Workshop
July 20:	Family Day at Duman Lake County Park
Jul 21:	Family Day Raindate

# *Northern Cambria High School Sweeps Envirothon*

The 2016 Cambria County Envirothon was held on April 28th at Disaster's Edge Environmental Education Center and the 1889 Park. Twenty-two teams participated in this year's event representing 8 area school districts. The teams are required to test at 5 stations; Wildlife, Aquatics, Soils, Forestry and a current issue, which was invasive species. The winning team from Northern Cambria High School (Team III) will move on to the state competition which will be held at Susquehanna University on May 24th and 25th. Second and third place also went to Northern Cambria (Team II) and (Team I). Fourth Place was awarded to Bishop McCort Catholic High School Team I and 5th place to Forest Hills High School Team I.



## **FIRST PLACE**

### **Northern Cambria Team III**

Coach – Ron Yuhas, Lindsey Prasko,  
Brianna Phillips, Sean Sifford, Emily Weaver and Sydney Roach.



## **SECOND PLACE**

### **Northern Cambria Team II**

Coach Ron Yuhas,  
Michael DeLosh,  
Mallory Bernard,  
Graci Hoppel, Sarah Tibbott  
and Logan Marino





**THIRD PLACE**  
**Northern Cambria Team I**  
 Coach Ron Yuhas  
 Andreana Malcotti, Emily Pavelko,  
 Siena Burk, Kara Paronish  
 absent from the photo – Nicole Hoover



**FOURTH PLACE**  
**Bishop McCort Catholic High School**  
 Front – Kyleigh Way, Mary Majercsik,  
 Back row – Coach Mrs. Kourtney Penatzer,  
 Kristin Diehl, Hunter Gleason, Devin Nau

*Thank you to our sponsors: AC Colver Power, Northern Star Generation Services/  
 Cambria CoGen, and our station presenters: Chuck Kubasik/DEP,  
 Mike Nelson/Bureau of Forestry, Virgil Wilford/NRCS, Seth Mesoras &  
 Phil Andraychak/ PA Game Commission*



**FIFTH PLACE**  
**Forest Hills High School**  
 Alyssa Madison, Alyssa Murphy,  
 Emily Rozum, Audrey Ritko,  
 Travis Varner and  
 Coach Courtney Swanson

# *Spring Programs*

## **Johnstown Christian School 2nd Grade**

On May 13th, 2016, second graders from Johnstown Christian School participated in an education day at Disaster's Edge Environmental Center. The kids were able to learn about several of our reptiles we have on site while interacting with them. Among the reptiles were a Red Eared Slider Turtle, a Blue Tongued Skink, and a Box Turtle. The kids were also able to learn about many native species to our state, which included birds. After reviewing the common birds in our area, they were given binoculars and went on a bird hunt to find Cardinals, Chickadees, Towhees and more. Next the students participated in a program called "Farm to Table." This program taught them the many types of food that come from farms and the different forms they take on our table. The day concluded with a nature bingo walk, where the students searched for nature items to mark off a bingo card.



**Interactive Farm to Table program**



**Examination of the Blue Tongued Skink**

## **Forest Hills 2nd Grade**

On May 19th and 20th, 2016, Forest Hill's second graders attended an education day at Disaster's Edge Environmental Center. During this program, students participated in four activities. Students were able to interact with reptiles and amphibians while learning their habitats and features. A "Farm to Table" activity was set up to teach the students which foods are produced on a farm and the form they take on our kitchen tables. The students also learned about many of our regions birds and were then sent bird watching in the forest. All four groups were able to spot a variety of birds. Finally, students also participated in a fishing game, where they learned many facts about the fish.



**Interactive Fishing Game**



**Bird Watching**



## *Family Day*

**Cambria County Conservation District**

# Family Day

**July 20th, 2016 at Duman Lake County Park**

**9:00 am to 3:30 pm**

**RAINDATE—Thursday, July 21st**



Discover the growing trend of geocaching!

Relax with some animal yoga!



Fish knowledge fun, including a fishing lesson  
(fishing licenses waived so adults can fish too)



Don't miss out on LIVE reptile encounters!



**Registration Deadline: July 11th, 2016 by 4pm**

**\$2.00/Person**

**Please pack a lunch for the family—Drinks & snack provided!**

**For more information or to register, please call 814-472-2120  
or email [bard@co.cambria.pa.us](mailto:bard@co.cambria.pa.us)**

# *Growing Greener Grant Projects*

## **Emeigh Run Streambank Stabilization Project**

Emeigh Run is located in Susquehanna Township, Cambria County and is a tributary to the West Branch Susquehanna River. In the past, the stream has been impacted from mining, sewage and encroachment. However, in recent years there has been documentation by PA Fish & Boat Commission and local citizens, of a wild trout population in Emeigh Run as well as downstream into the West Branch Susquehanna River. A streambank located on an unnamed tributary to Emeigh Run is showing signs of severe erosion. This is caused by high flows during storm events and the rainfall infiltrating upslope and seeping through the bank. The eroded streambank is adding sediment into Emeigh Run and eventually the West Branch Susquehanna River. Research has shown that sediment can cloud the water and make it difficult or impossible for aquatic plants to grow. Sediment also can destroy aquatic habitats. Water polluted with sediment becomes cloudy, preventing animals from seeing food. Murky water prevents natural vegetation from growing in the water. Sediment in stream beds disrupts the natural food chain by destroying the habitat where the smallest stream organisms live and causing massive declines in fish populations. Sediment can clog fish gills, reducing resistance to disease, lowering growth rates, and affecting fish egg and larvae development. So now is the time to continue efforts to improve the Emeigh Run watershed by stabilizing this streambank after many years of degradation.

This project is a coordinated effort with the Conservation District and the PA Association of Conservation District's Growing Greener Engineering Southwest Regional Office. The Project relates to the West Branch River Conservation Plan compiled by the Cambria County Conservation & Recreation Authority and the Cambria County Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy Plan compiled by the Conservation District with both plans demonstrating the need for restoration of streambanks and streambeds of the West Branch Susquehanna River Watershed.

This project received \$4,505 from the Growing Greener Grant and will be completed this summer .



**Emeigh Run Erosion issues**



## **Porter Run**

The Northern Cambria Borough Flood Control Sediment Transport and Fish Habitat Enhancement Project entails creating a low flow meandering channel with in the flood control project on the West Branch Susquehanna River and Porter Run. The environmental benefits increases dissolve oxygen levels, increases sediment transport, and improve the streambank stabilization, fish habitat, and flood protection.

The Porter Run portion was recently completed with use of PA Fish & Boat habitat devices. This area totaled 250 feet and includes modified mudsills, single log vane deflector, and toe log. Funding was provided by PA Fish & Boat Commission and the West Branch Susquehanna Rescue.



## *John Dryzal Named District Manager*

The District is proud to announce that John Dryzal has been promoted into the position of District Manager. John is well qualified to take on the duties of manager with his 23 years of experience. The directors and staff are pleased with the appointment and look forward to having John at the helm.

John was hired by the district as the first Watershed Specialist in 1993 and became Assistant Manager/E&S Technician in 1995. From 1997 to 2008 John remained Assistant Manager and was also appointed as Park Director for Duman Lake County Park. As Park Director he made significant improvements and supervised park staff. In 2009, the county took back management responsibilities for Duman Park and John became our fulltime Assistant Manager. John directly administered the No-Till Drill rental program, internships, AmeriCorps and grant administration and was involved in nearly every program the District provided.



John is a member of the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts Ways and Means Committee and chairs the Southern Alleghenies RC&D Land/Resource Conservation Committee, and has served on the State Conservation Commission Conservation District Manager Advisory Committee.

John graduated from St. Francis College with a degree in biology. He lives in Jackson Township with his wife Lisa, and two children.

## *Trout in the Classroom*

Cambria Heights Middle School 6th grade students spent their day at Patton Park at an event sponsored by the Kiski Conemaugh Stream Team. Missy Reckner and her team pulled together agencies to conduct six learning stations throughout the park and a portion of the West Branch of the Susquehanna River.



Conservation staff Mark Stockley and Anna Sybert, manned the station in the river explaining stream restoration and fish habitat structures. The students saw first hand, structures such as the log deflector depicted in the photo above. They experienced how each structure produced habitat areas in the stream and the hydraulics, along with how erosion is eliminated with the use of different conservation practices. The kids then entered the water to take part in a duck race down the river, with the winner in each race receiving a Sheetz gift card, compliments of the Conservation District.





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Return Service Requested

- If you wish to be added or removed from our mailing list, please contact the Cambria County Conservation District office at (814) 472-2120.
- If you would like to help conserve resources and receive your newsletter via email, send your email address to [bard@co.cambria.pa.us](mailto:bard@co.cambria.pa.us)
- Help us get the word out—"like" us on Facebook and ask your friends to do the same!

[www.cambriacountypa.gov/conservation-district.aspx](http://www.cambriacountypa.gov/conservation-district.aspx)

and



## Where is Disaster's Edge Environmental Education Center?

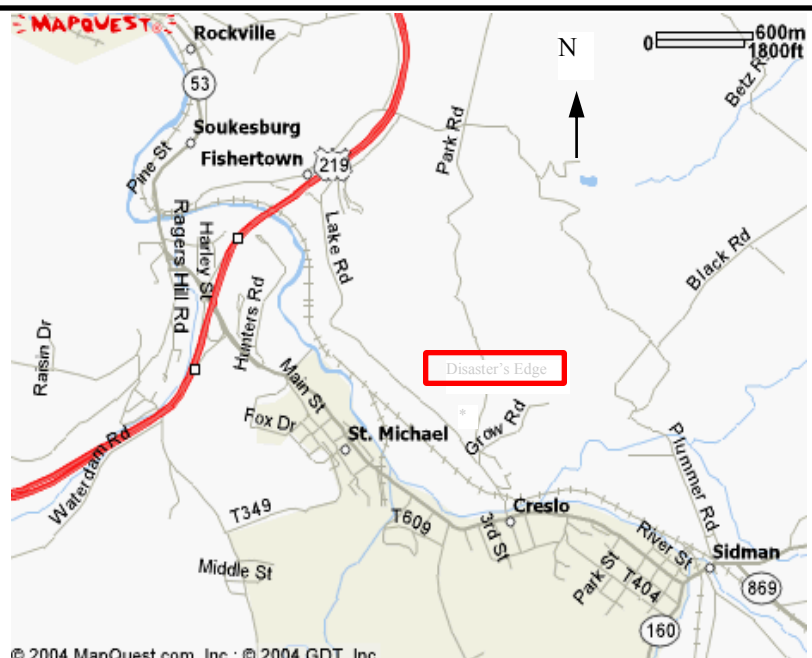
Take Route 219 North/South to the Sidman/St. Michael exit. At the bottom of the ramp, turn onto Route 869 toward Sidman and the Johnstown Flood National Memorial. Travel approximately 3 miles. Turn left onto Lake Road, traveling over the bridge then over the railroad tracks and entering the 1889 Park. Disaster's Edge Environmental Education Center will be on the right across from the baseball field and the coal miners museum.

Call Jackie Ritko at the Cambria County Conservation District Office to schedule programs or to discuss events.

**138 Park Road  
St. Michael, PA 15951**

### Mission Statement

The Cambria County Conservation District educates and assists the public through programs, projects, and leadership in the stewardship of natural resources to sustain and enhance the quality of life.



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**Road Map to The Disasters Edge Environmental Education Center.**