



A View from "The Edge"

"Autumn is a second spring where every leaf is a flower"
~Albert Camus~

Editors
Mary Ellen Bard
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Leslie Run Monitoring Project

Leslie Run, a stream that is a tributary to the West Branch of the Susquehanna, is being impacted by an abandon mine located close to the stream, along with a coal refuse pile. The history of the stream tells us that it has low PH and high Aluminum levels. In order to improve the condition of the waterway, the district applied for and was awarded a Growing Greener grant in the amount of \$2,620 for our Leslie Run Water Quality Monitoring Project.

A device known as a weir channels the water to a level that can be monitored for flow and water quality. Five of these weirs were constructed and installed in specific locations upstream and downstream of the refuse pile, and at two mine discharge locations. These weirs will stay in place for a year and during that time the flow will be measured. A water sample will be taken from each month at every weir location for a year, and the samples will then be sent to a local lab for further analysis. The main goal of this project is to improve the water quality with a passive treatment facility and possible removal of the refuse pile.

The Project is supported through the Cambria County Chesapeake Bay Tributary Plan, the West Branch Susquehanna River Restoration Plan and the West Branch Susquehanna Rescue's Headwater AMD Assessment & Restoration Plan Development.

Weir placement



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Special Dates to Remember

Nov 5: Board Meeting 10:00 am
Nov 11: Holiday/Office Closed
Nov 26/27: Holiday/Office Closed
Dec 3: Board Meeting 10:00 am
Dec 25: Holiday/Office Closed
Jan 7: Board Meeting 10:00 am

Family Days in Brief



The month of July is eagerly awaited by families who enjoy our Family Day adventures! This year we aimed to please as programs were presented to give children and adults the chance to canoe, try their skills at archery, build a duck box and learn the steps to a Native American Indian Pow Wow Dance. Day two gave our guests a chance to act as planets in the solar system, see the sun through a telescope, tie a fishing fly, make ice cream with liquid nitrogen and experience Parrots up close and personal.



Jeri Jones with his planets and telescope.

Fish & Boat staff teach technique and canoes hit the water.



PA Game Commission Interns assist with building a Wood Duck Box and explain pelts.



American Native, Pete Giove, along with his wife and son entertained, and explained Indian garb and dance.



Game Commission instruction on how to shoot a bow and then the fun begins!

Family Days continued.....



At left, youth learn to tie a fishing fly with assistance from Trout Unlimited and District staff.



St. Francis students thrill our guests with the magic of liquid nitrogen!



With help from our friends at the Fish & Boat Commission, Pennsylvania Game Commission, Pete Giove, St. Francis ROCK Program, Jeri Jones, Mountain Laurel Trout Unlimited, and "The Bird Guy" we accomplished our summer education mission!

We would also like to thank Coca-Cola, Sheetz, Snyders of Berlin, Allied Milk Producers, and Jessica New, Cambria County Dairy Princess along with Megan Facciani, Ambassador.



The "Bird Guy" shares bird stories, facts and fun with the curious and brave!



2015 Pennsylvania Poster Contest Winners



Two of the entries from Cambria won at the State level and will now be judged at the National contest in February. Congratulations to Calli Smith and Samantha Gallo!



Poster theme for 2016!
"We All Need Trees"

For rules and entry forms, visit our website at
<http://www.cambriacountypa.gov/conservation-district.aspx>

Poster Deadline
April 1st, 2016

Dirt & Gravel Roads Program

The Dirt & Gravel/Low Volume Roads Program (D&GLVR) assists municipalities in reducing environmental impact while improving the public road system. This program focuses on "Environmentally Sensitive Road Maintenance Practices" that reduce the impact of road runoff and sediment to local streams, while reducing long term road maintenance costs.

To be eligible for D&GLVR funding municipalities must attend the two day Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance (ESM) training provided by The Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads. The municipality road master and/or the person

completing the work on the road must become certified. Once certified, application can be made to fund roads that have been identified within the township. In 2008 the conservation district completed a second assessment to identify potential roads throughout Cambria County that would qualify for funding.

During this assessment, Pringle Hill Road in Croyle Township was designated as a possible worksite. Croyle Township Supervisors acted upon this opportunity and applied for grant money. The Pringle Hill Road contract was approved by the D&G Quality Assurance Board and the Conservation District Board in December of 2013. A project extension was approved in March 2015 allowing the township to have more time to complete the project. The work was completed by August 2015 and the district board approved an amendment to the contract to increase the funding by 20% to help the township cover the cost of inflation on materials bringing the total grant to \$13,571.76. D&G funds aided in covering the cost of AASHTO #4 Stone, AASHTO #57, 2B Stone, Geo Fiber and 611.25 Ton of Driving Surface Aggregate (DSA).

The D&G Program has expanded to include **Low Volume Roads** and these roads will be identified by the Conservation District, according to environmental impact, traffic volume and road condition. Municipalities must be certified by attending the ESM training, and a traffic count must be conducted on the potential road before application can be made. Conservation staff will assist the municipalities with this process, and traffic counters are available from our office. For more information on this program, or for ESM training dates, contact Anna Sybert, Resource Specialist, at (814) 472-2120 or visit the Center for Dirt & Gravel Roads at www.dirtandgravelroads.org.



Pringle Hill Road



Seen at right, township officials laying Driving Surface Aggregate with a paver.

Keep Cambria County Beautiful



**KEEP
CAMBRIA COUNTY**
Beautiful

Fall 2015 Collection Totals

Tires	Appliances
1,246	81



**Keep an eye on our Website, Facebook,
and your local papers for Spring
Appliance and Tire Collection dates.**

Fall collections were conducted on:

September 19th at Summerhill Township

September 26th at Tunnelhill Borough



Empowering Pennsylvanians to make
our communities clean and *Beautiful*.

Legislative Breakfast



Each October the Conservation District hosts an event, inviting area legislators, partners and cooperating agencies to a meal and program with a current topic of interest. This year our guests gathered at the Imperial Room in Ebensburg on October 2nd to enjoy breakfast and a presentation from Mr. Troy Ott, PhD, Prof. of Animal Science. Mr. Ott gave a very informative talk about "Genetic Engineering (GMO) - What it is, what it isn't and why we should care." He explained the basic concepts behind genetic modification and shared many examples of food and fiber that have been modified for years. He also shared new techniques being used and the science behind the efforts to improve grain, produce and animals to sustain the growing population in the world. Mr. Ott urged our audience to help educate the public on the science behind GMO's in order to better understand the need for this type of engineering. In the battle over GMO labeling, if people were given more specific information on how the product was enhanced or improved on the label, it would be more accepted. There is much more work to be done in order for the general public to understand the GMO need.

Take Home Messages

- The fact that a crop or animal is produced using genetic modification tells us absolutely nothing about the risks or benefits of that plant or animal.
- Each GMO must be evaluated individually for its benefits and risks and the regulatory path must be clear and science-based.
- GMO are not the only solution to feeding a growing population sustainably, but they are an essential tool to that end.

Staff Service Awards

During our Legislative Breakfast, Manager Robb Piper, updated our guests on the projects done and work accomplished by the Conservation District Staff in 2015. He also recognized years of service for the following:

Mary Ellen Bard—35 Years of Service
Jacqueline Ritko—20 Years of Service

Bobbie Blososky—15 Years of Service
Bryan Rabish—15 Years of Service

Growing Greener Grant

Cush Cushion Creek Stream Restoration and Flood Control



Portion of Cush Cushion Creek prior to work.

The district was granted Growing Greener Funds to complete “The Cherry Tree Flood Control Restoration Project” in 2015. This project will recreate a low flow meandering channel within the man made flood control project on the West Branch Susquehanna River and Cush Cushion Creek. In October work was completed on the 1200 linear feet of the Cush Cushion Creek portion.



Installing rebar for log placement

By recreating the low flow channel, the environmental benefits will be include improvements to sediment transport, streambank stabilization, aquatic & fish habitat, and flood protection. The low flow channel will be constructed with the use of PA Fish & Boat Commission designed habitat devices, such as modified mudsills, log deflectors, log cross vanes and random boulders.

Labor was provided by the PA Fish & Boat Commission and Conservation District Staff. Contracted work was completed by Rock Water Energy Solutions. Logs were provided by Top Notch Logging. Total cost of the project \$29,446.99.



Modified mud sill installed to provide streambank stabilization and overhead cover for fish. The erosion control blanket helps to keep seed in place until growth begins.



Construction of a mud sill.



Log Cross Vane takes water to the center of the channel to raise the oxygen levels for aquatic life.



Last mud sill completed before the railroad bridge in Cherry Tree.

Snippets of the District



Cambria County Fair: September 6-12, 2015

This year's theme for the Cambria County fair was centered around pollinators. Who are pollinators, how they operate, how to protect them and how to encourage them in your environment. Information was available to help with setting up your own pollinator gardens, complete with flower seeds and a chance on bird and butterfly wildlife boxes. Visitors to the booth were encouraged to test their pollinator knowledge and were treated to a live display of Monarch butterflies in the metamorphosis stages.

SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

A new venture was presented to the district this summer when Respective Solutions Group requested some environmental education for their summer programs at Cherry Ridge Terrace and the Harmony School District. So staff members Jackie Ritko, Mary Ellen Bard, Genny Christ, AmeriCorps members—Amie Fritchman, Noah Kolar and intern Nicole Miller, pulled together to conduct 6 weeks of programming which included visits once a week covering topics such as, song birds, bears, turtles, native flowers, fish, and water ecology. The programs were very well received and as a result, the district is now conducting after school programs at 6 school districts from October through January.



Picnic at the Park

The August Board meeting is traditionally our annual summer picnic and this year we traveled to Patton Park where we were treated to some history of the park from Commissioner Chernisky. The business of the board was taken care of first, followed by an award presentation to Robert Maiden—Special Conservation Service Award recipient. The directors and guests enjoyed a meal catered by Clair Krug (C&C Catering).

AmeriCorps Member—Travis Gates



We are pleased to welcome Travis Gates to the fold, as our full time AmeriCorps member for the 2015/2016 service year. Travis previously served as an intern for the district during the summer of 2014 working toward graduation credits for the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. Travis has since graduated from UPJ with a bachelors degree in Environmental Studies and Geography. He works well with our district team and will be helping with education and well as many other projects.



One of his first duties was helping to build and install weirs for a Growing Greener Grant project.



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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
- Help us get the word out—"like" us on Facebook and ask your friends to do the same!

www.co.cambria.pa.us/conservation

and



Where is Disaster's Edge Environmental Education Center?

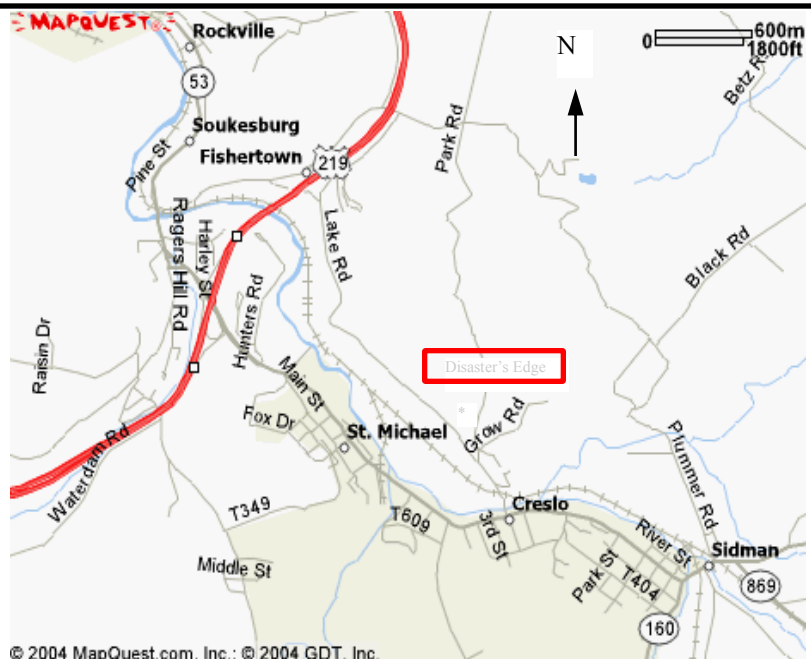
Take Route 219 North/South to the Sidman/St. Michael exit. At the bottom of the ramp, turn onto Route 869 toward Sidman and the Johnstown Flood National Memorial. Travel approximately 3 miles. Turn left onto Lake Road, traveling over the bridge then over the railroad tracks and entering the 1889 Park. 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.

**132 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.