



# A View from "The Edge"

*"Take care of the earth and she will take care of you." Unknown*

Editors  
Mary Ellen Bard  
Jocelyn A. Sauter

## Fall Educational Programs

We kicked off the new school year with a fantastic program at our educational facility, Disaster's Edge. Jackie Ritko, CCCD Resource Supervisor and Education Coordinator for Disaster's Edge, organizes fun-filled, information-rich, interest-peaking days for students of local school districts. Using the natural resources located in and around the Edge, students learn about our environment, conservation methods, and local history.

On September 29 and 30, Disaster's Edge welcomed its first group of students for the 2011-2012 school year. Six 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes took a field trip to the Edge to learn about pumpkins, tree identification, and the history of coal mining in our area. The students enjoyed a picnic lunch in the park's pavilion. The two days definitely had the feel of crisp, fall weather, but luckily the rain stayed away!

Mary Ellen (Ellie) Bard, CCCD Administrative Assistant, and Jocelyn Sauter, AmeriCorps, taught the students that there is more to pumpkins than carving them for Halloween. The students identified and labeled the parts of a pumpkin during the anatomy lesson. Ellie explained how DNA determines the size and color of pumpkins. Using simple measurements, each group of students calculated the weight of their pumpkins and then compared their calculations to the actual weight – some groups had spot-on calculations! Finally, after a brief lesson on pollination, students worked together to empty their pumpkins and count the seeds. They found that the biggest pumpkin didn't always have the most seeds. Each student was sent home with a bag of pumpkin seeds and a recipe to roast them with his or her family. Thank you to Benshoff Farms and Pisarski Farms for the generous donations of pumpkins!



Jackie Ritko and Bryan Rabish, CCCD Watershed Specialist, opened up the Coal Miner's Museum to the students. The museum features a realistic replica of a mine shaft. Using the exhibits and pictures, donated by members of the community, Jackie and Bryan taught the students about local coal mining history, the way a mine is constructed, the different tools and their uses in mining, and how coal is formed, extracted, and used. Many of the children thought it would be "awesome" to work in a coal mine instead of going to school. However, when they discovered how harsh the conditions were, they quickly retracted that sentiment! Did you know the Child Labor Laws in force today were formed in large part due to the child labor conditions of the mines in our area? With the remaining time students were able to explore the museum. (cont. p 6)

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### Special Dates to Remember

**Dec 7:** Board Meeting, 10 am  
**Jan 5:** Board Meeting, 10 am  
**Jan 31:** Breakfast Meeting, 7:30 am  
**Feb 2:** Board Meeting, 10 am  
**Feb :** Tree/Plant Catalog Delivery

# Meet the CCCD Board of Directors

*Each issue we'll introduce you to the wonderful people who serve the Conservation District  
Today, meet our  
Associate, Public and Farmer Directors*

## Sam Valenty

**Sam Valenty (2010)** is a Cambria County Commissioner, appointed to the Conservation Board of Directors by the Commissioners, fulfilling the Conservation District Law (Act 217) of having one commissioner on the board. Sam was reappointed for 2011. He has been self-employed for 55 years and is owner of Valenty Bottled Water. He has served as a board member for JARI, Mount Aloysius College, NorCam, American Red Cross, Chamber of Commerce, Cambria County Planning Commission, Miner's Hospital, Community College Foundation and the Cambria County Alliance. He has received Honorary Doctorates from St. Francis University and Mount Aloysius College. He received the Economic Summit Award and the prestigious Four Chaplains Award. Sam was born in Barnesboro and lives in Northern Cambria.

Sam has a son Richard, a daughter Tammy, four grandchildren and one great-granddaughter. Sam and his wife Sarah were married for 54 years.

## Robert Davis

**Robert Davis (2009)** has served on the Board of Directors since 2009. He was an Associate Director for two years. In January of 2011 Bob was nominated as a Farmer Director by the Cambria County Society of Pennsylvania Farm Women and the Cambria County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs.

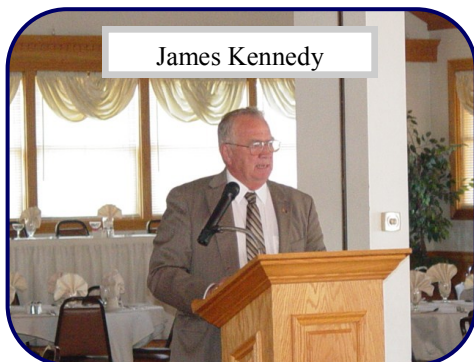
He is a current member of the Cambria County Farm Bureau and previously held the position of President of the organization for four years. He is also on the legislative committee for the Farm Bureau. Bob also serves on the County Farmland Preservation Board.

A self-employed farmer, Bob is a life-long resident of Cambria County, residing in Colver. He attended Pennsylvania State University for Agricultural Business and graduated in 1977.

## CCCD Legislative Luncheon

## Keep CC Beautiful

We gathered for the Conservation District's Annual Legislative Luncheon on Friday, October 7 at the Imperial Room in Ebensburg. The CCCD staff was joined by the Board of Directors, Legislative Officials, Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts members, Department of Environmental Protection staff, and Cooperative Extension employees. James Kennedy, Western PA Regional Director for the PA Department of Agriculture, was our guest speaker. Kennedy talked about the importance of agriculture in relation to Pennsylvania's economic recovery. Robb Piper, CCCD Manager, highlighted the many accomplishments achieved over the course of the 2011 year. Service Recognition Awards were acknowledged for Louis Kopczyk, 10 years, and Bill Myers, 5 years. Congratulations and a warm thank you to each for their dedicated years of service.



James Kennedy



**KEEP  
CAMBRIA COUNTY**  
*Beautiful*

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

*Below are the numbers from the Fall collection:*

Tires		Appliances	
On-Rim	Off-Rim	Freon	Non-Freon
526	117	67	17



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

## Fall Workshops



Mary Ellen Bard, Conservation District Administrative Assistant, organized two free workshops this Fall for more than 80 people. Tom Ford, a horticulturalist from the Cambria County Cooperative Extension Office, was the expert speaker for both workshops. On September 29 an informative session about the Brown Marmorated Stink-bug (BMS) was held. During this workshop, attendees learned how the BMS came to exist in our area, which plants and objects attract the pest (did you know light-colored houses attract the BMS), and about possible eradication methods (chemical solutions, natural predators, safe disposal, etc). The information delivered by Tom Ford was especially pertinent to local farmers; the BMS can have very damaging effects on many crops. Homeowners picked up useful tips on how to keep the nuisance pest out of their house and what to do if they already have an infestation.

On October 12, the second fall workshop was held. The Orchard and Landscape Management session was widely attended and very educational. The purpose of this workshop was to provide attendees with information on what they can do today to prevent a problem with their trees, plants, and lawns in the Spring. Too often, people wait until they see signs of an issue to apply treatment – by then it's usually too late. Ford talked about the importance of managing weeds and rodents to combat disease, assessing tree vigor and looking for injury, utilizing proper pruning techniques and optimal timing, and performing tests to save time and money when putting in a new lawn. Eighty percent of tree mortality is the result of humans' lack of proper care. Hopefully, that number will shrink as people implement the strategies delivered by Tom Ford.



"One of the best seminars I have attended." ~ Joe Johns

If you were unable to attend either of the workshops and would like more information, please contact the Cambria County Conservation District at (814) 472-2120.

## 2012 Spring Tree Sale

In Cambria County we've had a pretty pleasant fall season so you should have had plenty of time to cut back perennials, trim bushes and mulch for the winter season. If you haven't put in your spring bulbs – there's still time as long as the ground is not frozen, but be sure to add a shot of bulb fertilizer.

Over the next few months the evenings will be cold and the nights long, and many of us will look forward to the coming of spring. One sure sign that spring is around the corner is the arrival of seed and gardening catalogs in your mailbox. One catalog that you don't want to miss is the **40th Annual Conservation District Tree/Plant Sale** catalog! Items listed in the catalog include a variety of fruit trees, evergreen seedlings, berries, ground cover, shrubbery, perennial flowers, and more.

The catalog will be sent in February with orders to be taken through March. Your order will be available for pick-up in early April. If you do not already receive a catalog, call 472-2120 or email [jsauter@co.cambria.pa.us](mailto:jsauter@co.cambria.pa.us) to get your name and address on the mailing list. For those who would prefer to receive the catalog via email, please include your email address. The catalog will also be available on the county website in February [www.co.cambria.pa.us](http://www.co.cambria.pa.us).

Additional information will be printed in the spring edition of "*A View from the Edge.*"

# 2012 Poster Contest Rules



Any media may be used to create a flat or two-dimensional effect (paint, crayon, colored pencil, charcoal, stickers, paper or other materials on regular posters). (No computer category this year)

Poster size must be between 8.5" x 11" and 22" x 28" (or as rules at your local or state level)

All posters entered must have the entry form completed and attached to the back of the poster. (Local winners will be asked to complete an additional entry form in order to send the poster on to the state competition.)

Posters should be packaged so they remain flat when sent for judging.

- ♦ All posters must be created by an individual student rather than a team of students.
- ♦ **The 2012 title "Soil to Spoon!" must be on your poster.** (Don't use any other title.)
- ♦ Although younger students will most likely receive help in planning from parents or teachers, NACD encourages each student to do as much of the work as possible by him/herself. Entries completed by students in their handwriting and coloring will score better than those designed, drawn and colored by adult assistance.
- ♦ Posters must be submitted to the Cambria County Conservation District office by **April 16, 2012**

Grade Categories: K-1, 2-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12.

For more info, visit: <http://nacdnet.org/education/contests/poster/2012/index.html>

## POSTER EVALUATIONS

Posters will be evaluated on the following

**Conservation message (50%)**

**Visual Effectiveness (30%)**

**Originality (10%)**

**Universal Appeal (10%)**

## PRIZES

Local Contest: **1<sup>st</sup> Place** – trophy/\$50 Savings Bond  
Dinner at Awards Banquet

**2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Place** – Rosettes & Dinner

State & National Contest: **1<sup>st</sup> Place** - \$100 **2<sup>nd</sup> Place** - \$75

## TIPS TO REMEMBER

Don't use too many words.  
Use a combination of illustrations and words.  
Be as neat as you can.  
Blend colors when using crayons or colored pencils.  
Depending on design leave white space on the poster.  
Make sure the poster is balanced.  
Brainstorm ideas and make a list.  
Decide on information to include on the poster.  
Research the theme topic.  
Sketch out your idea.  
Mark guidelines for lettering (lightly).  
Clean up the poster so it is neat. Erase any guidelines that are showing.

## THINGS YOU SHOULD **NOT** DO

Use staples, tacks or tape  
Use fluorescent poster board  
Create a poster that is all words or a poster that is all pictures.  
Have your parent or others draw your poster for you to color in.  
Include too many ideas or activities on your poster.  
Make up another theme title.

## CHOOSE COLORS CAREFULLY

Black:	formal, neat, rich, strong
Blue:	cool, melancholy
Purple:	royal, rich
Yellow:	warm, light, or ripe
Green:	fresh, young, growing
White:	clean and neat
Red:	attracts the eye, high energy
Orange:	attracts the eye, high energy

## **CONGRATULATIONS!!**

### **2011 Poster Contest State Winners:**

**Grades 4-6:** Ellen Simmerman, Benjamin Franklin Elementary School, Grade 6

**Grades 7-9:** Nikolas Suckinos, All Saints Catholic Elementary School, Grade 8

Posters will be sent to NACD for judging at the national level in February.

**Local Entry Form**  
**NACD/PACD Auxiliary National Conservation Poster Contest**

Attach a completed copy of this entry form to the back of each poster being entered. Entries must be received by the Cambria County Conservation District office no later than April 16, 2012 at 4:00 p.m.

**STUDENT**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Middle \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

School Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ The poster is an original completed by the student.

\_\_\_\_ The student received assistance from another person or materials/ideas from another source. (Please explain on separate page)

**\*\* 1st Place Winning posters become the property of the Conservation District.**

Please **CHECK** appropriate category

\_\_\_\_(K-1)    \_\_\_\_ (2-3)    \_\_\_\_ (4-6)    \_\_\_\_ (7-9)    \_\_\_\_ (10-12)

**SCHOOL**

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Phone(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Public School \_\_\_\_\_ Private School \_\_\_\_\_ Home School \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or guardian name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of parent or guardian** allowing permission to utilize the poster for educational or promotional purposes.

**CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

Name: Cambria County Conservation District Contact: Jackie Ritko Title: Education Coordinator

Address: 401 Candlelight Drive, Suite 221 City: Ebensburg State: PA Zip: 15931

Phone: (814) 472-2120 Email: ritko@co.cambria.pa.us

**STATE CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION, STATE AUXILIARY OR STATE AGENCY**

Name: Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Inc.

Contact: Shannon Wehinger Title: Communication Specialist

Address: 25 N. Front St. City: Harrisburg State: PA Zip: 17101 Phone: 717-238-7223

# Disaster's Edge Spring Programs

*"The Best  
field trip EVER!"*

**In School Programs—\$1.00/person  
Programs at Disaster's Edge—\$.50/person**

*"A wonderful experi-  
ence for our students."*

Environmental Education programs are for area schools, scout troops, and clubs. Programs can be brought to you or you can come to The Edge in St. Michael. Here are some of the programs being offered for the Spring of 2012:

**Who's Clues** – Students will learn to use their senses to explore the outdoors by listening and looking for clues (tracks, scat, nests, and burrows) that the animals leave behind. (Edge)

*4.3 Environmental Health; 4.6 Ecosystems and their Interactions; 4.7 Threatened, Endangered and Extinct Species; 4.8 Humans & the Environment.*

**Amphibians & Reptiles** – Students will be introduced to the life cycle of local amphibians and reptiles; and learn how they survive the long cold winters in Pennsylvania. Live animals are featured. (Edge or Classroom)

*4.1 Watersheds & Wetlands; 4.3 Environmental Health; 4.5 Integrated Pest Management; 4.6 Ecosystems and their Interactions; 4.7 Threatened, Endangered and Extinct Species.*

**Wetland Ecology**—Students tour a local wetland as they learn about the characteristics and function of wetlands and the important role they play for wildlife and humans. (Edge)

*4.1 Watersheds & Wetlands; 4.2 Renewable and nonrenewable Resources; 4.3 Environmental Health; 4.6 Ecosystems and their Interactions*

**Birds of a Feather**— We'll investigate bird habitats, adaptations, and the mysteries of migration. (Edge or in classroom).

*4.3 Environmental Health; 4.6 Ecosystems and their Interactions; 4.7 Threatened, Endangered and Extinct Species; 4.8 Humans and the Environment.*

**Go Green with Trees**—Students learn the effects of trees on the ecosystem, test for levels of chlorophyll using Chromatography, learn how to identify tree species, and determine the stage of succession of a woodland or forest. (Edge).

*4.2 Renewable and nonrenewable Resources; 4.3 Environmental Health; 4.4 Agriculture and Society; 4.6 Ecosystems and their Interactions; 4.7 Threatened, Endangered and Extinct Species; 4.8 Humans and the Environment.*

**Seeds & Frogs**—Students investigate the life cycles of plants and animals, recycle a plastic bottle to create a miniature terrarium, and observe the various stages of tadpole development (Edge or Classroom)

*4.1 Watershed & Wetlands; 4.3 Environmental Health; 4.4 Agriculture and Society; 4.6 Ecosystems and their Interactions; 4.7 Threatened, Endangered and Extinct Species.*

**Dirt...you got to Dig It**—Students learn the secrets of soil composition, percolation and the effects these qualities play on the local ecosystem. (Edge or outdoor classroom area at school).

*4.3 Environmental Health; 4.4 Agriculture and society; 4.6 Ecosystems and their Interactions; 4.8 Humans and the Environment.*

**NOTE:** We can design a program which fits your needs, and is aligned with PDE Environment & Ecology Standards. All activities are geared toward the age and skill level of our participants. Please call our Education staff for more information.

**District Office (814) 472-2120**

**Disaster's Edge (814) 495-4380 or 243-5069**

## Fall Ed. Prog. (Cont.)

Nathan Marsh, AmeriCorps, led the students in a tree identification lesson. Nathan started the session in the park pavilion with a demonstration using leaves gathered from the surrounding trees. The students were shown that leaves have different growth patterns, and by identifying these growth patterns one can identify the species of tree to which the leaves belong. Students were split into groups, and using a worksheet designed by Nathan, each group participated in a tree identification scavenger hunt. They navigated their way around the Edge with the aid of a map. When they found a tree with a pink ribbon, the students consulted the questions on their sheets. As they answered each question, they grew closer to discovering the species of each tree. Everyone was very proud when he or she was able to declare, "It's a White Ash!"



We are looking forward to hosting many more students throughout the school year!

# Envirothon 2012



Young minds thrive on challenges. The Envirothon is a program designed to cultivate a desire to learn more about our natural environment through competitive events. For over 20 years, high schools in PA have been recognizing the value of the Envirothon experience. Students and their teachers become empowered by their own motivation as the Envirothon engages them in an exciting, multi-faceted study of the environment. For many people involved, the Envirothon is more than just a competition. Participating students often pursue further education in environmental fields. Many Envirothon participants pursuing college degrees in various natural resource studies have indicated that their education choice was partly due, or strengthened by, their

Envirothon experience. Envirothon advisors credit the Envirothon with increasing student interest and involvement in environmental sciences.

## 2012 Team Packets Now Available!

The Conservation District Education Staff is working on selecting a date in early May for the local contest, which will be held at the Disaster's Edge Environmental Center and the 1889 Park in St. Michael. More information will be sent in the near future, along with team/advisor packets, which include compact discs containing study materials for each station. Advisors can also go online now and download the Teacher Resource Packet at

[www.envirothonpa.org](http://www.envirothonpa.org).

The 2012 Pennsylvania State Envirothon will be held at University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, Cambria County

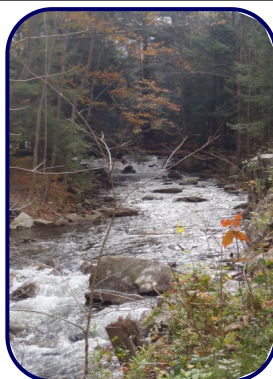
on Tuesday and Wednesday, May 22 and 23, 2012. The Oral Component has been reinstated for the state contest, which will fall in line with the current issue – **“Nonpoint Source Pollution and Low Impact Development.”** A power point program is available on the Envirothon website with regards to the current issue.

*If your school has never participated in the Envirothon, but would like to be a part of the 2012 contest, please contact Jackie Ritko at 472-2120 or*

*[ritko@co.cambria.pa.us](mailto:ritko@co.cambria.pa.us) to be put on the mailing list for all future correspondence regarding the contest.*

## South Fork AMD Remediation Project

The South Fork Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD) Remediation Project is a collaborative effort of several partners, property owners, state and federal agencies and non-profit organizations. The project focuses on a 4-mile stretch of the Little Conemaugh River from the Lloydale Dam to Beaverdale. The goal of the project is to raise water quality, improve native brook trout fishery, and increase the recreational opportunities of the region.



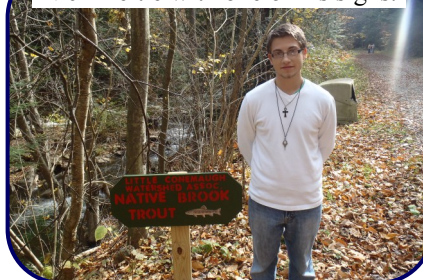
The Remediation Project was started in 2006 when Joel Kosmac, a local volunteer with the Little Conemaugh Watershed Association (LCWA), started monitoring AMD discharges in the headwaters of the river. In 2007 the DEP Watershed Manager became interested and started working with the LCWA, the Cambria County Conservation District (CCCD), and the Dunlo Rod and Gun Club (DR&GC). CCCD and LCWA received a Growing Greener Grant (\$105,000) to construct several limestone beds and trenches to reduce aluminum in the stream and raise pH levels. The DR&GC received funding for limestone sand dosing.

Aside from the Growing Greener Grant, sources of funding and resources came from the Eastern Brook Trout Venture through the US Fish and Wildlife Service (\$46,000), U.S. Office of Surface Mining through the Southern Alleghenies Conservancy (\$30,000), PA Fish and Boat Commission's installation of fish habitat structures, PACD Somerset Technical Assistance Program's provision of engineering and design, Hedin Environmental's development of treatment priorities and conceptual recommendations, and Nick Deitle's (a local Forest Hills High School student) design and construction of the watershed signs.

The Conservation District hosted a site dedication on October 19, 2011. We were joined by members of the LCWA, DR&GC, and

Beaverdale Conservation Group. Jim Penna, Chief of Staff for Congressman Critz, was also in attendance. Jackie Ritko, CCCD Resource Supervisor, and Malcom Crittenden, DEP, spoke about the project and its history and led the group in a tour of the treated areas.

Nick Deitle with one of his signs.





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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 [jsauter@co.cambria.pa.us](mailto:jsauter@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](http://www.co.cambria.pa.us)  
and  
[facebook](https://www.facebook.com/cambriacountyconservation)

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

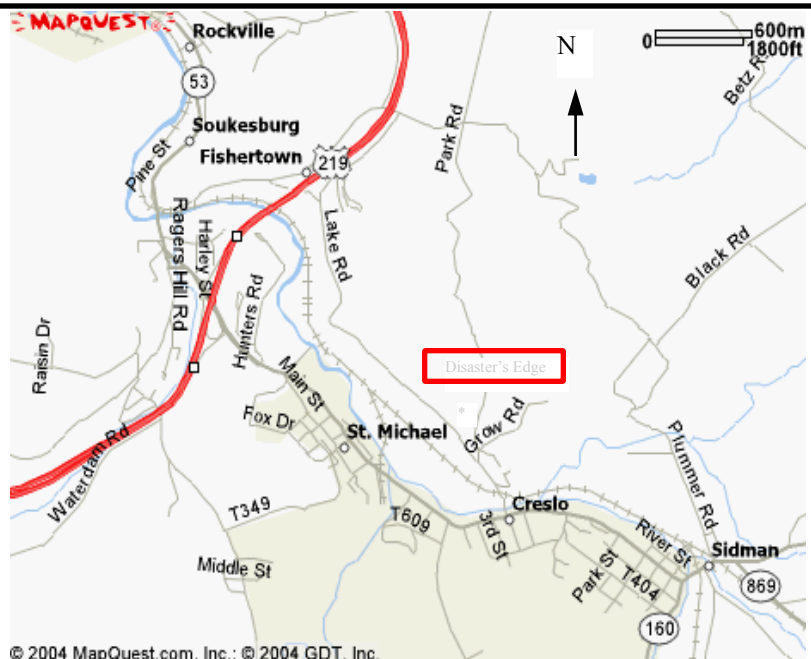
Take Route 219 North/South to the Sidman/St. Michael exit. At the bottom of the ramp, turn onto Route 869 toward Sidman and the Johnstown Flood National Memorial. Travel approximately 3 miles. Turn left onto Lake Road, traveling over the bridge then over the railroad tracks and entering the 1889 Park.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