

Volume 53
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THIS IS OUR LAST NEWSLETTER ISSUE!



As the world turns more and more digital, the District has decided to go digital too! We've created a new website, just for us, that went online in April. Our website hosts a plethora of information for professionals looking for permit laws, educators looking for new education programs, farmers looking for programs to assist in their operations, municipalities looking to improve roads, coverage on stream bank projects and just about anything you would want to know about the Conservation District.

We will be **eliminating our newsletter**, in an effort to reduce costs, and to increase traffic to our new website. The District will continue to have articles posted on the website in order to keep the local community informed on District activities and events.

The site contains some great features such as a calendar constantly updated with upcoming events. As opposed to being restricted to space in a printed newsletter, our website allows the District to showcase some things in a more detailed fashion. It is a hub for those wishing to learn the purpose behind our streambank projects and the devices we use to enhance habitat .

One of the greatest advantages we have with our new website is giving the public instant availability to all forms, workbooks, and applications we have. If you want additional information about any of our programs, we have direct links to other agencies and partnering organizations. In order to keep the public informed about everything we are doing at the District we are posting articles that highlight the many programs and projects that we are actively carrying out and the people we work side by side with to accomplish our goals. An addition we hope to include is an interactive map presentation to showcase some of the stream restoration projects we have completed.

Stay up to date on all District news, upcoming events, and personal stories from the community members we work with!

Please check out our website at: www.cambriaconservationdistrict.org

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Summer Dates to Remember!

FAMILY DAYS

July 24th—Duman Lake County Park

August 9th—Disaster's Edge

Two days of educational family fun!

Watch our website for details, or request a mailed brochure by calling 472-2120.

CONSERVATION DISTRICT WEEK SUCCESS!

Conservation District Week was celebrated May 5th thru 11th. Conservation districts throughout the state held special events and participated in statewide activities. Our District Manager, John Dryzal, participated in PACD Capitol Day and traveled to Harrisburg to meet with various legislators. John met with Pennsylvania Senator Wayne Langerholc, Representatives Jim Rigby, Frank Burns, and Tommy Sankey, as well as staff from the House Appropriations Committee and the Governor's Office.

John, along with PACD Executive Director, Brenda Shambaugh represented all Conservation Districts in receiving a proclamation from Senator Wayne Langerholc, Senator Gene Yaw, and Senator Elder Vogel at the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building.

On May 9th atop the Johnstown Incline Plane, John accepted another proclamation on behalf of the District from the Cambria County Commissioners for Conservation Week. It turned out to be a great week for conservation!



Cambria County Commissioner Proclamation



Pennsylvania Senate Proclamation



John Dryzal with Representative Sankey

2019 FLOOD CONFERENCE

Two staff members traveled to State College in April for a biennial workshop dedicated to flood protection. The workshop was held at the Atherton Hotel, where numerous guests were invited to speak to the audience that mostly consisted of Pennsylvania borough officials and decision makers. District employee, Mark Stockley, was honored to be able to participate in presenting some of his stream restoration work to the audience.

Mark talked about the work completed throughout a few of the local flood control projects. Being one of the first of their type, many of the restoration projects amazed locals. Years of dedication to efforts of cleaning our local waterways have resulted in much success. What started nearly 20 years ago in Patton, has now expanded to include very similar projects in Nanty Glo, Northern Cambria, and Cherry Tree.

Stream restoration was conducted within the flood control projects of each of the four towns previously listed. These projects featured the installation of various devices such as mud sills, log cross vanes, and random boulders. Each of these devices serves as fish habitat or as a way to center the flow and create a greater meander throughout the stream. The devices are placed strategically throughout the stream to create the intended outcome.

The presentation Mark delivered showed aerial photography as well as still photos showing before and after the devices were placed. AmeriCorps member, Shannon Johns created a presentation using software that allowed for a dynamic view of the stream. The audience was able to see a more complete and inclusive representation of exactly what the projects accomplished. Some of the audience members included several of the local officials from the towns featured, who testified to the cleaner water and abundance of fish now seen within these flood control projects.

2019 CAMBRIA COUNTY ENVIROTHON

Teams were formed, questions were answered, and awards were distributed! The 2019 county Envirothon was held at Disaster's Edge on Tuesday May 7, 2019. Testing began at 9 am and ran until around 12, followed by lunch, and the presentation of awards.

The Envirothon is a competition beginning at the county level, and advancing to state, and North American levels. High school teams consisting of five team members compete against each other by taking environmentally categorized tests on subjects such as Forestry, Soil, Wildlife, Aquatics, and a Current Issue. The current issue this year was *'Agriculture and the Environment: Knowledge and Technology to Feed the World'*. Teams were given a written test about the subject at the various stations. For the aquatic identification portion of the test several live animals such as bullfrogs, slimy salamanders, and turtles were used for students to identify. Some of the other stations had hands-on testing activities for students to do as well, such as tree measuring, and soil composition identification. Many students got to experience active outdoor learning while enjoying the great weather we were lucky enough to have.

Eighteen high school teams competed in the 2019 Envirothon from schools around the county including Blacklick Valley, Forest Hills, Penn Cambria, Northern Cambria, Bishop Carroll, Portage and Conemaugh Valley. The top five winning teams were 5th Place—Portage Team III, 4th Place—Forest Hills; Team II, 3rd Place - Forest Hills Team I, 2nd Place - Portage Team I, and 1st Place—Northern Cambria Team I.

The event was made possible through donations from AC Colver Power, Coca Cola, Adams/Croyle Recreation Authority, PA Game Commission, PA Fish & Boat Commission, NRCS, Bureau of Forestry and the Conservation District.



1st Place: Northern Cambria High School Team 1
 Coach, Marybeth Kerr, Paige Dumm, Taylor Sherry, Danielle Nealen,
 Abby Strong, Absent from photo: Zach Malicky



2nd Place: Portage Area High School Team 1
 Hunter Kalinoski, Dominic Davis, Olivia Kissell, Alyssa Baxter,
 Connor Price, Coach, Mary Kinney



3rd Place: Forest Hills High School Team II
 Taryn Varner, Connor Wysocki
 Absent from photo: Coach, Joel Kosmac



4th Place: Forest Hills High School Team 1
 Thomas Hockensmith, Donovan Faith, Lowe Ayers,
 Garett Connor, Autumn Holdsworth,
 Absent from photo: Coach, Joel Kosmac



5th Place: Portage Area High School Team III
 Ben Sanner, Tanner Trusik, Lakin Phillips,
 Summer Viscusi, Emma Kissell,
 Coach, Mary Kinney

2019 POSTER CONTEST WINNERS

The 2019 poster contest theme was “Life In The Soil: DIG DEEPER” with 5 schools participating, resulting in winners in all 5 age divisions. Congratulations to the winners!



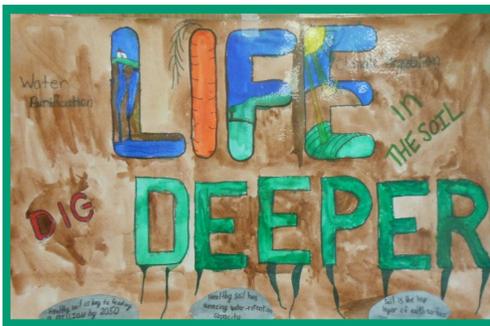
1st Place (K-1)
Grant Wharton
Cambria Heights Elementary



1st Place (4-6 grade)
Trey Trybus
Cambria Heights Middle School



1st Place (7-9 Grade)
Sydney Rickley
Forest Hills Jr/Sr high School



1st Place (2-3 grade)
Karlee Beyer
Forest Hills Elementary

2nd Place
(2-3) Brock Wharton—Cambria Heights
(4-6) Evelyn Warner—Cambria Heights
(7-9) Emma Becquet—Bishop Carroll
(10-12) Abby (Xiaoyun Zhu)—Bishop Carroll



1st Place (10-12 Grade)
Madison Lee
Bishop Carroll Catholic High School

3rd Place
(2-3) Danika Faith—Forest Hills
(4-6) Gina Lane—Cambria Heights
(7-9) Laura Montag—Forest Hills
(10-12) Abigail Gerber—GJCTC

4th Place
(4-6) Hannah Beyer—Forest Hills
(7-9) Savannah Smorto—Bishop Carroll
(10-12) Gabriel Zimmerman—GJCTC

5th Place
(4-6) Isabell Terza—Cambria Heights
(7-9) Sarah Gaviak—Forest Hills
(10-12) Kevin (Zikang) Li—Bishop Carroll

2019 Tree/Plant Sale



Staff using flashlights to locate customer orders.

The 2019 Tree and Plant Sale distribution took place on Friday, April 12th. Each year, this fundraising event yields profit that is used to further education efforts and conservation projects within the District.

District staff, directors, associate directors, and friends of the District gathered at the Cambria County Fairgrounds the second week of April to sort and label the stock. They then spent the day packing customer orders. This year, we were grateful to have the help of some Penn State Extension Master Gardener’s.

Unlike years past, the Tree and Plant Sale was held in the dark in 2019. Unfortunately power was not available for the building where the sale was being held. All was well until sale day and a thunder storm rolled in. Lacking lights, staff resorted to using the glare of cell phones and flashlights to see. While it was an unusual year, it was successful yet again selling 9,562 trees and plants, and raising \$8892.

Thank you to all of our supporters!

3rd GRADE FOR THREE DAYS!

We learned about bears! We learned about reptiles! We dissected owl pellets!

District staff spent three days with Portage Area Elementary School 3rd graders, educating them about various wildlife species as well as assisting them in their investigation of owl pellets! Day one was spent learning about Pennsylvania black bears. The program kicked off by playing a quick true or false game to get students thinking about black bear facts, and they were taught about some interesting techniques used to age a black bear. Students listened as District staff explained what to do if a bear is in your backyard, what bears eat, and how they survive in the wild. To keep things interactive, the students played a game where they got to put their new found knowledge to the test! Students played a game where they became bears and had to gather as much 'food' as they could in their bear 'habitat', teaching them about habitat needs. Another game was played to test student's sense of smell, demonstrating the importance of a bear's nose to their survival.

Day two held a variety of learning opportunities for the 3rd grade, as they traveled outside the classroom and into the District education center (Disaster's Edge in St. Michael). Students were broken into smaller groups and rotated through different stations that focused on different environmental subjects. Bird watching in the morning, trail hikes in the afternoon, and hands-on learning about some of the reptiles and amphibians who call the Edge their home.

The last day was one of investigation. Always a student favorite, owl pellets were given to each 3rd grader to rip apart and identify the findings inside. Owl information was given and a real frozen screech owl was displayed to the students. Staff brought an owl skull replica, egg, and talons to show students an up close view of the majestic owl. After dissecting the owl pellets and discovering various bones, students were able to identify some of the bones. Many students found mice, rats, moles, and some feathers in their owl pellets. The investigation and identification of what is found inside the pellet was the end to a fun and informative week spent at Portage Area Elementary School.



OWL PELLETS



NATURE HIKE



FISH PRINTS

SALAMANDERS, TROUT, & TRAIL HIKES!

Spring is in the air and local students are in the 1889 Park! As the weather gets warmer, our education program schedule fills up very fast. We held our first education program of the year on April 16th, when we hosted roughly 25 local students.

Our education staff conducts programs April through June at Disasters Edge Environmental Center, for schools from around the area, as well as Boy and Girl Scout troops. Students from all ages receive hands on experiences in a variety of subjects pertaining to the environment, and learn how to preserve and protect resources for humans and wildlife.

In our recent programs, students were introduced to a relatively new program that involves animals, habitat, observation, and hiking. Flags are set up around the trail at the 1889 Park in areas where animal evidence is present. Students are given a list of written clues as well as pictures of animals typically seen around the park. As the students maneuver from flag to flag, they are tasked with reading the habitat clues and trying to match the animal to their habitat. This program has been played with children in grades ranging from kindergarten through 4th grade, with slight adaptations being made based on age.



Red eft spotted by a group from Blacklick Valley

Students were eager to meet and learn about the animals that call the Edge home. Some of the most popular animals they had the opportunity to learn about were the hognose snake, Madagascar hissing cockroaches, and box turtles. In addition to programs at the Edge, we also assisted some lucky students from Blacklick Valley High School participating in the release of trout that they raised from egg to fingerlings, in conjunction with the "Trout in the Classroom" program. The District conducted a station throughout the day focusing on amphibians. Blacklick Valley students learned some basic, as well as some not so well known facts about amphibians in this outdoor classroom atmosphere. They then had the opportunity to go and look for salamanders themselves! Several common salamanders were found, which included the slimy salamander and the red back salamander, along with one group even finding a small garter snake!

SPRING APPLIANCE & TIRE COLLECTION

The Spring Appliance & Tire Collections were held in Croyle Township, Patton Borough, Cambria Township, and the new location of Stonycreek Township. We collected a total of **4,373** tires and **273** appliances! The collections were made possible by volunteers, including students from St. Francis University. Check our website in September for Fall collection dates and locations.



PRESERVING FARMS FOR OUR FUTURE

According to the American Farmland Trust, the United States is losing two acres of farmland every minute. In Cambria county we have a program established in order to slow that loss. The District has been participating in the Farmland Preservation Program for nearly two decades, which helps farmers protect their agricultural lands. The basics of the program is to protect viable agricultural lands by acquiring agricultural conservation easements which prevent the development or improvement of the land for any purpose other than agricultural production. There is a variety of requirements and system rankings that determine the eligibility of land to be accepted into the program. More information about the program is available on our website.

One of the farmers the District was able to work with is Cambria County native, Richard Davis, who runs the RJD Farm in Clearfield Township, with 104.6 acres. His farm was preserved in 2002 and remains a beef farm to this day. He chose to participate in the program in order to keep his farmland remaining farmland forever. The desire to keep farmland preserved and able to be cherished by future Pennsylvanians was a driving factor that led Davis to participate. Some of the most important reasons he believes others should be interested in the program is to allow future generations to enjoy the land that has provided resources for past generations, to continue a farming legacy, and to ensure the farm will be a farm forever. Davis recommends the program to other local farmers, and hopes the program to be further understood by the public.



RJD Farm preserved in Clearfield Township—2002

FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS

Here at the District, summer means the kickoff of some important projects. The first in a series of stream restoration projects in our area has begun in Nanty Glo. This project, which is Phase II, was installed on an unnamed tributary of the Blacklick Creek that runs through Nanty Glo's Flood Control Project Area. Following the completion of that section, an additional section was added to the Phase I project area downstream of the fire hall.

This project placed fish habitat structures in the stream that served two purposes. These structures both provide habitat for aquatic species, as well as making the stream run faster and cut deeper. The Conservation District partnered with the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission Stream Habitat Division, as well as contractor, Earth Shapers, LLC., working together to place the structures into the stream. Construction and implementation of the structures in this project were short and only lasted a total of three days.

While the Nanty Glo project was the start to our summer projects, the District is scheduled to be involved in a variety of projects throughout the summer and into early fall. Upcoming projects will be similar to the one implemented in Nanty Glo, however they will be larger in their scope of work.





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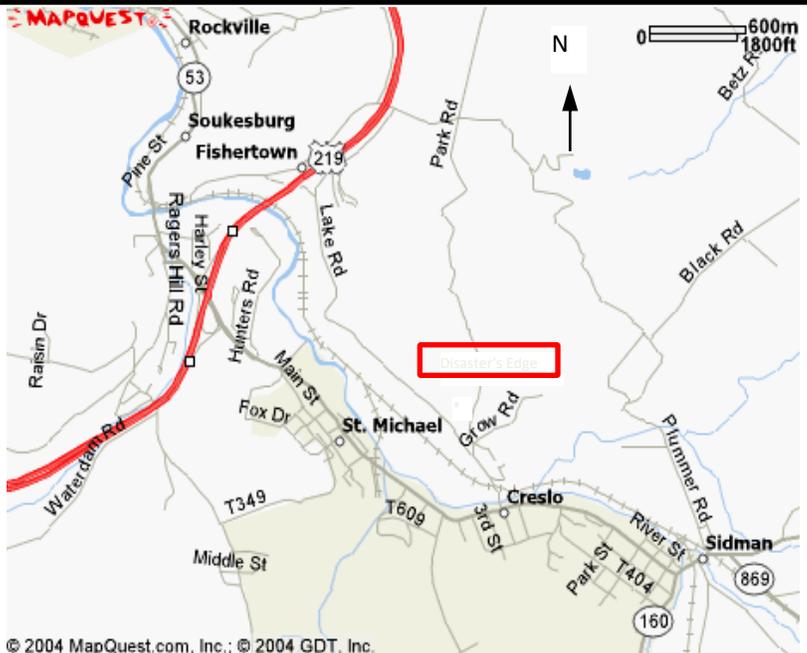


www.cambriaconservationdistrict.org

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.



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Road Map to The Disasters Edge Environmental Education Center.

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.