



# McKEAN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT



## 2023 Annual Report



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***Vision:*** The Conservation District is the steward of McKean County's natural resources and embraces environmentally responsible decisions.

***Mission:*** The Conservation District provides leadership and stewardship to ensure the protection and sustainability of McKean County's natural resources by fostering public and private partnerships.

# McKean County Conservation District

## District Board and Staff Members

### Directors

Jeff Larson	<i>Chairman-Farmer</i>
Chase Miles	<i>Vice Chairman-Farmer</i>
Cliff Lane	<i>Secretary/Treasurer-Commissioner</i>
Kerry Fetter	<i>Public</i>
Blaine Puller	<i>Farmer</i>
Greg Bell	<i>Public</i>
Ken Kane	<i>Public</i>

### Associate Directors

Pete Mader  
Charlie Kirkpatrick  
Boyd Fitzsimmons  
John Stratton  
Jeff Holcomb  
Lori Coffman

### District Staff

**Sandy Thompson - District Manager**  
814-887-4025 [sdthompson@mckeancountypa.org](mailto:sdthompson@mckeancountypa.org)  
**Adam Causer - Watershed Specialist**  
814-887-4003 [accauser@mckeancountypa.org](mailto:accauser@mckeancountypa.org)  
**Lindsay Trojanowski - Resource Conservationist**  
814-887-4002 [ltkrojanowski@mckeancountypa.org](mailto:ltkrojanowski@mckeancountypa.org)

Conservation District Board Meetings are held monthly, normally on the third Wednesday of the month, at 7:00 PM in the McKean County 911 Conference Room, Smethport.

### Nominating Organizations

Nominating Organizations have a unique role in shaping the future of McKean County. These organizations, which must be approved by the State Conservation Commission, are permitted by law to nominate individuals to the County Commissioners for appointment to the District Board.

By providing such nominations, these groups help define membership on a Board that makes critical decisions about how we manage our growing community's natural wealth - McKean County's soils, forests, lakes, wetlands, rivers, and streams. The District is grateful to our Nominating Organizations for their continued participation and support. Contact the District for information about how county organizations can be considered for approval as Nominating Organizations.

#### Nominating Organizations

Penn State Extension  
USDA Farm Service  
Agency  
Association of Township  
Officials  
Bar Association  
McKean County Fair  
Association  
McKean County Planning  
Commission  
McKean County Historical  
Society  
McKean/Potter Farmer's  
Bureau  
Upper Allegheny  
Watershed Association

# McKean County Conservation District Celebrating District Directors & Staff



## District's First Annual Picnic

The District held its First Annual Picnic/ Meeting at Kinzua Bridge State Park in August. This gave us an opportunity to get to know each other and our partners better. It was enjoyed by all and agreed to become an annual event.



## District Directors & Staff Honored

During the First Annual Picnic, the District honored its Directors and Staff.

Chase Miles, Vice-Chairman and Blaine Puller, past Chairman and farmer director were honored for their 15 years of volunteering for the district. Ken Kane, public director was honored for his 10 years of volunteering for the district. Associate Directors, Charlie Kirkpatrick, Pete Mader and Boyd Fitzsimmons were honored for their 5 years of volunteering for the district.

Staff member Adam Causer, Watershed Specialist was honored for 5 years of service.



L-R Vice Chair Chase Miles, Director Ken Kane, Chairman, Jeff Larson, Director Blaine Puller, Watershed Specialist Adam Causer



# McKean County Conservation District

Protect, Maintain, and Improve McKean County's Natural Resources  
Natural Resources Committee

## Goals:

- Implement stream restoration/riparian buffer/water quality projects while funding & resources permit (Pages 4 & 5).
- Provide support to implement Ag BMPs as resources and funding permits (Page 6 & 7).
- Develop cover crop strategy with partners
- Develop project-based monitoring/management (Page 8).
- Assist 3 conservation organizations
- Implementation of Dirt, Gravel & Low Volume Program (Page 9-10).
- Implement delegated programs, Chapters 102, 105 & Nutrient/Manure Management (Page 11-12).
- Promote, improve and implement new recycling initiatives and education throughout the county (page 13).

## Goal: Implement Stream Restoration/Riparian Buffer/Water Quality Projects.

### Streambank Stabilization/Fish Habitat Project

Five Streambank Stabilization/Fish Habitat projects were completed utilizing the District's Stewardship funds, \$23,625.00 secured through PA Fish & Boat Commission and \$6,6015.14 through DEP's Stream Improvement Program for the McKean County Stream Restoration Program. The primary objective of the program is to maintain and enhance habitats important for the PA Species of Greatest Concern (SGCN) that are conserved and managed under the jurisdiction of the PFBC and are identified in the 2015 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan.

The project pictured below is along Lillibridge Creek in Port Allegany Borough. This project was completed to fix a public safety hazard; an eroded and exposed 8" concrete encased main sewer line in the stream. There was also severe erosion along the streambanks due to failing gabion baskets. These hazards were both rectified with a long term solution by installing two 100' modified mud sills, and a grade control structure. The total cost of this project was \$8,967.00.



Before : Showing extreme stream bank erosion



After : Streambank stabilized with a modified mudstill



# McKean County Conservation District

Protect, Maintain, and Improve McKean County's Natural Resources  
Natural Resources Committee

## Streambank Stabilization/Fish Habitat Project

The remaining 4 projects were completed along Blacksmith Run in Keating Township, Willow Creek in Corydon Township, unnamed tributary to Cole Creek in Keating Township and Knapp Creek in Eldred Township.

These projects were designed here to minimize both the sedimentation loading and the streambank erosion as well as maximize the fish habitat. There were single log deflectors, multi-log deflectors and modified mudsills, installed to eliminate the erosion and maximize fish habitat. The total for these three projects was \$26,566.36.

Pictured below are three of the streambank stabilization/fish habitat projects. The foundation of these projects were to utilize logs that average 6 to 12" in diameter of either larch or hemlock species. Rebar rods are used to pin the logs together and to secure the logs to the stream bottom.





# McKean County Conservation District

Protect, Maintain, and Improve McKean County's Natural Resources  
Natural Resources Committee

## Goal: Provide support to implement Agricultural BMPs

### Upper Allegheny BMP Project

#### Jeff Brown Project

The McKean County Conservation District has been awarded six Growing Greener Grants over the past 13 years for the implementation of agricultural best management practices.

The grants focused on the sub-watersheds of the Allegheny River, Lillibridge, Two Mile, Annin Creek, Newell Creek and Barden Brook to not only protect but to restore these sub-watersheds to “attaining” status on DEP’s Integrated List of All Waters. The District has directed over \$2 million in Growing Greener funds to multiple landowners for nutrient management planning, installation of vital agricultural best management practices, restoration of streambanks and creation of acres of forested riparian buffers.

This landowner has implemented various Ag. BMPs through a previous Growing Greener Grant and a grant through the Western PA Conservancy, such as exclusionary fencing with a forested buffer, a heavy use area connected to a manure stacking pad, spring developments and perimeter fencing for rotational grazing.

Through the round of funding, shown in the picture below, perimeter fencing for rotational grazing, exclusionary fencing, were installed along unnamed tributaries to Lillibridge Creek and Twomile Creek to prevent nutrients from this operation from entering the stream.

The total cost of the construction of the project was \$89,712.00.





# McKean County Conservation District

Protect, Maintain, and Improve McKean County's Natural Resources  
Natural Resources Committee

## Goal: Provide support to implement Agricultural BMPs

### Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP)

The McKean County Conservation Districts will receive an annual allocation of \$286,773 for the next three years to work with participating farmers and landowners to help design and implement soil and water conservation practices. These practices are for the control of nitrogen, or phosphorus or sediment losses from their farms while improving water quality and soil health across the Commonwealth. This funding will be available for all farmers within McKean County - there are no eligibility requirement that farmers must be within a certain watershed.

This is a unique opportunity to implement projects within the next three years. The funding is required to be obligated for projects and spent within two years of each installment.

The District held 3 rounds throughout the year to accept and rank applications. To be eligible, an applicant must have a conservation plan or agricultural erosion and sediment control plan and a manure or nutrient management plan.



Rotational Grazing Project with high-tensile fencing

Four projects are under contract for \$205,886. with three under construction. To date we have spent \$59,213.49. Pictured below are two of the projects under construction.



Roofed manure stacking facility



# McKean County Conservation District

Protect, Maintain, and Improve McKean County's Natural Resources  
Natural Resources Committee

## **Goal: Develop Project-Based Monitoring/Management**

### **Scaffold Lick Assessment Grant**

The District was awarded \$164,181.00 through an Abandoned Mine Land and Acid Mine Drainage Grant for a watershed-based surface-water quality assessment of the Scaffold Lick Run watershed.

This grant is focused on a watershed-based surface-water quality assessment of the Scaffold Lick Run watershed. This stream flows from one of the only parts of McKean County that contains economic coal reserves and historic mining activity has left approximately 520 acres of abandoned mine land. A total of 16.4 miles of stream is listed as impaired due to acid mine drainage on the 303(d) list of impaired and threatened waters.

An assessment conducted in 2010 did not identify any large point-source discharges of AMD. However, the streams are poorly buffered (naturally acidic due to extensive wetlands) so even minor inputs of acid and metals can cause impairment. The streams can probably be restored with modest additions of alkalinity which will also protect them from acid deposition. This project will provide an updated detailed assessment of the current water quality and watershed conditions and provide a plan for the most cost-effective restoration projects.





# McKean County Conservation District

Protect, Maintain, and Improve McKean County's Natural Resources  
Natural Resources Committee

## Goal: Implementation of the Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Program

### Goal Accomplishments

- District staff were on site for construction of (1) DGR project and (1) LVR project. Site visits with municipalities for potential 2023 projects.
- 19 of the 22 municipalities ESM certified.
- Hosted a one-day ESM class with 22 people in attendance.
- Staff represented the District on the state DGLVR Policy & Planning Committee.

The McKean County Conservation District provides hands on technical assistance to all eligible entities in regards to the PA Dirt Gravel and Low Volume Road Program. The McKean County Conservation District offers assistance in developing a work plan that will best alleviate any negative stream impacts caused by nearby roads while reducing road maintenance cost and increasing road longevity.

The primary issues addressed are road drainage, roadbed elevation, sub-base materials, and surface material. These all keep water off the roadway and eliminate the erosion of road surface material into local streams. Local municipalities and state agencies that maintain dirt and gravel roads and low volume roads with less than 500 vehicles per day are eligible to receive funding.

However, to be eligible for the program, the participant must first attend a two-day training session for “Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance of Dirt and Gravel Roads”. To be eligible, projects must employ “environmentally sound” maintenance practices and products to correct pollution problems related to the roadway.

### Hutchins Loop DGR Project—Sergeant Township—Phase II

This Dirt and Gravel Road project is in Sergeant Township. This section of Hutchins Loop impacts the water quality of an UNT to Little Sicily Run, a cold water wild trout fishery. Hutchins Loop is an entrenched road, lacking adequate crosspipes and stable outlets for water to get off road surface.

The scope of work includes:

- Placed 8,740 tons of fill
- 275 tons of asphalt
- Install (1) 36” plastic pipe
- Install (3) 24” plastic pipes
- Install (2) 18” plastic pipes
- Install (8) 15” plastic pipes
- Install 480’ of underdrain

The grant request : \$217,472.36  
Township contribution: \$71,713.64  
Project Total : \$289,186.00





# McKean County Conservation District

Protect, Maintain, and Improve McKean County's Natural Resources  
Natural Resources Committee

## Taintor Road, Low Volume - Lafayette Township

What you can't see in the picture to your right is the extremely saturated ditch line running on both sides of the road. The ditch line was becoming eroded and adding sediment to a high quality wild trout stream.

The project included replacing two, nonfunctioning cross-pipes, installing one new pipe and installing 674 linear feet of underdrain along both sides of the roadway.

The total grant amount: \$73,774.00  
Township Contribution; \$5,253.00  
Total project cost \$79,027.00.



Above:: Taintor Road, Lafayette Township, before DGLVR project



Above: Taintor Road, Lafayette Township, during project construction. Picture shows installation of a new crosspipe.



Left: Taintor Road, Lafayette Township after . Picture shows new underdrain installed on both sides of the road.



# McKean County Conservation District

Protect, Maintain, and Improve McKean County's Natural Resources  
Natural Resources Committee

## Goal: Implement delegated programs-Chapter 102, 105, Nutrient & Manure Management

### Chapter 102 (Erosion & Sedimentation) Plans & Permits

#### Chapter 102 Overview

16 E&S Plans reviewed  
3 NPDES Permits issued  
51 Technical Assists

Held the Erosion Control In Our Forest Workshop

The District is delegated by the DEP to implement the Erosion and Sedimentation Pollutant Control Program (Chapter 102) to be sure plans and permits are in place and sites practices to prevent erosion and sedimentation pollution from leaving disturbed sites. The Required Output Measures are to review NPDES Erosion & Sediment Control General permits (ESCGP), Erosion & Sedimentation Plan reviews, handling complaints, providing technical assistance, site visits and inspections and providing educational programs.

Projects with more than 5,000 square feet of earth disturbance, but less than 1 acre, should prepare an Erosion & Sedimentation Plan with appropriate management practices to prevent erosion. Projects involving more than one acre of earth disturbance require NPDES Permits. There are General and Individual NPDES Permits, depending on the watershed affected. These permits are submitted to either the Conservation District (General) or PA DEP (Individual). Oil and gas activities (e.g., exploration, production, processing, treatment operations or transmission facilities) involving 5 or more acres of earth disturbance, an E&S permit (ESCGP-3) is required under Pennsylvania's Clean Streams Law for these activities over the life of the project.



Completion of an Individual NPDES Permit. Kane School Track & Synthetic Turf Athletic Field.



Completion of an Individual NPDES Permit. Bradford Water Authority, Gilbert Run Reservoir.



# McKean County Conservation District

Protect, Maintain, and Improve McKean County's Natural Resources

## Natural Resources Committee

### Chapter 105 (Dam Safety & Waterway Management) Permits

#### Chapter 105 Overview

12 Chapter 105 General Permits Acknowledged  
41 Technical Assists

Held the Erosion Control In Our Forest Workshop

Any work in or near a stream requires a permit to prevent pollution and or changes the watercourse. Any encroachment or disturbance of a waterway such as a new bridge or stream crossing requires a Chapter 105 General Permit. Projects requiring General Permits include bank rehabilitation, stream bank protection, gravel bar removal, bridge construction or replacement, stream crossings for agriculture or forestry, docks or boat launches, and utility line crossings.

District responsibilities include General Permit review, handling complaints, and providing technical assistance for Chapter 105.

The District is delegated by the PA Department of Environmental Protection to oversee and review certain permits for construction, stream encroachment, and timber projects. The permit required depends on the location, area of land disturbed, and type of project.



National Fuel's pipeline stream crossing

#### Chapter 91 Manure Management and Act 38 Nutrient Management Overview

6 Nutrient Management 590 Plans being developed.  
1 Act 38 Nutrient Management Plan being developed  
10 Manure Management Plans Written  
2 Workshops Held

### Nutrient & Manure Management Programs



Participants at the District's Manure Plan Writing Workshop

The District has a cooperative agreement with PA Department of Environmental Protection and State Conservation Commission for the development of Chapter 91 Manure Management Plans and Act 38 Nutrient Management Plans for farmers with livestock.

The Conservation District provides technical assistance to farmers and can help them to obtain funding for agricultural best management practices. All farms generating manure are required to have a management plan. The District held a workshop to assist landowners with writing their own manure management plan



# McKean County Conservation District

Protect, Maintain, and Improve McKean County's Natural Resources  
Natural Resources Committee

## Goal: Promote, Improve and Implement New Recycling Initiatives Throughout the County.

### Electronics & Household Hazardous Waste Collection



The District hosted two electronic and household hazardous waste collection events in 2023. The first was held at the Seneca Highland Career and Technical Center on July 26th. The second event was held at the Otto Township Memorial Park on September 16th. The Conservation District worked with Noble Environmental, an industry leading environmental services company headquartered in Pittsburgh, PA.

The collection was set up as a drive-thru electronic and household hazardous waste event. These events were held help as many McKean County residence properly dispose of their electronics and household hazardous waste.

There were 161 participants at the collection events with 15,057 lbs. of electronics and 12,587 lbs. of household hazardous waste.



# McKean County Conservation District

Market & Increase Awareness of Conservation District Programs & Functions:  
and provide Educational Outreach  
Education & Outreach Committee

## Goals:

- Distribute Conservation Information.
- Prepare District Exhibits and Presentations.
- Conduct Conservation Education Programs. (Page 15-19)

## Goal: Distribute Conservation Information

### Goal Accomplishments

- 2 issues of the “Conservation Times” Newsletter sent electronically to over 690 people.
- 4 issue sof “Farm Chatter” sent to 65 landowners.
- 25 News Releases
- 56 Facebook posts reaching 2,500 people
- 4 Displays set-up and manned

The McKean County Conservation District strives to inform the public that we are a local entity to help protect, conserve, and educate about our natural resources.

One way to accomplish this is through press releases, social media, website, exhibits, and a variety of publications are all tools utilized to reach the goals in this objective.

## Publications and Press Releases

A variety of publications and outreach through traditional and digital methods are utilized. Publications are available in digital formats or as paper copies. The District’s newsletter “Conservation Times” was published to the website and an email link was distributed to newsletter recipients.

A newsletter targeting farmer/landowners “Farm Chatter” was sent by mail. Educational and program brochures and flyers were kept updated with current information and staff. Press releases were submitted and the District’s website and Face Book page were maintained.

## Goal: Exhibits and Presentations

The District prepared and staffed exhibits at the McKean County Fair, at the Senior Expos in Bradford (pictured here) and Kane, and during University of Pittsburgh at Bradford’s Career Day at the Allegany State Park.

Exhibits provide the public with information about District programs and projects, and information guiding them with tools to protect our natural resources.





# McKean County Conservation District

Market & Increase Awareness of Conservation District Programs & Functions:  
and provide Educational Outreach  
Education & Outreach Committee

## Goal: Conduct Conservation Education Programs

### Goal Accomplishments

- 12 Youth Educational Programs reaching 850 students
- 8 Adult Educational Programs reaching 330 people

Education & outreach programs promote responsible stewardship of natural resources and are an integral part of the District's vision and mission. Presentations reached a variety of audiences: school children, farmers, municipal employees, contractors and others.

## My Growing Tree Program

The District spent the last two weeks of April celebrating Arbor Day by presenting the "My Growing Tree" program to youth including all the first or second grade students in each of the public schools. There was 500 white oak seedlings handed out to the students along with a poster that included charts to enable the students to monitor their own height as well as the growth of their tree. Support for this year's program was provided by Seneca Resources.



Sandy Thompson, District Manager and Adam Causer,  
Watershed Specialist  
at Bradford Elementary School.

Stan Hess, Retired Service Forester and Marshall Hamilton from DCNR, Bureau of Forestry, Commissioner Cliff Lane and staff members from the District spoke about the importance of Arbor Day and how trees help to protect and improve our water resources. Students learned about the water cycle and the different ways trees help decrease pollution in streams by providing a protective barrier called a riparian buffer and by stabilizing streambanks with their roots.

Students learned the parts of the tree. Presenters also discussed how to plant a tree and did an activity that illustrates how forests are renewable which points out cutting trees is not bad when practiced in a sustainable manner. The program finished with the students reciting a pledge to conserve our natural resources and to work for a cleaner and healthier McKean County.

# McKean County Conservation District

Market & Increase Awareness of Conservation District Programs & Functions:  
and provide Educational Outreach  
Education & Outreach Committee

## ‘Wild’ Envirothon



The Bradford Bees Envirothon Team, Overall winners of the “Wild Envirothon. L-R Lilly Kemick, Sydney Hamer, Steven Williams, Amber Eschrich and Cecily Bell

The ‘Wild’ Envirothon was held on Thursday, May 4, 2023 hosted by the Veterans Memorial in Port Allegany. The Envirothon began in 1989 in McKean County. 95 students from both Cameron and McKean Counties that included Cameron County High School, Bradford High School, Kane Area High School, Otto-Eldred High School, Port Allegany High School, and Smethport Area High School participated in the event.

During this hands-on competition, students may be asked to measure a tree...identify a frog or toad call...or determine soil erosion potential according to a soil survey. They work as a 5-member team to answer questions, and use their critical thinking to find solutions to reality-based situations.

Partners helping to make the day possible included DCNR Bureau of Forestry, PA Game Commission, USDA Natural Resources & Conservation

Service, McKean County Court of Common Pleas, University of Pittsburgh at Bradford as well as staff and volunteers from the Cameron and McKean County Conservation Districts.

The event was sponsored by McKean and Cameron County Conservation Districts, International Waxes, Upper Allegheny Watershed Association, Zook Motors, Lafayette Township, Dresser Pipeline Solutions, Kiwanis Club of Bradford, Kane Save A Lot, Pine Valley Nurseries, Ardagh Glass Packaging Team Minard Screen Printing & Embroidery, American Refining Group, Inc., Pine Haven Vet Clinic, Kessel Construction Company, Veteran’s Memorial of Port Allegany, Miller-Raffaele VFW Auxiliary Post 6221, North Point Contracting, Solveson Contracting, Cameron County Outdoor Youth Activities, May Hollow Sportsmen, Cameron County Vet’s club, McKean County E-Sales, Emporium Food Market, J. Ream Engineering, Sinnemahoning Sportsman Association, Emporium Hardwoods, and IUE-CWA Union Workers of G.E. Motor Coils of Emporium

Overall Winning Team and first place McKean County: Bradford Bees – Amber Eschrich, Steven Williams, Sydney Hamer, Lilly Kemick, Cecily Bell and Advisor Jan Russell. Second place McKean County team: The Cubs from Kane – Lily Williams, Paige Lehman, Jess Stear, Anna Meyers, Ben Walter and Advisors Nick Byron and Lindsey Hottel. Third Place Screech Owls from Bradford – Lillian Erickson, Joseph Bukowski, Emmy Kemick, Andrew Magee, Landon Lohrman and Advisor, Rich Bierbower. Amber Eschrich from the Bradford Bees was also recognized for participating in the “Wild” Envirothon for the 4th year.

The Bradford Bees represented McKean County at the State Envirothon held on May 24th at Camp Mt. Luther in Mifflinburg.



# McKean County Conservation District

Market & Increase Awareness of Conservation District Programs & Functions:  
and provide Educational Outreach  
Education & Outreach Committee

## Erosion Control In Our Forests Workshop

The McKean County Conservation District, Potter County Conservation District, Elk County Conservation District and Tioga County Conservation District teamed up this fall to hold Erosion Control In Our Forests Workshop.

A workshop for foresters, loggers, logging contractors and private forest landowners to learn more about the fundamentals of erosion control, permitting, planning before a timber harvest, best management practices to implement during the harvest and stream crossing practices.

The workshop rotates yearly from county to county. This year it was held in Tioga County with 30 participants. The workshop is a full day split into half the time in the classroom followed by a field trip to a active, or retired timber harvest site.





## McKean County Conservation District

Market & Increase Awareness of Conservation District Programs & Functions:  
and provide Educational Outreach  
Education & Outreach Committee

### No Till Drill Demo Day

The District partnered with NRCS to hold a free No-Till Demo Day in the Spring. This was to kick-off the new No-Till Drill Rental Program. Chairman, Jeff Larson assisted with conducting the demo and going over the operation of the drill.

The field day gave the 20 participants a demonstration of the District's Great Plains 10' No-Till Drill. Participants also learned more about the Natural Resource Conservation Service's Farm Bill related programs on grazing and pasture practices that are available.

There were presentations from Adam Causer, Watershed Specialist as well as Amanda Murdock with NRCS .



### Cover Crop Demo Day

In the fall, the District partnered with NRCS to hold a free cover crop demo day for local landowners to learn about how to properly install and manage cover crops.

Amanda Murdock from NRCS and Adam Causer, Watershed Specialist presented topics on benefits and selection of cover crops and meeting NRCS standards and programs.

Again, Jeff Larson utilized the District's no-till drill to plant a demonstration cover crop of rye and radishes.





## McKean County Conservation District

Market & Increase Awareness of Conservation District Programs & Functions:  
and provide Educational Outreach  
Education & Outreach Committee

### Rain Barrel Workshop



The District partnered with the Bradford Sanitary Authority and Penn State Extension's Master Watershed Stewards to host a free rain barrel workshop. Participants learned about rain barrels and rain gardens, watershed basics and the impacts of stormwater. The Bradford City residents also learned how they could reduce their stormwater fee.

Financial and other support for this program is provided by the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act, administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection

### One Day DSA and Road Maintenance Workshop

The McKean County Conservation District, in cooperation with the Pennsylvania State Conservation Commission, Penn State Center for Dirt and Gravel Road Studies, and the Potter County Conservation District held a free DSA and Road Maintenance Workshop for anyone who maintains unpaved roads on October 13th.

During the workshop, presentations were given on innovative and effective practices to reduce maintenance costs and sediment pollution from unpaved roads, the Dirt and Gravel Programs DSA (driving surface aggregate) placement requirements and maintenance, Road Surface Maintenance, Ditch Maintenance and Invasive Plant Information. The workshop also included a live grading demonstration done by Wetmore Township, shown in the picture to the right.

The workshop was held on Friday, October 13, 2023 at the Kane Fire Department. Municipal attendees received additional points towards the ranking of the Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road application. Attendees also earned 4 hours (1 year) for PA Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) continuing education credits.





# McKean County Conservation District

Develop Resources to Sustain & Enhance the Conservation District and Our Natural Resources.

District Resources Committee

## Goals:

- Identify current needs of public & natural resources (Page 22-23)
- Analyze existing fiscal capabilities and grant writing resources. (Page 20 & 21)
- Seek funding for staff to administer programs on the local level.
- Engage legislators and build a connection with Governor & federal legislators (Page 24)
- Monitor & implement the District's plans 2019-2023
- Build on our leadership at the local, state & national level. (Page 25-26)

**Goal: Analyze Existing Fiscal Capabilities and Grant Writing Resources.**

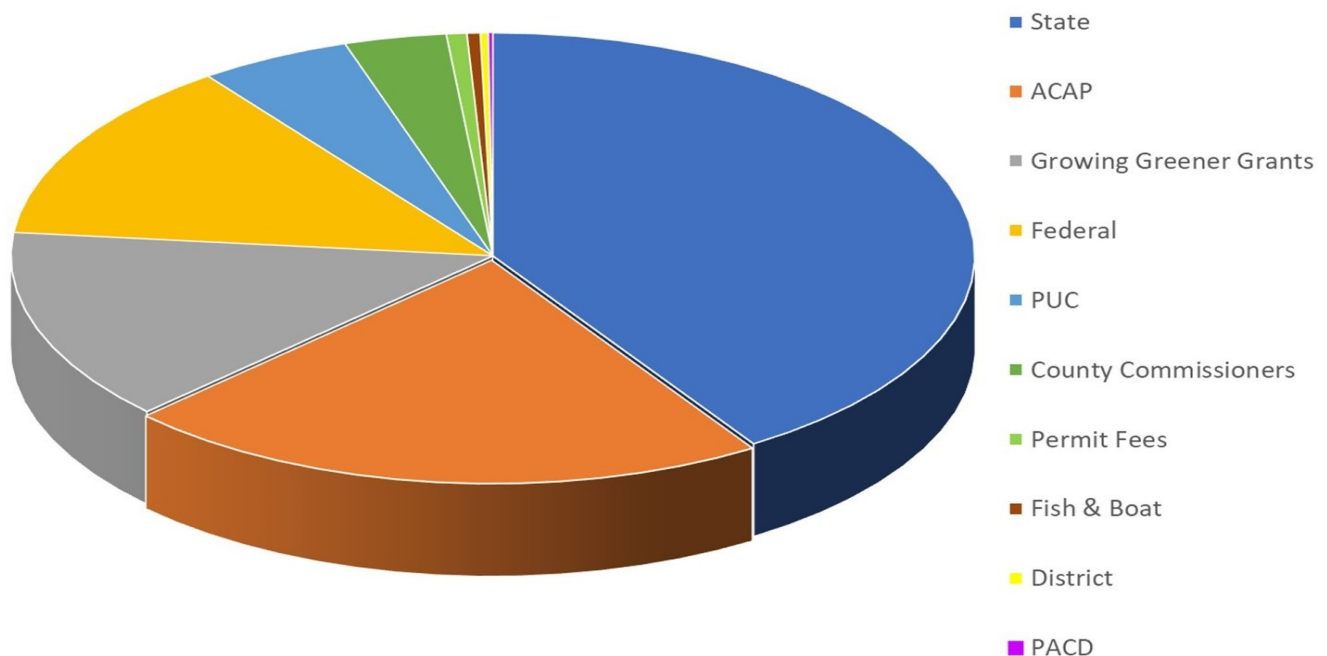
**Goal: Seek Funding for Staff to Administer Programs at the Local Level.**

## Goal Accomplishments

- Purchase of No-Till Drill
- Implementation of 14 different grants and programs
- Funding proposals for stream crossing and watershed assessment projects.
- Continuing treatment of Japanese Knotweed & Goatsrue

The District staff implemented, administered and monitored 14 different grants and programs. Below and on the next page is a breakdown and description of these grants and programs.

## 2023 Funding Sources



**For every dollar the County contributes to conservation  
the County receives \$29.21 in return.**

# McKean County Conservation District

Develop Resources to Sustain & Enhance the Conservation District and Our Natural Resources.  
District Resources Committee

## 2023 Funding Sources

Program	Amount	Source
Dirt, Gravel & Low Volume Road Program	\$ 303,568.00	State
Erosion & Sedimentation Program (Chapter 102)	\$ 20,000.00	State
E&S Review Fees	\$ 3,500.00	District
Nutrient Management Program	\$ 17,500.00	State
Agricultural Conservation Technician (ACT) Program	\$ 20,000.00	State
District Manager Funding	\$ 30,000.00 \$ 45,000.00	State County
Clean Water Permitting Program – Chapters 102 & 105	\$ 9,000.00	Permit Fees
Act 13 Unconventional Gas Well Fund	\$ 67,123.00	PUC
Act 13 Unconventional Gas Well Fund	\$ 146,632.00	State
Growing Greener Grants – Watershed Specialist	\$ 45,250.00	Growing Greener
Growing Greener Grants – Ag BMP Projects	\$ 138,000.00	Growing Greener
PACD – Mini-Grant – Adult Education Programs	\$ 2,000.00	PACD
Agricultural Assistance Program ( ACAP)	\$ 286,773.69	ACAP
AML/ AMD Grant – Assessment of Scaffold Lick	\$ 164,181.00	Federal
Fish & Boat - Habitat Restoration Projects	\$ 5,837.00	Fish & Boat
Invasive Plant Initiative - US Forest Service Grant to treat Goatsrue	\$ 10,000.00	Federal
<b>TOTAL Income</b>	<b>\$ 1,314,364.69</b>	

Income Source	Amount	% of Income
State	\$ 537,700.00	41%
ACAP	\$ 286,773.69	22%
Growing Greener Grants	\$ 183,250.00	14%
Federal	\$ 174,181.00	13.25%
PUC	\$ 67,123.00	5%
County	\$ 45,000.00	3%
Permit Fees	\$ 9,000.00	1%
Fish & Boat	\$ 5,837.00	0%
District	\$ 3,500.00	0.3%
PACD	\$ 2,000.00	0.2%



# McKean County Conservation District

Develop Resources to Sustain & Enhance the Conservation District and Our Natural Resources.

District Resources Committee

## Goal: Identify Current Needs of Public & Natural Resources



### Purchase of No-Till Drill

The District purchased a Great Plains 10' No-Till Drill in the fall of 2022 for \$28,000. This became available for rent by landowners within McKean County in 2023. With the purchase of the no-till drill, the District will be implementing a no-till/cover crop program.

In 2023, 13 landowners rented the drill to plant 100 acres of no-till crops.

Shown in the top picture are district directors Ken Kane and Chase Mile unloading the drill. Thank you to Ken Kane and director Blaine Puller for picking up the drill. Also, thank you to Duffy Inc. for helping to unload the drill.

Shown in the bottom picture is district chairman, Jeff Larson planting a demonstration cover crop that was utilized for a workshop.





# McKean County Conservation District

Develop Resources to Sustain & Enhance the Conservation District and Our Natural Resources.

District Resources Committee

## Goal: Identify Current Needs of Public & Natural Resources

### Treatment of Japanese Knotweed

In 2019, the District received \$25,000 through the PA Dept. of Agriculture (PDA) to initiate a coordinated, across boundary approach to treating the small, widespread infestations of Japanese Knotweed within the Tionesta Watershed.

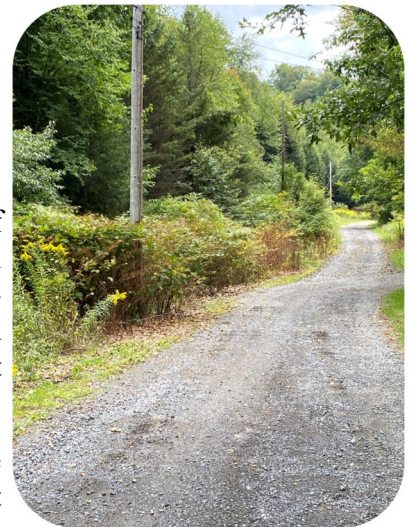
2023 is the fourth year of treatment with 25 landowners within the Tionesta Watershed that were treated. The picture to the right show a before treatment of Knotweed along West Run and below right shows the after treatment.



### Treatment of Goatsrue

In 2019, the District received \$25,000 through the PA Dept. of Agriculture (PDA), for treating known goatsrue infestations. In 2021, an additional \$10,000 was received through PDA. In 2022, a \$10,504 USDA, Forest Service Grant was also secured. This allowed us to expand our treatment in 2023 to 47 landowners in not only McKean County but also in Potter & Elk Counties.

2023 is the fourth year of treatment, the District spent \$14,818 to treat the 47 properties. Shown below are a before (left) and after (right) treatment of Goatsrue





# McKean County Conservation District

Develop Resources to Sustain & Enhance the Conservation District and Our Natural Resources.

District Resources Committee

## **Goal: Engage legislators and build a connection with Governor and federal legislators**

### **Legislative Luncheon**

The McKean County Conservation District hosted local, state, and federal legislators and partners to a legislative luncheon to not only thank them for funding efforts in conservation, but also to present them with plans for the future.

The district detailed many projects completed in the past year, as well as updates for the 2023/24 budget, Invasive Species proposal, and the 2023 Farm Bill. The 2023 projected income for the district was outlined showing how for every dollar the county contributes to conservation, it sees \$25.56 in return on that investment. Most of the income is from the Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP), a new program that allows the district to assist farmers throughout McKean County.

Brenda Shambaugh, executive director of Pa. Association of Conservation Districts Inc. stressed the importance of keeping the additional funding in the budget for conservation districts. Stating that Conservation Districts haven't seen an increase since 2005. It is important to continue the increase in funding,.

The district highlighted how establishing the ACAP program and assuring its continuation beyond 2026 is an investment in Pennsylvania's farms and measurable improvements to Pennsylvania's water quality. Pulling together the Farm Bill and ACAP funds will allow the dollars go further and help more farmers in the county.



# McKean County Conservation District

Develop Resources to Sustain & Enhance the Conservation District and Our Natural Resources.

District Resources Committee

## Goal: Build on our leadership at the local, state & national level

### Involvement at the National Level:



NACD welcomed nearly a thousand conservation professionals to the 2023 Annual Meeting in New Orleans, LA. Hosted in partnership with the Louisiana Association of Conservation Districts, the meeting explored the theme "Local Resiliency, National Community." Commissioner Director, Cliff Lane and District Manager, Sandy Thompson were in attendance.

During the meeting, the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) administered oaths of office to its new Officers and Executive Board members. Cliff Lane took

the oath of office as the North East Region Representative. In this new role, he will be representing Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. Cliff also serves as PACD's North West Region Director.

### Northeast Association of Conservation District Employees Recognition

Cliff Lane received the Northeast Association of Conservation District Employees (NACDE) District Leader Award. This award is presented to a director or other individual who is doing an outstanding job working with district professionals on a regional basis, helps obtain the goals of NACDE and the regional partnership, and assists in expanding employee professional development.

Sandy Thompson, Manager of McKean County Conservation District and former Vice President of the Northeast Association of Conservation District Employees (NACDE), received the 2023 NACDE President's Award. President Jeff Parker, from Steubin County, New York, selected Sandy for the award for her service as Vice-President and Secretary of the Board since 2011.





# McKean County Conservation District

Develop Resources to Sustain & Enhance the Conservation District and Our Natural Resources.

District Resources Committee

## Goal: Build on our leadership at the local, state & national level

### Cliff Lane, Northeast NACD Director, activities:



It was a productive and exciting 2023 for the newest NE NACD Director, Cliff Lane. Pictured here shows Cliff taking part in a NACD Spring Fly-In meeting in Washington, D.C. NACD leaders met with Senator John Boozman and then each of the members met with their congressional representatives to discuss the important work districts are performing at the local level and to advocate for federal policy priorities. Later, NACD members joined members of Congress and their staffs at a reception to celebrate locally led conservation and district advocacy.

In July, Cliff attended the summer meeting of NACD in Bismark, ND. The summer meeting included a tour of a local conservation district that had a 150 acre education center, where many different projects are being demonstrated for local farmers. The most interesting was their worm farm!! Also, there was a tour of a vertical integrated business with beef, bison, and beer. The last tour was of a research center where they are working on ways to get native grasses back.

Cliff attended the NE regional meeting in Portland Maine held in September. Besides, the tours on urban stormwater management and conservation projects along the coast; the meeting included excellent breakout sessions and information on a major forestry grant that includes many of the NE states including PA and Ohio. Cliff also services as the Invasive Species subcommittee chairman for the NACD. The committee is working on changes to some of the existing resolutions.

Pictured here is Cliff and the NACD's Executive Board during a meeting with U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and congressional leaders in December. This included meeting with NRCS Chief Cosby, Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation Business Center Robert Bonnie, Farm Service Agency Administrator Zach Ducheneaux, Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Debbie Stabenow, Senate Agriculture Committee Ranking Member John Boozman, and majority and minority House Agriculture Committee staff.





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**“Here is your country. Cherish these natural wonders, cherish the natural resources, cherish the history and romance as a sacred heritage, for your children and your children’s children.”**

**Theodore Roosevelt**

