



McKEAN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

CONSERVATION TIMES

Winter
2025

Directors Sworn-In

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Commissioner Carol Duffy swore-in District Directors on January 10th. Commissioner Tom Kreiner will serve a one-year term as a Commissioner Director. This will be his second term as a Conservation District Director

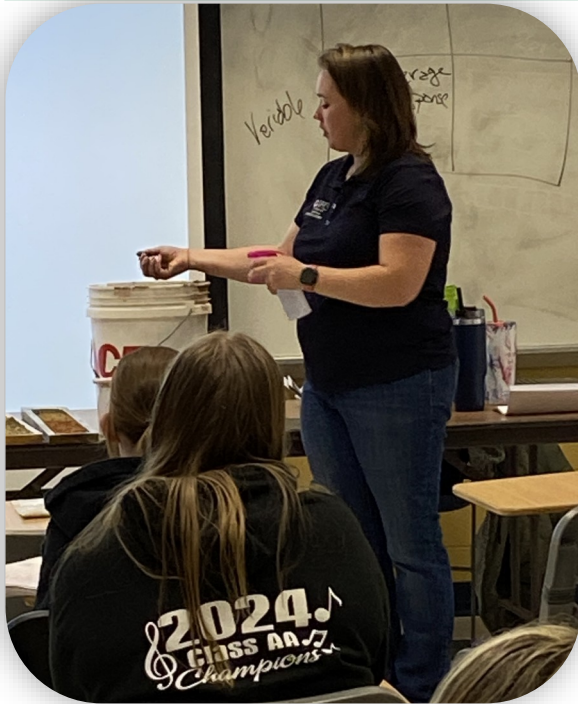
Kerry Fetter from Smethport was re-appointed to serve a four-year term as a Farmer Director. Kerry will be starting his 26th year as a director. Jeff Holcomb from Bradford was appointed to serve a four-year term as a Public Director. This will be his first term as a director, Jeff previously served on the board as a non-voting associate director for the past two years.

A member of the Board of Directors of the Conservation District has the responsibility for assuring that conservation district policies and practices enhance the natural resources in his/her county. This requires the identification of local natural resource needs and issues, development of management strategies, development and setting of local policy, and coordination of local, state and federal resources



l-r Jeff Holcomb, Commissioner Tom Kreiner, Kerry Fetter and Commissioner Carol Duffy, after swearing-in newly appointed Directors.

Spring Envirothon Study Day



Above: Ashlynn Dunn, NRCS teaching students about soil texture during the Soils Station



Left: Student shown labeling major watersheds in Pennsylvania.

Right: Dr. Frantescu with the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford teaching students different ways to foster forest stewardship.



On Tuesday March 4th the McKean County Conservation District hosted their first annual Spring Envirothon Study Day. There was representation from Bradford, Kane, Port Allegany, Otto Eldred, Smethport and Cameron County schools for a total of 19 teams and over 100 students.

The study day included 5 stations - soils, led by Ashlynn Dunn (NRCS), land use, led by Jim Zoschg (Cameron County Conservation District) and Sarah Carlson (McKean County Conservation District), aquatic ID, led by Adam Causer (McKean County Conservation District), aquatic habitat, led by Jon-Marc Burdick (Cameron County Conservation District), and the current issue (Roots and Resiliency: Fostering Forest Stewardship in a Canopy of Change) led by Dr. Mary Mulcahy, Dr. Ovidiu Frantescu, and Dr. Oluwabunmi Femi-Oloye (University of Pittsburgh at Bradford).

The next Envirothon Study Day is scheduled for April 10th which will be held at the VMI in Port Allegany. The stations will include all the Envirothon topics; soils, forestry, wildlife, aquatics, and current issue. This will be the final study day prior to the Envirothon event which will be held on April 30th. The winning team will go on to represent McKean County and compete at the PA state Envirothon which will be held on May 21st in Cambria County at Windber Recreational Park.

We would like to send out a huge thank you to the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford for hosting our Spring Study Day, our station presenters and the teachers for making this a great day.

Educational Grants Awarded

Building Environmental Stewards Initiative – Northwinds 4-H Camp - NACD



NACD awarded the District with a \$2,500.00 grant to provide educational outreach through a local 4-H camp. This will be implemented through a partnership with Penn State Extension and the District

Through this program, campers will be introduced to federal, state, local agencies and private entities to provide a hands-on climate resilience focused educational program encompassing natural resource topics, forestry, wildlife, aquatics and soil health to approximately 60 youth from a 5 county-wide area.

Arbor Day Program — Seneca Resources and Highland Field Services

The McKean County Conservation District was awarded a grant from Seneca Resources and Highland Field Services for \$2,000.00 to assist with the purchase of native tree seedling for the elementary students that will participate in the “My Growing Tree” program in the 2025 school year.

The District celebrates Arbor Day every April through the “My Growing Tree” program with the assistance from DCNR, Bureau of Forestry. Each first-grade student (second grade in Bradford) in the county receives a native tree seedling and a poster that includes charts for the student to monitor their own height as well as the growth of their tree. The program teaches students about Arbor Day and the importance trees play in our lives and in nature. The District distributes over 500 tree seedlings annually over the course of one week to all school districts.



Growing Greener Grant Awarded



On February 10th The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced that 12 projects in the state's North-west Region were awarded a total of \$2.5 million through DEP's Growing Greener Plus grant program. These projects will work to protect waterways and watersheds, reclaim abandoned mine sites, and work to reclaim and plug abandoned oil and gas wells. This year's awards exceed \$15 million statewide.

The District will receive \$263,259 to fund the McKean County Stream Crossing Restoration Initiative. The District will be providing an additional \$297,580.00 in Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Program funds towards this restoration initiative. The initiative includes replacing a severely degraded stream crossing in Lafayette Township, Taintor Road. "This crossing is a threat to environmental and public safety, due to being severely undersized, massive amount of streambank and bed erosion have occurred causing harmful levels of sedimentation to this naturally reproducing wild trout stream", said Lindsay Trojanowski, District's Resource Conservationist.

This initiative will eliminate the undersized crossing which is categorized as a "severe aquatic organism (AOP) barrier", reestablish stream connectivity and continuity, address sediment pollution, mitigate extensive streambank erosion, reconnect riparian corridors and improve degraded fish habitat within an UNT to the East Branch of the Tunungwant. This will be completed through the implementation of a stream restoration plan that includes known and proven stream crossing improvement practices, fish habitat improvement structures, and erosion control methods. The initiative will replace the failing 4.8' stream crossing with a properly sized 20'11" aluminum plate box culvert to obtain full aquatic passage along with flood resiliency. Another key part to this initiative is to include native riparian buffer plantings up and downstream of the crossing. This will improve water quality by greatly reducing sediment pollution and thermal impacts to the UNT to the East Branch of the Tunungwant. The project will also include a total of 120' of instream of in-stream fish habitat structures as outlined in PA Fish & Boat's Habitat Improvement for Trout Streams publication.

The Conservation District is looking forward to working with Lafayette Township and other partners to improve water quality as well as public safety with the implementation of this initiative.

Winter Workshops

DGLVR Municipal Breakfast Workshop



On January 28th the District hosted a Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Program Workshop for municipalities. The Workshop gave participants an update on the changes to the local policy and DGLVR application timeline. Attendees also learned about the program's stream crossing policy, eligible projects, and project implementation from Andrew Mickey with the State Conservation Commission.

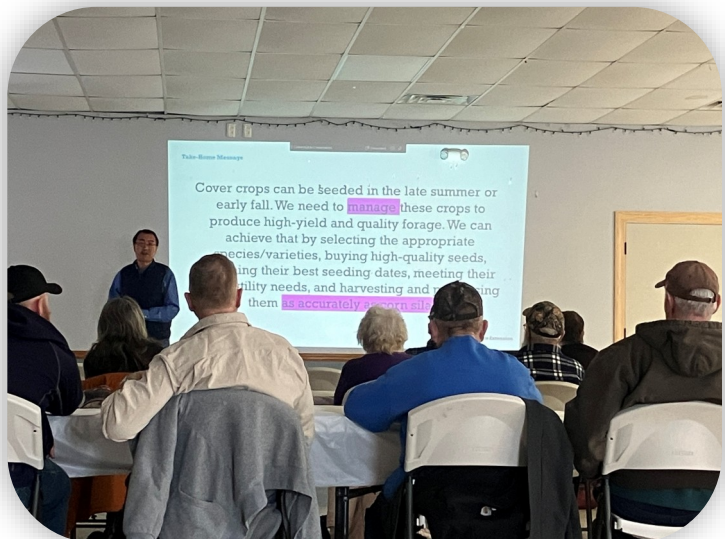
Minor changes were made to the District's Local DGLVR policy with hopes of making the program operate more efficiently for both the grant applicants and the District. The Conservation District also adjusted the timeline

for when applications are due by moving the deadline from September 31st to June 6th.

Winter Farmers Meeting

The annual Winter Farmers Meeting was held February 21, 2025 at the Port Allegany Veterans Memorial with 25 participants.

Presentations included 2024 Disease Year in Review and the Results of the 2024 Fungicide Efficiency Trials, by Tyler McFeaters, Penn State Southeast Agricultural Research and Extension Center; CHEMSWEEP, by Jon Johnson; Penn State Extension; Management of Problem Weeds and Herbicide Regulations, by John Wallace, Penn State Extension; Cover Crops for Forage Production, by Guojie Wang, Penn State Extension; and NRCS Agency Updates by Amanda Murdock, USDA NRCS. Adam Causer, MCCC, also presented on the ACAP Program.



Pesticide credits were available to those who attended, 2 category and 2 core.

79th Annual NACD Meeting

The 2025 Annual NACD meeting was held February 8th—12th in Salt Lake City Utah. This year was the 79th year and the theme was “Bee the Change: Reaching New Summits in Conservation!”

Members from the McKean County Conservation District manager Sandy Thompson and Conservation Technician Sarah Carlson, along with Board Member Cliff Lane attended the 2025 NACD Annual Meeting.

The NACD Annual Meeting’s general sessions featured an array of inspirational and informative speakers from within Utah and across the country. The most memorable speaker from the meeting was keynote speaker Erik Weihenmayer. Erik is a blind athlete, author, and Co-Founder of the nonprofit organization No Barriers. Erik shared his own experience heights kayaking, mountaineering, and rock climbing, and encouraged participants to dive into the learning process and reach for our own goals.

The breakout sessions for 2025 fit into one of four themes: community outreach, conservation implementation, conservation district capacity and operations, and conservation partnerships. These sessions focused on the work of conservation districts and their partners across the country. From green infrastructure and restoration programs to outreach initiatives and new partnerships, these sessions provided a wealth of information about the agriculture world and the groundbreaking work from people across the nation.

The Annual Meeting came to a close with three local tours hosted by the Utah Association of Conservation Districts. Sarah attended the tour that explored Summit County, including a visit to the Kohler Creamery to explore their innovative automated milking system and enjoy an award-winning cheese tasting. This was followed by a stop at the Alf Engen Ski Museum in Utah Olympic Park, where they learned about skiing, ski jumping, and snowboarding through interactive exhibits on snow science and weather patterns. Sandy attended the tour that went to two farms which are advancing in urban agriculture and sustainability through creative solutions and community engagement.

Photo to the right shows Pennsylvania representation at the Annual NACD Meeting.

Back L-R : Justin Challenger, SCC, Jennifer Fetter, Penn State, Extension, Cliff Lane, McKean CD, Doug Wolfgang, SCC, Doug Beri, Jr., Indiana CD, Ron Rohall, Westmoreland CD.

Front L-R : Dan Ludwig, NRCS, Sandy Thompson, MCCD, Blake Mauthe, Indiana CD, Sarah Carlson, McKean CD, Hayly Hoch, Allegheny CD.



Chapter 102 NPDES Permit Updates



Effective March 8, 2025, The Chapter 102 Individual NPDES Permit (IP) application, checklist, and instructions have been updated and are available in [DEP's eLibrary](#).

Updates to the IP application and permit were made to be nearly identical to the PAG-02 changes, including EP Analysis, Qualified Site Inspector requirements, etc. A new section has been added to the application instructions for sites with contamination. This section also corresponds to the new information in the IP completeness review checklist of the Chapter 102 Fact Sheet and Attachment A of the IP SOP.

The table below is a list of all the documents that have been revised with the reissuing. Dates have been included as to when these documents are to be used or serve as a reminder that some of them need to be in use now.

Document	Must Be Used Starting
Annual Report (3800-PM-BCW0405e)	December 7, 2025
Visual Site Inspection Report (3800-FM-BCW0271d)	December 8, 2024
Erosion Potential Analysis Form (3800-FM-BCW0271h) updated for PAG-02 and IP	December 8, 2024
New Property Owner Notification Form (3800-FM-BCW0271i)	December 8, 2024
SCM Construction Certification Form (3800-FM-BCW0271j)	December 8, 2024
E&S Module 1 (3800-PM-BCW0406a) updated for PAG-02 and IP	March 8, 2025
PCSM Module 2 (3800-PM-BCW0406b)	March 8, 2025
Notice of Termination (3800-PM-BCW0229c) updated for PAG-02 and IP	March 8, 2025
Individual Permit Application (3800-PM-BCW0408b)	March 8, 2025
Antidegradation Module 3 (3800-PM-BCW0406c)	March 8, 2024
Riparian Buffer Module 4 (3800-PM-BCW0406d)	March 8, 2024

For additional information or with any questions, contact Katelynn Decker at kadecker@mckeancountypa.gov 814-887-4008.

Directors

Jeff Larson - Chairman
Chase Miles - Vice-Chairman
Cliff Lane--Secretary/Treasurer
Tom Kreiner—Commissioner Director
Ken Kane - Public
Kerry Fetter - Farmer
Jeff Holcomb - Public

Associate Directors

Pete Mader
Boyd Fitzsimmons
Lori Coffman
John Stratton
Chris Payne

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The McKean County Conservation District was organized at the request of the County residents. The County was declared a District by the board of County Commissioners on August 19, 1959, according to provisions of the Soil Conservation Law of 1945, Act 217 of the General Assembly, as amended.

The primary goal of the District is the development, improvement, and conservation of the County's Soil, water and related resources as well as educating the community in various conservation and environmental practices and methods.

The District is administered by a board of seven Directors—three farmer members, three public (non-farmer) members and one County Commissioner. District Directors are appointed by the County Commissioners from a list of names submitted by countywide nominating organizations. The Commissioners also designate one of their members to serve as a Director.

Vision: The Conservation District is the steward of McKean County's natural resource 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.

