



McKEAN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

CONSERVATION TIMES

Winter
2026

Directors Sworn-In

Inside This Issue:

Commissioner Carol Duffy swore-in District Director, Cliff Lane and Commissioner Tom Kreiner on January 21st. Commissioner Tom Kreiner will serve a one-year term as a Commissioner Director. This will be his third term as a Conservation District Director. Cliff Lane from Annin Township was re-appointed to serve a four-year term as a Farmer Director. Cliff will be starting his 22nd year as a director.

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

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l-r Cliff Lane, Commissioner Tom Kreiner, and Commissioner Carol Duffy, after swearing-in newly appointed Directors.

Annual Meeting

The McKean County Conservation District held their Annual Meeting on January 14th. District staff gave presentations on their accomplishments from the 2025 year, along with detailed information on project implementation for programs such as ACAP, the DGLVR program, and the stream bank stabilization initiative. There was 18 people in attendance who reviewed the 2025 Annual Workplan and provided input into the development of the District's 2026 Annual Workplan. The District holds an Annual Meeting every year to gather input utilized in building our Annual Workplan.

Annual meetings are a crucial part of the districts planning process giving a platform to inform members/shareholders, boost trust, and celebrate milestones. The District is thankful for all its partners who have continued to support us and our mission throughout the years.



Above and right: Watershed Specialist Adam Causer presenting on the ACAP program during Annual Meeting.



Left: District Manager Sandy Thompson presenting on district development during the Annual Meeting

Spring Envirothon Study Day

On Wednesday March 11th the District hosted the 2ND Annual Spring Envirothon Study Day with representation from Bradford, Kane, Otto Eldred, Smethport and Cameron County schools for a total of 19 teams and over 100 students.

The study day included 3 stations - soils, led by Sarah Carlson (McKean County Conservation District), and land use, led by Jim Zoschg (Cameron County Conservation District) aquatic habitat, led by Katelynn Decker (McKean County Conservation District), aquatic ID, led by Jon-Marc Burdick (Cameron County Conservation District), and the current issue (Non-Point Source Pollution; It begins at home) led by Dr. Ovidiu Daniel Frantescu (University of Pittsburgh at Bradford).



After the stations students were given the opportunity to tour the Biology and Natural Science Resource Room, led by Dr. Mary Mulcahy (University of Pittsburgh at Bradford), shown above. They also toured the Environmental Science room, led by Dr. Ovidiu Daniel Frantescu (University of Pittsburgh at Bradford).

The spring study day provides a unique opportunity for students ask questions and gather additional information to prepare for the Annual Envirothon which is scheduled for April 30th.



A huge thank you to the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford for hosting our Spring Study Day, our station presenters, the teachers, and the students for making this a great day.

Growing Greener Grant Awarded

On January 21st The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced that they would be investing \$17,325,163 for 89 projects across Pennsylvania that will restore streams, improve fish and wildlife habitat, and reclaim mine lands. The grants are part of the Growing Greener program, Pennsylvania's largest environmental grant program.

"Growing Greener grants are one of the best investments that Pennsylvania makes into improving our environment," said DEP Secretary Jessica Shirley. "These 89 projects will lead to cleaner water for us to drink and swim in, better habitat for fish and wildlife, and less pollution in our streams and rivers. It enables local governments, county conservation districts, and non-profit organizations to make Pennsylvania a better place to live and thrive."

The District was awarded a \$487,707 Growing Greener Grant to fund the planning, permitting, designing, and construction of the Buck Run Agricultural BMP Initiative. In 2024, the District was contacted about potential agricultural best management practices (BMPs) improvements to a farm along Bucks Hollow in Port Allegany. Bucks Hollow is a wild reproducing trout stream from the headwaters to the mouth of the Allegheny Portage. The District met with the landowner to develop a plan and cost estimate. The BMPs chosen were based upon the substantial environmental improvements that will be gained and the landowner's willingness to address the identified problems, especially barnyard Animal Concentration Areas (ACAs), erosion and nutrient control practices on cropland, hayland, and pastureland and stream corridor management problems.



The Upper Allegheny Watershed is impaired due to agriculture with the cause being sediment loading into the stream because of grazing in riparian zones.

This type of agricultural non-point source pollution not only affects the water quality, but it affects and threatens the water quality of the Upper Allegheny River Watershed. Conversely, restoring the water quality in this tributary watershed, and building necessary in-stream habitat for the wild reproducing trout that are already present in Bucks Hollow will work to improve overall water quality conditions in the Allegheny Portage and the greater Allegheny River Watershed.

The BMPs planned for this site are a roofed Heavy Use Area/Waste Storage Facility, access roads, animal trails, in-stream fish habitat structures, stream exclusionary fencing, riparian buffer, underground outlets, roof runoff structures, and stabilized agricultural crossings.

The estimated immediate environmental results after the installation of this project will be a 50% reduction in contaminated stormwater runoff from the farmstead and barnyard, a 100% reduction in the amount of livestock having direct unregulated access to Bucks Hollow, and 18.95 tons of sediment annually will be eliminated from loading into the stream.

Winter Workshops

DGLVR Municipal Meetings



Above: Resource Conservationist, Lindsay Trojanowski reviewing the DGLVR grant application with meeting participants

The District held two municipal meetings in February designed to help municipalities become more familiar with the Dirt Gravel and Low Volume Road (DGLVR) Program. The purpose of these meetings were to be a short, informative and discussion based way to introduce the DGLVR program and how municipalities can receive grant funding to improve their roadways.

Meeting topics included information on the low volume road portion of the program, an explanation on how the DGLVR program works at the state and local level, a walk through of the grant application and ranking sheet, and an in-depth explanation of roles within the program.

Winter Farmers Meeting

The annual Winter Farmers Meeting was held February 27 with 18 in attendance. Pesticide credits were available to those who attended which included 2 category and 2 core along with free soil test kits.

Speakers and presentations included “Protecting Aquatic Resources while using Pesticides” by Travis Wingard, Penn State Extension Master Watershed Coordinator, “Best Ways to Manage Stubborn Weeds in Crop Fields and Pastures/Hayfields by Dwight Lingenfelter, Penn State Extension Weed Scientist, “Don’t Risk It: Record Weather Before you Spray” by Nicole Thompson, Penn State Extension Agronomy Educator, and Guojie Wang of Penn State Extension presented on pasture evaluation and management.

Representatives from NRCS and FSA also gave agency updates, with the day ending with a Manure Management presentation by District Resource Technician Sarah Carlson.



Above: Presenter Dwight Lingenfelter a Penn State Extension Weed Scientist explaining best ways to manage stubborn weeds in crop fields and pastures/hayfields

80th Annual NACD Meeting

The 2026 Annual Meeting was held February 15th-19th in San Antonio, Texas. This year was the 80th year with the theme of “Deep Roots, Bold Horizons”. Staff members Sarah Carlson (Resource Technician) and Katelynn Decker (Conservation Technician) attended the meeting, along with Board Member Cliff Lane.

The opening session explored the theme for the week with speakers including NACD President Gary Blair and NACD Chief Executive Officer Jeremy Peters. The Keynote Speaker for the meeting was Chet Garner, creator, host, and executive producer of the Texas travel show *The Daytripper*. His talk not only included some Texas trivia but touched on the idea that every place has a story to be told. Taking the road less traveled is important to learn these stories and the people connected to them. The week ended with Texas FFA Foundation Executive Director Aaron Alejandro speaking on the importance of seizing opportunities and making decisions based on values.

There were many breakout sessions held throughout the week including a session presented by Katelynn and Sarah “From One to Two: Redefining roles to optimize performance while creating a stronger workforce”. The presentation focused on how new staff were hired at the district, responsibilities and workload balance were shifted, sustainable funding strategies, and how current district programs have flourished with increased implementation and outreach to the local community.



Photo above shows Pennsylvania representation at the Annual NACD Meeting.

L-R - Ron Rohall, Westmoreland CD, Andy Mickey, SCC, Doug Beri, Indiana CD, Justin Challenger, SCC, Sarah Carlson, McKean CD, Steve Bloser, Penn State Center for Dirt & Gravel Road Studies, Katelynn Decker, McKean CD, Shaun McAdams, Penn State Center for Dirt & Gravel Road Studies, Emil Bove, Westmoreland CD, Cliff Lane, McKean CD.

PA Chapter 102 and 105 Project Information



With spring approaching, time is limited to build, create driveways, and conduct other land clearing or property improvement activities. The District reminds landowners and contractors that certain activities may require permits or erosion and sedimentation plans.

When planning any work near a stream or waterway it is especially critical to acquire permits and check regulations. A stream in Pennsylvania is a waterway with a defined bed and banks, even if water does not flow year round. If your project requires work in a stocked trout stream, no instream work

can take place between February 15 and June 1. Work in wild trout streams must be completed prior to spawning season (no work between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31).

Here are a few guidelines when planning your project. If your project:

- * Will have less than 5,000 square feet of earth disturbance, it is not necessary to have a written plan on site but **erosion and sediment control best management practices (BMPs) are required** to minimize the potential for accelerated erosion and sedimentation.
- * Will have more than 5,000 square feet of earth disturbance, a **written E&S plan is required** to be on site and implemented.
- * Will have 1 acre or more of earth disturbance a **NPDES Permit is required** to be submitted for approval to the District. Before any earth disturbance activity can occur the plan must be approved.
- * Is timber harvesting or road maintenance activity involving 25 acres (10 hectares) or more of earth disturbance, an **E&S Permit is required to be submitted for approval** to the District. Before any earth disturbance activity can occur the plan must be approved. Timber harvests with less than 25 acres of earth disturbance are required to have a **written E&S plan posted** on site and implemented.

Before beginning your project, check with your municipality and county planning office regarding their requirements and building permit information.

Please feel free to contact the District at 814-887-4008 or kadecker@mckeancountypa.gov or visit www.mckeanconservation.com for more permitting information. The District is here to provide educational and technical assistance to help landowners comply with the Clean Streams Law.

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
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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.

