



Pike County Conservation District

Annual Report 2011

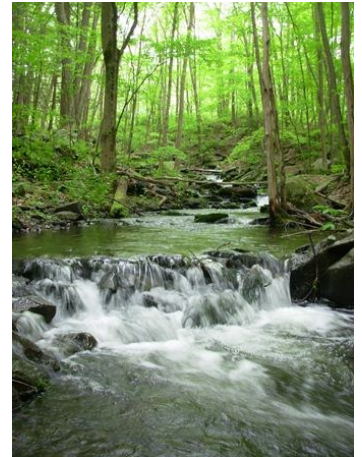
On the Importance of Partnerships...

Each year the District Board and Staff seek out ways to work with partners to protect the natural resources of Pike County. In the past year we worked closely with DEP's Northeast Regional Office and neighboring conservation districts to improve compliance on gas transmission line projects in the region. We worked with our County Commissioners to find funding opportunities to protect the surface water and groundwater that sustain our communities. We teamed with the Conservation Partnership to provide a variety of educational programs for residents and hosted an annual Legislative Breakfast to address environmental policy concerns with local, State and Federal legislators. In collaboration with the Pinchot Institute for Conservation and other local partners, the District provided outreach and assistance to landowners interested in the Common

Waters Fund, facilitating development and implementation of forest stewardship plans and management practices on their lands. This annual report will share these and many more District accomplishments in the service of natural resource conservation in Pike County.

The District would like to extend its thanks to the Pike County Commissioners and other partner organizations for their support of our mission and goals. My fellow volunteer Board Members and the District Staff are to be commended for their hard work and dedication in the face of significant challenges to Pike County's natural resources. It is through the collective efforts of our Board, Staff and many partners that the quality of life we all have come to enjoy is possible.

PCCD Board Chairman Scott Savini



OUR MISSION

Pike County Conservation District is committed to natural resources conservation through leadership, education, technical assistance, planning and enforcement to ensure the long term protection and sustainable use of Pike County's natural resources and implementation of environmentally sound development and land use practices.

What is the Pike County Conservation District?

Pike County Conservation District is one of 66 conservation districts statewide responsible under Act 217, Pennsylvania's Conservation District Law, for conservation work within county boundaries. The District was established in 1956 by the County Commissioners and has worked actively since then to carry out programs focused on soil, water, forests and other natural resources. The District is governed by a Board of volunteer Directors whose members represent a cross section of local interests. The Board meets monthly to oversee conservation programs and activities. District

staff have expertise in natural resource management, watershed protection, grant writing, public relations and program administration.

The District serves as an advocate for environmental conservation and a clearinghouse for natural resource conservation information and educational materials as well as State and Federal regulatory and permit information. Much of the work of the Conservation District is accomplished through collaborative efforts with local, state and federal partner agencies and organizations.

District Leadership

Pike County Conservation District's Board is a dedicated group of citizens who share a great concern for the natural resources and rich conservation history that are at the core of the Pike County landscape. The Board guides the District staff in their work to protect these natural assets.

Throughout the year Board members engage legislators, municipal leaders and others to provide updates and assess ways the District can better meet its goals. In 2011, District Board members and staff met with partners and legislators to discuss the impacts of utility and gas transmission line construction projects affecting landowners, forests and waterways in the County. Board members Ken Ersbak and Bob Engvaldsen served on the Pike County Marcellus Shale Task Force Environmental Committee, which was established to consider a variety of



2011 PCCD Board of Directors

From left: Robert Engvaldsen - Vice Chairman, Ray Banach, Roy Borgfeld, Frederica Leighton, Pete Helms, Carole Linkiewicz, Commissioner Richard Caridi, Scott Savini - Chairman, and Ken Ersbak
Missing from photo: Linda Cioppa -Treasurer

impacts associated with gas drilling and transmission infrastructure.

The Board communicated to Federal legislators their support of the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act of 2011 as a mechanism to enhance habitat, water quality and flood control in the Delaware River Basin.

The Board also supported the Delaware Highlands Conservancy's Forest Legacy Program application for the Little Bushkill Headwater Forest Preserve - three private properties contiguous to State Forest lands that, if protected, will create a block of over 20,000 acres of contiguous forestland forming an important greenway corridor between the Delaware State Forest and Delaware Water Gap

National Recreation Area.

The renewal of state *Growing Greener* funding was also a focus of Board support given its integral role in providing matching funds for the County's Scenic Rural Character Preservation program. *Growing Greener* funds also support the District's Watershed Specialist, who plays a key role in efforts focused on conserving Pike County's largely unspoiled High Quality and Exceptional Value water resources.

On an ongoing basis, the Board also reviews District policies and operating procedures. In 2011 the Board updated the PCCD Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Policy and the Financial Accounts, Policies and Procedures.



Commissioner Rich Caridi swears in reappointed Public Director Pete Helms with an unnoticed guest looking on.

District Active in PA Association of Conservation Districts



From left: Ken Ersbak, Pete Helms, Commissioners Rich Caridi and Kathy Hummel, PACD Exec. Director Robert Maiden and Scott Savini.

In September, PA Association of Conservation Districts (PACD) Executive Director Robert Maiden met with the District Board to provide an update on PACD activities and discuss natural gas impact fee legislative proposals. Mr. Maiden also accompanied District Chairman Scott Savini and Executive Director Susan Beecher on a site visit to the Tennessee Gas Pipeline project to view first-hand the impacts of natural

gas transmission line construction in the County.

Throughout 2011, District Director and PACD Northeast Regional Director Linda Cioppa organized regional meetings and participated in the PACD Oil and Gas Committee, Ways and Means Committee and the Executive Board, working with Conservation Districts across the state analyzing legislative and regulatory policy that may impact Districts.

2011 Board of Directors

Scott Savini, Chairman
Bob Engvaldsen, Vice Chairman
Linda Cioppa, Treasurer
Richard Caridi, Commissioner
Ray Banach, Roy Borgfeld,
Peter Helms

Associate Directors

Ken Ersbak,
Frederica Leighton, Carole Linkiewicz

2011 District Staff

Susan Beecher, Executive Director
Michele Ulmer, Administrative Manager
Kelly Rodemich, Program Assistant/
Gypsy Moth Coordinator
Tina Spizuoco, Administrative Assistant
Ellen Enslin, Senior Resource
Conservationist
Russell Seese, Resource Conservationist
Marci Barrows, Resource Conservationist
Lori Colgan, Watershed Specialist
Glenn Eby, P.E., District Engineer

Monthly Meetings

Generally held on the 3rd Monday
of each month
(unless otherwise advertised)
9:00 am at the District Office in
Blooming Grove.
The public is invited to attend.

District Office

556 Route 402
Hawley, PA 18428
PHONE: 570-226-8220
FAX: 570-226-8222
email: pikecd@pikepa.org
www.pikeconservation.org

Pike County Commissioners

Richard A. Caridi
Kathy Hummel
Karl A. Wagner, Jr.

2011 District Staff Highlights

District Staff welcomed some new faces in 2011 to a team of seasoned individuals. **Kelly Rodemich** came on board as a part time Administrative Assistant then moved into the full time Program Assistant position in September. **Tina Spizuoco** joined the team in November rounding off a great administrative support team that keeps the office and program administration running smoothly.

In cooperation with the County Commissioners, the District added another Resource Conservationist position to the staff in 2011. Two new Resource Conservationists, **Marci Barrows** and **Russell Seese** joined the team in the spring to implement environmental regulatory and resource management programs.

2011 also saw the marriage of **Ellen (Salak) Enslin** to Jeff Enslin in June, followed by Ellen being named Senior Resource Conservationist.



Ellen's knowledge of delegated programs was recognized when she was asked to serve on a DEP workgroup tasked with revising the Chapter 102/NPDES Administrative and Permitting Manual. Ellen also serves as an advisor to the County Ag Preservation Board and Pike County Santos Riverfront Park Master Site Plan committee.

With the District Engineer position vacant at the beginning of the year, PCCD received assistance from Monroe County Conservation District's engineer to review Post Construction Stormwater Management (PCSM) Plans. **Glenn Eby, P.E.** then joined the District in April. With 24 years of civil engineering experience in land development and municipal reviews, Glenn was a great asset to the District, reviewing PCSM and E&S Plans and providing construction inspection and engineering assistance. Unfortunately, the

District Engineer position was cut from the Pike County 2012 Budget and Glenn left the District at year-end.

Lori Colgan came on as Watershed Specialist in August. She holds a BS in Environmental Studies from East Stroudsburg University, an Environmental Law degree from Vermont Law School and is a member of the PA Bar. Lori provides assistance in watershed assessment, groundwater and surface water protection, conservation education and watershed organization development.



Administrative Manager **Michele Ulmer** continued to work closely with the Conservation Partnership to provide educational programs throughout Pike and Wayne Counties. Michele serves as Records Officer for the District, is a representative on PACD's Education and Outreach Committee, and is a District Voting Delegate to PACD's Executive Council. In April and May, Michele and Lori attended the Pace University Land Use Leadership Alliance (LULA) Training, which was funded in part by the District.

Executive Director **Susan Beecher** served as Regional Coordinator for the Common Waters Fund (see page 9 for details) in 2011 and participated as a Common Waters Partnership steering committee member. Susan also served on the County's Marcellus Shale Task Force and lent her conservation experience to the Grey Towers Heritage Association as a Board member.



Pictured from left: Resource Conservationist Marci Barrows, District Engineer Glenn Eby, P.E., Administrative Assistant Kelly Rodemich and Resource Conservationist Russell Seese

Conservation Partnership Activities

In August members of the Conservation Partnership gathered once again with local, State and Federal legislators to discuss natural resource issues and concerns (see photo below). The Partnership includes over 20 non-governmental and governmental organizations active in Pike and Wayne Counties. This annual event allows for dialogue on shared goals, funding needs for protecting resources and various natural resource-related legislative initiatives.

Promised Land State Park's Alex Stout shared how DCNR's Conservation Landscape Initiative has helped connect nature and tourism in the Hawley area, bringing together neighboring communities to enhance recreation, greenway connections and business opportunities. District Executive Director Susan Beecher highlighted the Common Waters Partnership, a regional cooperative effort supporting sustainable communities and working landscapes

in the Delaware River watershed. Susan, along with Wayne Conservation District Manager Bob Muller, highlighted natural gas transmission line projects impacting Pike and Wayne Counties. Delaware Highlands Conservancy's Sue Currier and Pike County Planning Director Sally Corrigan spoke to the importance of Federal and State funding, including the Forest Legacy Program and Land and Water Conservation Fund, for local open space and planning efforts. Michele Sands of SEEDS (Sustainable Energy Education and Development Support) highlighted renewable energy educational initiatives throughout Wayne County.

The Partnership, which meets regularly to share information and discuss current activities, is actively engaged in outreach to help landowners meet their land management goals. Joint educational programs for local residents and municipal officials focus on a number of growth management

topics and are promoted through various media, including a monthly *Living Green* article in *Connections Magazine* and the Wallenpaupack Community Education Program.

Conservation Partnership

Pike County Conservation District
Pike Co. Office of Community Planning
Delaware Highlands Conservancy
Penn State Cooperative Extension
The Nature Conservancy
The Pinchot Institute for Conservation
Upper Delaware Roundtable
National Park Service - DWGNRA
National Park Service- UDSRR
Pennsylvania Environmental Council
PA Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources
The Lackawaxen River Conservancy
PPL
Lake Wallenpaupack Watershed
Management District
Pocono Environmental Education Center
Wayne Conservation District
Northeast PA Audubon Society
US Forest Service
SEEDS
The Eagle Institute



Municipal Roundtable Advances Communication

In January, the District met with Pike County municipal representatives in an ongoing effort to enhance communication and cooperation. Sewage Enforcement Officers, Zoning Officers, Building Inspectors, administrative staff and Supervisors/Council members discussed with District staff the shared challenges associated with land development and natural resources protection in Pike County.

Topics of discussion included the newly revised PA DEP Chapter 102 Erosion and Sediment Control and Stormwater Management regulations, innovations in erosion and sediment control best management practices and a refresher on permit requirements for work in and around wetlands and streams. Board Chairman Scott Savini, who attended along with Director Pete Helms, told those present that "the District's

working relationship with municipal governments is a key element in the protection of Pike County natural resources".



Common Waters Fund Helps Upper Delaware Landowners Protect Forests & Water Quality

In 2011, 90 private landowners across three states were awarded more than \$575,000 in Common Waters Fund grants to develop forest management plans and implement sustainable management practices that protect water quality. The awards were distributed by the Pinchot Institute for Conservation, which is working with conservation districts and other organizations in the Upper Delaware River basin. Initial financing for the Fund came as a grant to the Institute from the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, which supports pioneering work to link "forests to faucets" around the country.

The Common Waters Fund is distributed across Monroe, Pike, and Wayne Counties in Pennsylvania; Delaware and Sullivan Counties in New York; and Sussex County in New Jersey. Funding helps landowners in the Delaware River's headwaters improve, update, or create first-time forest management plans or implement management practices that help conserve forests and protect water quality. Funded projects involve tree planting, adding fences to facilitate forest regeneration, removing invasive species, culling overcrowded or diseased trees, or correcting soil erosion that could impair streams.

"The application process was fairly easy to go through, the District staff were helpful, and the guidelines on what best management practices we could use were clear," said William DerHammer of the Maskenozha Rod & Gun Club. "Because of the program our Club can now install best management practices on our forests that suffered from gypsy moth

devastation, over-browsing by deer, and invasive species. The funding was a godsend because federal monies are just not there," he said. District staff provide assistance to Pike County landowners who are interested in applying for these funds.

Susan Beecher, District Executive Director, is the Upper Basin Coordinator for the Fund. In this capacity the District promotes the Common Waters Fund, provides support to other project partners, collects applications and collates application data and participates in outreach to downstream water users.

The Fund is now working to attract investors interested in sustaining the program beyond its initial two-year pilot phase. Landowners and land trusts are encouraged to check eligibility at www.commonwatersfund.org and apply for grants through local partner offices.



Participants at the Common Waters Fund Timber Bridge Workshop June 6th.



Consulting foresters at an informational session on Common Waters Fund and application process.



2011 CWF Activities

- In April the District coordinated workshops for consulting foresters from Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey who are working with clients submitting Common Waters Fund applications.
- In May, Executive Director Susan Beecher promoted the Common Waters Fund at a meeting of CHAT (Clean Headwaters Action Team), a multi-county association of hunting and fishing clubs, and at the Upper Delaware Land Use Leadership Alliance (LULA) Training coordinated by PACE University School of Law.
- In June, loggers from the Upper Delaware region joined the Common Waters Fund and local partners for a Portable Timber Bridge Workshop. Participants heard about the benefits of timber bridges and the availability of grants for bridges to help protect the region's high quality streams. A field tour and bridge installation demo rounded out the day.
- In August, Susan Beecher presented information on the Fund and the conservation districts' role in program delivery at the National Association of Conservation Districts Forest Policy Committee meeting, held at Grey Towers in Milford. The District's role in Common Waters Fund was featured in the August edition of NACD's *Forestry Notes*.

Chapter 102 Erosion and Sediment Control & Stormwater Management Program



Chapter 102 of PA's environmental regulations requires those engaged in earth disturbance activities to protect water quality by implementing best management practices (BMPs) to minimize erosion and sedimentation (E&S) and to manage post construction stormwater. The District administers Chapter 102 and NPDES construction permits through a delegation agreement with DEP. District responsibilities include review of permit applications and plans for land development activities, site inspections, complaint investigations and enforcement.

In 2011, District staff worked to help the public understand revised Chapter 102 regulations finalized at the end of 2010. The new regulation

incorporates post construction stormwater management (PCSM) requirements, water quality provisions, updated agricultural requirements and riparian buffer provisions.

District staff attended training in May for the latest information from DEP on Chapter 102 implementation, safety issues, and compliance and enforcement procedures.

With the elimination of the District Engineer position in the Pike County 2012 Budget, the PCSM delegation agreement with DEP was terminated and PCSM reviews will now be conducted by the staff at the DEP Northeast Regional Office in Wilkes Barre.



| 2011 E&S Control & NPDES Program Highlights | |
|---|------|
| Technical Assistance Provided | 734 |
| Initial Plan Reviews | 114 |
| Follow-up Plan Reviews | 132 |
| Project Acres | 2450 |
| Total Acres Disturbed | 849 |
| Individual/General NPDES Permits | 5 |
| Complaints Investigated | 74 |
| Site Inspections | 268 |
| Enforcement Actions Taken | 5 |
| Combined Staff Hours | 6961 |

2011 NPDES Permit Applications

NPS Childs Park Rehabilitation
Masthope Recreation
Facilities & Ski Parking Area
Monroe Optical
SR 2001, Section 402
SR6 Roadway Improvements
Additions to Camp JRF
Westfall Sewer Improvements



Monroe and Pike Districts Sponsor E&S/NPDES Workshop

In February, Pike and Monroe County Conservation Districts presented *What's New with Chapter 102?*, a technical workshop for area engineers and plan preparers. Over 50 professionals learned about the newly revised PA Department of Environmental Protection's Chapter 102, Erosion and Sediment Control and Stormwater Management regulations and the draft Erosion and Sediment Control Best Management Practice manual. Items highlighted included

riparian buffer requirements, NPDES permit renewals, exceptional value wetlands, anti-degradation analysis, municipal notifications, and post construction stormwater management requirements. Pike County Conservation District Executive Director Susan Beecher participated in the workshop along with Resource Conservationist Ellen Enslin (pictured right), who discussed general E&S requirements and reviewed changes in Chapter 102 related to agricultural activities.

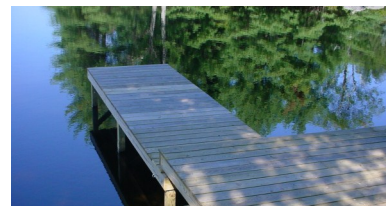


Chapter 105 Waterways & Wetlands Activities

Land development activities that encroach on streams, wetlands and other bodies of water can degrade habitat, impact aquatic life and cause flooding resulting in property and infrastructure damage. Through the State delegated Chapter 105 program, the District provides oversight of work in and around waterways. The District handles PA DEP General Permits, which authorize certain types of work including: Fish Habitat Enhancement; Small Docks & Boat Ramps; Streambank Stabilization; Utility Line or

Minor Road Crossings of streams or wetlands. District staff register General Permits, inspect permitted sites, investigate complaints and provide permitting assistance within Pike County.

Although the Chapter 105 program is no longer supported by state funding, the District Board recognizes the importance of providing these services for the convenience of residents and protection of water resources in Pike County.



2011 Chapter 105 Program Highlights

| | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| Technical Assistance Provided | 315 |
| General Permits Acknowledged | 31 |
| Complaints Investigated | 26 |
| Sites Inspected | 13 |
| Total Inspections | 87 |
| Combined Staff Hours | 1385 |

“Big Lake” Pre-Drawdown Permitting Assistance

In 2011, the District participated in educational programs and assisted property owners with permitting for docks, access paths, boat launching ramps, and shoreline stabilization projects in preparation for the Lake Wallenpaupack drawdown by PPL. In September, the Lake was lowered by five feet to allow for scheduled maintenance and inspection of the hydroelectric dam and power plant.

This drawdown is done every five years to allow for routine dam maintenance and testing, including a test required by the plant's Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license. The drawdown process took longer than expected this year due to heavy rains from Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee at the end of August and into September.



Wetter Than Normal 2011 Challenges Pike County

Heavy rains and flooding from Hurricane Irene and the remnants of Tropical Storm Lee set the stage for potential Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) projects in Pike. The District fielded many calls from landowners and inspected a number of sites in cooperation with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to assess damages that might qualify for funding. Late in 2011, EWP funding through a supplemental appropriation authorized by Congress was confirmed for work on 379 potential Pennsylvania sites in 22 counties. Funding will be prioritized to address those circumstances where permanent

residences are in immediate danger from streambank erosion caused by high flows. The program requires that there be local sponsors (usually municipalities) to handle contracting for projects eligible for funding. With the appropriation, NRCS can provide 100% of the technical assistance costs and up to 75% of the construction costs for emergency measures. The remaining 25% must come from local sources.

Before undertaking any work on flood-altered stream banks or channels, residents are urged to contact the District office. Depending on the



scope and size of restoration projects, state and/or federal encroachment permits may be required.

District a Co-Applicant in County Open Space Applications

The District participated in two land preservation opportunities in 2011 through the Scenic Rural Character Preservation (SRCP) Program. PCCD was a co-applicant with the County for funds to purchase the 486 acre Rock Hill Boy Scout property located adjacent to Delaware State Forest and State Game Lands #180 in Dingman Township. To complete the purchase, Pike County was awarded \$1,126,000 from the Community Conservation Partnerships Program administered by DCNR. The property will be turned

over to the DCNR Bureau of Forestry who will own and manage the property. The District also donated additional funds to complete a pre-purchase appraisal of this property.

PCCD also submitted a joint application to the SRCP Program with The Trust for Public Lands (TPL) for the KD Land acquisition. TPL has been working with the owner of the 310-acre parcel along Routes 6 and 402 in Blooming Grove Township to acquire the property and convey it to the Bureau of Forestry to be

managed as part of the adjacent 80,000 acre Delaware State Forest. To match funding from the SRCP program, TPL has submitted a grant application to the Pennsylvania DCNR to fund the balance of this project.

By enhancing existing public lands, conserving biologically important areas and expanding recreational opportunities for area residents, both of these acquisitions are consistent with township, county and state comprehensive plans.

Dirt & Gravel Road Program Funds Greene Township Projects

The PA State Conservation Commission's Dirt and Gravel Road Maintenance Program provides training and funding through Conservation Districts to local municipalities to correct surface and drainage problems on unpaved roads that are identified as sources of dust and sediment pollution into waterways.

Using a grant from the District, Greene Township completed improvements to Mountain View Road in 2011, including the installation of approximately 500 linear feet of driving surface aggregate to restore road crown and repair eroded road surfaces and approximately 500 linear feet of

roadside channel with a vegetative lining to improve water quality and reduce thermal impacts to the stream. The township and residents on the road were pleased with the completed project.

In October, the Dirt & Gravel Road Quality Assurance Board (QAB) met to review submitted municipal applications. The QAB recommended that Greene Township's application for an additional portion of Mountain View Road project be funded up to \$55,500. This project is scheduled for the Spring of 2012. All municipally-owned dirt and gravel roads open to the public are eligible for the program. Although the

application period may remain open year round, funding is somewhat limited and we recommend that grant applications for this year be submitted by June 15, 2012, after which the QAB will meet to rank applications and allocate funds.



An improved Mountain View Road in Greene Township

Gypsy Moth Program Funding Cut in 2011

With a reduction in gypsy moth populations and a cut in State funding, there was no Pike County spray program in 2011. PA's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) reported that, since 2009, the populations essentially collapsed across the Commonwealth following several years of heavy defoliation. In June, DCNR announced that under new EPA requirements, to be phased

in by 2012, an NPDES permit may be required for applicators of insecticides including those used for gypsy moth spraying. It is uncertain moving forward how this requirement will impact PA's administration of the gypsy moth suppression program. The non-native gypsy moth has had severe impacts on the Commonwealth's forests since the early 1970's. On average, an outbreak has occurred

every five to seven years since 1968. At its peak in 1990, gypsy moths defoliated 4.3 million acres of forest in Pennsylvania.



Realtors Get Updates on Local Environmental Topics



Pike County Conservation District, Northampton Community College, Wayne Conservation District and Penn State Cooperative Extension sponsored *Environmental Impacts to*

Local Real Estate in March. The workshop, geared toward real estate professionals, provided information on septic systems, waterways regulations, impacts of land development on water resources, protection of drinking water and planning initiatives in Pike and Wayne counties. Northampton Community College offered Continuing Education Credits for participants.

Real estate professionals are often the first to interact with new and second homeowners, land purchasers

or developers coming from metropolitan areas. These new residents may be confronted with issues of which they have no prior experience, including various regulatory requirements, the need for septic system maintenance and well head protection, contributions they may make to non-point source pollution and methods to reduce or eliminate water resource impacts. With the information gained from this program, realtors can assist new residents in making a smoother transition to our region.

More Conservation Education and Outreach

Throughout the year the District participated in a number of additional education and outreach activities. Below is a listing of some of these efforts:

- Provided program promotion and support for the Pike/Monroe Forest Landowners Association.
- Secured funding through the Pocono NE RC&D Council to reprint and distribute the brochure *Managing our Lands Today – Creating our Legacy for the Future*.
- Conducted Groundwater Flow Model demonstration and training for Wallenpaupack High School teachers.
- Awarded \$500 to the Wallenpaupack Area Middle School for a native planting project that was completed in the spring of 2011 (picture to the right).

- Provided information on the water cycle, lake ecology and wetlands at Wallenpaupack Middle School's Science Days in cooperation with the Lake Wallenpaupack Watershed Management District.
- Participated in the Pike-Wayne Earth Day Festival.
- Teamed with Grey Towers Heritage Association to present the film *Green Fire: Aldo Leopold and a*



Land Ethic for Our Time at Grey Towers National Historic Landmark.

- Provided funding for Gifford Pinchot Audubon Society's *Audubon Adventures* for 8 classrooms. The theme for 2011-2012, *Wildlife on the Move*, included activities on birds, monarch butterflies, whales and sea turtles.
- Conducted site visits and secured funding through the Pocono Northeast RC&D Council to provide assistance to Pike County landowners enrolled in NRCS's Conservation Stewardship Program.
- Secured funding through the Agricultural Conservation Easement Administrative Support Program to assist Pike County's Agricultural Land Preservation Board with administrative and educational outreach activities.

Nominating Organizations Support District Efforts

Pike County Conservation District's Nominating Organizations provide a vital link between various community groups and the District. These groups nominate individuals for the Board who are subsequently considered for appointment by Pike County Commissioners. By participating in this process, Nominating Organizations help to shape critical decisions about how we manage our community's natural wealth. The District is thankful for their continued support.

Delaware Highlands Conservancy
Gifford Pinchot Audubon Society
Milford Garden Club
Northeast PA Audubon Society
Pike County Agricultural Fair Association

Pike County Cooperative Extension
Pike County Builders Association
Pike County Planning Commission
Pike Federation of Sportsmens' Clubs
Wayne/Pike Chapter Trout Unlimited

Surface and Groundwater Quality Monitoring Efforts

Each year the District collects information about streams and rivers throughout Pike County. Surface water monitoring provides invaluable baseline data that assists in detecting pollution, evaluating recovery from disturbed conditions and revealing environmental trends and cycles.

Along with some basic physical and chemical parameters such as temperature, pH and conductivity, District Staff, with help from Aquatic Resources Consulting, collect macroinvertebrates (aquatic insects) and survey fish populations to determine abundance, density, and species composition. While spring monitoring went off without a hitch, high flow conditions in the fall of 2011 kept staff out of streams and prevented electrofishing from being completed.



PCCD's water quality monitoring data was used by the US Army Corps of Engineers during a staff review of Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) documents relating to Tennessee Gas Pipeline's (TGP) Northeast Upgrade project. While TGP indicated in its environmental documents that no wild trout streams would be impacted by the proposed project in Pike County, the District's fish data showed that some streams do indeed support wild trout populations. The PA Fish and Boat Commission confirmed the District's data with surveys of their own and will add these streams to their statewide list. The wild trout designation affords some additional protection during the permit review process.

The District, in partnership with the US Geological Survey (USGS), also continued its monthly well level monitoring throughout the county during 2011. USGS manages this data on its online database: http://groundwaterwatch.usgs.gov/countymaps/PA_103.html. Funding for the project is currently provided by the County's Scenic Rural Character Preservation (SRCP) Program.

Working in coordination with the Pike

County Commissioners and their Marcellus Shale Task Force Environment Committee, the District is working with the USGS and the Pike County Office of Community Planning to explore options for expanding monitoring of both surface and ground water resources in anticipation of natural gas drilling in the region. This expansion could include the addition of new surface water monitoring sites (streams that have been or will be crossed by transmission line projects are being considered), the addition of various monitoring parameters and development of a groundwater quality monitoring plan in cooperation with USGS.



Delaware River Named 2011 River of the Year!



In January the Delaware River was officially named

PA's River of the Year by the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and the PA Organization for Watersheds and Rivers (POWR). The Delaware forms the entire eastern boundary of

Pike County.

"The Delaware River is the longest undammed river east of the Mississippi and is steeped in history, diverse in resources, and vital to protect," then DCNR Secretary John Quigley said. "Its waters serve the needs of more than 15 million people from four states, including more than 5 million Pennsylvanians. It boasts the largest freshwater port in the world, threatened and endangered species,

and a thriving tourism industry. A goal of River of the Year designation is to raise awareness of the river and its conservation needs. The public voting format used to nominate and select the River of the Year for the first time this year certainly generated local enthusiasm for conservation and recognition of the importance of our waterways," Quigley said. Events were held through the year to celebrate the Delaware and its tributaries.



District Supports County Natural Heritage Inventory Update

Pike County's Natural Heritage Inventory update was completed in 2011. The Pike County Office of Community Planning and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, in collaboration with the Pike County Natural Heritage Inventory Advisory Committee, on which the District served, compiled the report. The Inventory includes a list of recommended practices to protect critical habitats and species through invasive species management, responsible land stewardship, and critical lands acquisition. According to

the report, Pike County has the third highest number of threatened, endangered, rare species and natural communities in Pennsylvania.

Funding from Pike County's Scenic Rural Character Preservation Program, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the Pike County Conservation District brought this project to fruition. This effort will help Pike County continue to protect the unique natural resources that draw people to the area. It is a great complement to the many ongoing

conservation efforts in Pike County. Copies of the report are available in electronic format through the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program website, www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us.



Pike/Wayne Envirothon 2011

The twenty-fifth annual Pike/Wayne Envirothon was held April 27th at PPL's Environmental Learning Center in Hawley. "Green Revolution" from Wallenpaupack Area High School took first place. The Envirothon is a one-day educational competition for high school students designed to test knowledge, skills and problem solving abilities regarding natural resources. Envirothon teams are comprised of up to five students from the same school enrolled in grades 9 through 12. The local event is coordinated by Pike and Wayne County Conservation Districts.

A total of ten teams represented Delaware Valley, Wayne Highlands, Wallenpaupack and Western Wayne high schools in this year's event. Students were tested on Aquatics, Forestry, Wildlife, Soils and Land Use and the 2011 Current Issue, *Salt and Fresh Water Estuaries*.

Game Commission Wildlife Conservation Officers Jim McCarthy

and Mark Kropa made a surprise appearance at lunchtime with a recently tranquilized bear. Students assisted in tagging the bear and extracting a tooth which, along with a lab analyzed blood sample, help determine the bear's age. A tattoo placed on the inside of its lip will assist in future identification/tracking.

"Green Revolution" of Wallenpaupack represented Pike County and "Platinum Platypi" from Wayne Highlands represented Wayne County at the 2011 PA State Envirothon Competition in May at Susquehanna University and Shikellamy State Park. The Pike/Wayne Envirothon program is possible through partnerships with the PA Department of Agriculture, PA Department of Environmental Protection, PA Department of Education Office of Environment & Ecology, PA Game Commission, PA Fish & Boat Commission, DCNR



"Green Revolution" pictured from left: Nick Pomroy, Nicole Grzejka, Courtney Singleton, and Janie Mergler with Michele Ulmer, Pike County Conservation District Envirothon Coordinator (center). Bryce Evans was not available for photo.



Pictured above: PA Game Commission officer Jim McCarthy, Delaware Valley teacher Jen Adamitis and PA Game Commission officer Mark Kropa tagging a bear at the Pike/Wayne Envirothon.

Bureau of Forestry and Bureau of State Parks, PPL, USDA NRCS, and many volunteers.

A special thank you to the 2011 sponsors including the Pennsylvania Trappers Association, Dutch's Supermarket, Wallenpaupack Veterinary Clinic, Woodloch Pines Resort, Inc., Honesdale National Bank, Elegante Restaurant, PPL Corporation, Wayne Bank, Honesdale Farm & Garden Inc., Nature's Grace Health Food Store & Deli, Dirlam Brothers Lumber Company, and Yatsonsky's Farm.

District Advocates for Improved Utility Line Construction Practices

Throughout 2011 the District communicated with local, state and federal officials on issues relating to current and future utility line projects affecting Pike County landscapes.

District staff spent a considerable number of man hours coordinating with pipeline environmental inspectors, company representatives, FERC officials and DEP NE Region staff on both the Columbia Gas Pipeline Replacement and Tennessee Gas Pipeline 300-line projects. Columbia Gas replaced a 14 inch natural gas transmission line with a 20 inch line with more than 140 acres of earth disturbance over an approximately 12 mile stretch of right-of-way from Weber Road in Dingman Township to the Delaware River in Westfall Township. At the same time, Tennessee Gas Pipeline's 300-line project included over 260 acres of earth disturbance over about 15 miles of expanded right of way.

Throughout the permit review and construction process District Staff advocated for improved construction practices, BMP maintenance and overall compliance with permit conditions to better protect water resources and adjacent and downstream landowners receiving runoff from the projects. Although both pipelines are substantially complete, final stabilization and

inspections will extend into 2012.

District staff also began reviews of two additional major utility line projects in 2011. The multi-county PPL Susquehanna-Roseland Transmission Line project, with a proposed 30 miles and 750 acres of earth disturbance in Pike County, includes an expanded right of way, multiple staging areas, new and improved access roads, and many stream and wetland crossings.

Tennessee Gas Pipeline's proposed Northeast Upgrade Project will "close the loops" installed in the 300 Line project to provide additional capacity for Marcellus Shale gas transport. The District participated in a number of pre-application meetings for the project and assisted the Pike County Commissioners in coordinating two meetings with State and Federal legislators, National Park Service representatives, DEP, municipal officials and the County Planning Commission to address concerns regarding a right of way proposed for the project which would cross undeveloped forested tracts, steep slopes and high quality and exceptional value watersheds in Milford and Westfall Townships. The District also submitted comments to FERC on its environmental assessment for the Northeast Upgrade.



Columbia Gas Pipeline replacement at Raymondskill Creek



An off-right-of-way pond muddied by pipeline construction runoff



Tennessee Gas Pipeline Lackawaxen River "wet crossing"

Weighing In On Marcellus Shale Legislation

In discussions with state legislators regarding proposed natural gas impact fees and changes to the PA Oil and Gas Act, the District Board supported dedicated funding for Conservation Districts and advocated to include funding for counties or municipalities that do not have active

drilling but do have secondary impacts such as pipeline expansion. The Board did not support the preemption of local governments' decision-making powers over oil and gas operations which was included in the final bill signed by the Governor early in 2012.



County Commissioners, District Board, Tennessee Gas, National Park Service representatives and Legislators discuss the proposed Northeast Upgrade project.