

District Mission Statement:

Pike County Conservation District (PCCD) is committed to the long-term protection and sustainable use of Pike County's natural resources.

We accomplish this through partnership, education, technical assistance, planning, enforcement, and leadership.

From the Chairman...

2022 was another exciting year for the Pike County Conservation District! In this Annual Report you will read about numerous projects and initiatives completed by our dedicated Staff Team and supported by our Board of Directors.

The majority of what we do at the Conservation District is done by our staff team. Lead by Executive Director Michele Long, this talented group of professionals continues to find new and innovative ways to provide outreach as well as teach our residents about our resources and how to protect them. Our Communications Coordinator Devan George did a great job this year utilizing grant funding for video equipment to bring a different aspect to our outreach with our trails video series and our award-winning Permeable Pavement video. Program Manager Ellen Enslin and Watershed Specialist Rachael Marques sought various grant funds to support a municipal master site plan and a county household hazardous waste program. Resource Conservationists Jeremy Oettinger and Marianna Quartararo as well as Ellen and our new District Engineer, have over 35 years of conservation district experience in their field combined. This experience is vital to provide comments on potential regulatory changes and assist landowners when navigating the regulatory process. Administrative Assistant Lisa Dolci has been with the District for over a year and has done a great job in getting up to speed, providing helpful and productive suggestions and changes to District operations.

I'd like to recognize and thank our dedicated Board of Directors who work effortlessly throughout the year providing oversight to our staff team. These volunteer Directors represent your community and take their role as a steward of our natural resources seriously when asking questions of our partners, providing input on items of concern, and actively participating in planning efforts at the county level. Locally, many of our current board members are participating and lending their voice to the development of the updated Pike County Comprehensive Plan. This document assesses the community needs and priorities then provides a roadmap to achieve them. And in every step along the way, natural resources and the beauty of our rural area rises to the top as a priority. I'd also like to thank the Pike County Commissioners for their support. Their dedication to the work of the District and the natural resources of the county is to be commended.

We have a unique resource base and are grateful to be a part of a community that shares our passion for the natural resources that make Pike County our home. Thank you.



Scott F. Savini
Board Chairman
Pike County Conservation District

2022 Board of Directors

Scott Savini, Chairman
John Milliken, Vice Chairman
Ronald Schmalzle,
Commissioner Member
Jay Morrow, Treasurer
Ken Coutts
Michael Spencer
Kelly Stagen

2022 Associate Directors

Carole Linkiewicz
Paul Ranello
JoAnn Rose

2022 Pike County Commissioners

Matthew Osterberg, Chairman
Ronald Schmalzle, Vice Chairman
Tony Waldron, Commissioner



District Board of Directors: Pictured from left: Paul Ranello, Jim Andre, JoAnn Rose, Treasurer Jay Morrow, Carole Linkiewicz, Ken Coutts, Kelly Stagen, Mike Spencer and Chairman Scott Savini.
Not pictured: Commissioner Ron Schmalzle and Vice Chairman John Milliken



From left to right: (front row) Michele Long, Executive Director; Lisa Dolci, Administrative Assistant; Rachael Marques, Watershed Specialist; (back row) Devan George, Communications Coordinator; Jeremy Oettinger, Resource Conservationist ; Ellen Enslin, Program Manager; Chris Meszler P.E., District Engineer. Not pictured: Marianna Quartararo, Resource Conservationist



New District Engineer

In September of 2022, Pike County Conservation District welcomed Chris Meszler, P.E. to the District with an excellent history of engineering work, and education. He grew up in Honesdale, PA and graduated from Pennsylvania State University in 2013 with a BS in Civil Engineering. After college, Chris moved to Allentown, PA to begin his professional career. Since then, he has worked for Pennoni Associates, Vertek Construction Management, and Colliers Engineering and Design. His passion for environmental conservation has brought him to the District.

Board Activities

In February, the Board approved an updated *Fees for Services Policy* which had not been updated since 2016. There was an increase from \$200 to \$250 per disturbed acre fee for an E&S Plan Review, language added to request all plans be submitted electronically, a change in fees for renewals, and language regarding E-permitting for Chapter 102 & 105. The E&S Plan review for Chapter 105 General Permits and the Timber Harvest E&S review fee has been increased from \$100 to \$150. In addition to fees changing, the District initiated an electronic payment option called *MuniciPAY* which is identified in the policy and is available on the District website.

Kelly Stagen, PCCD District Director and PACD President (pictured right) sits on the PACD Legislative Subcommittee who met with agency representatives from the DEP, the Dept. of Agriculture, and legislators requesting an increase in the Conservation District Fund line items in the state budget to increase funding. Line items have not been increased since 2004. Due in large part to the efforts of this group and Districts across the state, the state budget was passed in June with a \$6.8 million increase for Conservation Districts in both the Department of Agriculture and Department of Environmental Protection line items.

The District continued to monitor legislative proposals including a stream maintenance package of bills which were introduced in April 2022. The intent of the bills is to streamline the process for waterways maintenance and contains eight separate bills for consideration. Much of the content of these bills do not take into consideration the current permitting process and waivers available for such activities. The Board also looked at House Bill 591. As written, the bill would create a program for small project NPDES Permit programs, and the PACD legislative committee had concerns about the lack of criteria in the legislation. The Board sent a letter to legislators opposing this legislation as written.

The District Board sent a letter to the State Conservation Commission regarding the changes, development, and approval process in the proposed Nutrient Management/Manure Management Delegation agreement. Most Districts felt the proposed agreement presented to Districts had changes that would impact not only District operations, but change the working relationship with farmers that are the cornerstone of all District programming and education. In the letter, the Board asked that Districts have more of a say and be able to provide more input on any required output measures and standard operating procedures that relate to the delegation agreements that would equally be beneficial to both parties moving forward.



The District Board continues to offer both in person and Zoom options for Board meetings for increased participation.



District Director Kelly Stagen



District Associate Director Paul Ranello (pictured above) helping out with macroinvertebrate sampling



Nominating Process

The Pike County Conservation District uses a nominating process to appoint new members to the Board of Directors. The Board is made up of volunteers, joined by a common goal of environmental conservation.

Nominating organizations recommend individuals as Directors or Associate Directors of the Conservation District. Nominating organizations provide a vital link between various community groups and the Conservation District. This is especially important given the public's increased concern for environmental issues. These nominated individuals, who are unpaid volunteers, can become District Directors or Associate Directors. Directors shape critical decisions about how Pike County manages our community's natural assets - soils, forests and woodlands, lakes and wetlands, rivers and streams, and drinking water supplies. Volunteering as a Director or an Associate Director can be a great way to give back to your community and be a part of protecting the natural resources of your area.

Thank You!

We thank all of our nominating organizations who participate in this important process!

Nominating Organizations:

Delaware Highlands
Conservancy

Gifford Pinchot Audubon
Society

Hemlock Farms Conservancy

Milford Garden Club

Northeast PA Audubon Society

Pike County Penn State
Extension

Wayne/Pike Building Industry
Association

Pike County Planning
Commission

Pike County Federation of
Sportsmen's Clubs

Pike/Wayne Chapter Trout
Unlimited

Wayne/Pike Farm Bureau

Board Communications and Outreach Committee

In early 2022, the District Board created a Communications and Outreach Committee which was identified in the 2020 Strategic Plan to look at ways we can better get our message to the community. Some of the initiatives developed by the committee include:

- the development of an elevator speech for use by Board and staff
- a focused effort on redesign of District program materials for branding.
- a municipal survey to better gauge how the District communicates with municipal officials and the community.
- the development of short Conservation Minute videos on programs which target municipal officials. The first was presented at the October Pike County Township Officials meeting. Others will follow in 2023.
- Providing resource materials to the community in each edition of the District E-newsletters.
- Hosted a Director watch party with presentations from the State Conservation Commission on their role and relationship to the District.

The Pike County Conservation District is a local resource that provides education and technical assistance to landowners in our county on the importance of the communities unique natural resources

Surface Water Monitoring

For over 20 years, Pike County Conservation District (PCCD) has been monitoring the water quality of the county's streams. Pike County's streams are among some of the best quality streams in the state, so it is crucial that we continue to monitor their quality.

Macroinvertebrates are small, spineless creatures that live in streams that serve as an indicator of stream health and an important food source for the rest of the ecosystem. In spring of 2022, PCCD sampled 17 different sites for macroinvertebrate species. This process involved disturbing the streambed in six spots at each site for one minute. A D-frame net was placed below the disturbance to catch what was dislodged from the bottom of the stream. The samples were then preserved and sent to Aquatic Resource Consulting (ARC).

ARC staff were able to identify individual macroinvertebrates from the sample and calculate values to determine overall stream health. Over 65 different types of macroinvertebrates were found with a total of over 3,000 individual macros identified. The most commonly found macroinvertebrate in 2022 samples was the Mayfly.

In the fall of 2022, PCCD also sampled six sites for fish species. Fish species can also be used to indicate stream health and are of high importance for Pike County tourism. With some of the best-quality waters, comes some of the best fishing which is of huge economic value. The fish communities were sampled using an electroshock backpack which was professionally operated by ARC staff. Fish are sensitive to electrical currents, so the electroshock backpack used electricity to stun the fish in the stream. The stunned fish float up and were collected by ARC and PCCD staff before being put in a live well. When sampling for the site

was complete, the fish were identified and quickly returned to the water unharmed. This sampling process does not hurt the fish. In 2022, trout species were found at five of the six sampling sites. Two of the sites contained brook trout, Pennsylvania's state fish. A total of over 350 individual fish were caught and identified in 2022.

In addition, District staff looked at stream chemistry and habitat at each sample site. A handheld meter with several different probes was used to read the stream temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, and more. Staff also observed the conditions of the habitat, such as any areas of erosion and tree cover. This information can help give us a more complete perspective on stream health and help us interpret the results. The final report with results from the monitoring is available on the District website.





Pike County
Conservation District

2022 Surface Water Monitoring

In Total...



20

Stream sites
were sampled



382

individual fish
were identified



>3,000

macroinvertebrates
were collected



>20

years of surface
water monitoring

Results



Blacknose Dace

(*Rhinichthys atronaso*)
was the most common
fish species collected
221 individuals total

Mayfly

(*Ephemeroptera*)
was the most common
macroinvertebrate
family collected
2,084 individuals total



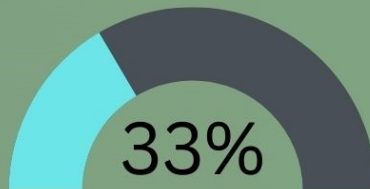
Ephemerella

a very sensitive group
of mayflies, was the
most common
macroinvertebrate
collected



12/17 Sites

for macroinvertebrates, were
considered attaining and not
impaired



Brook Trout,

Pennsylvania's state fish, were
found at 33% of sites sampled



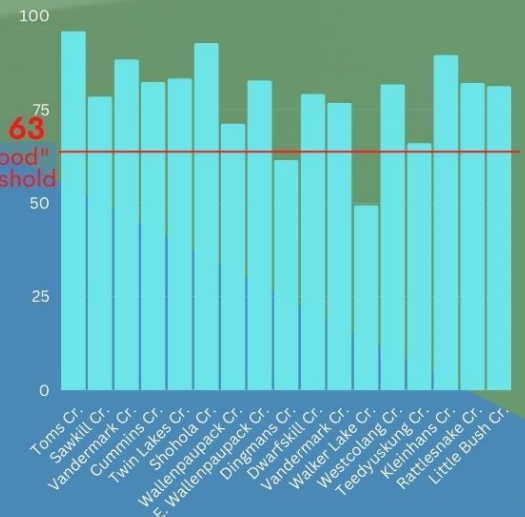
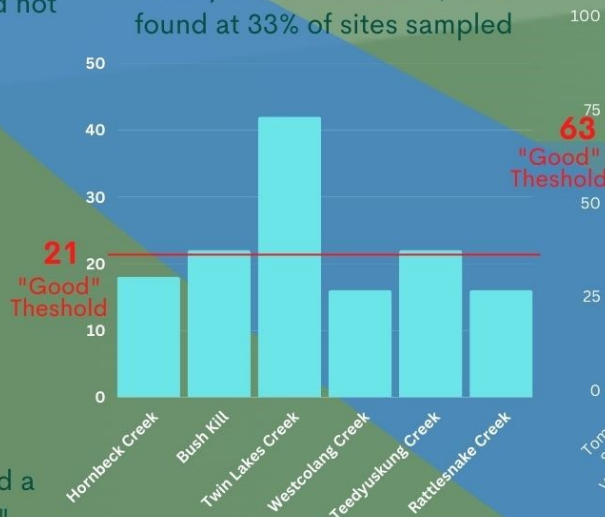
5 out of 6 sites

sampled found sensitive
trout species present



50%

of fish sampling sites earned a
score considered "Good"



Those sites that did not exceed the "good" threshold this year will be monitored closely in the upcoming year, to determine if this year's numbers were sampling error or a sign of a larger problem.

Groundwater Monitoring

Since 2007, the Pike County Conservation District has been partnering with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) to monitor groundwater levels in Pike County. 2022 marked 15 years of groundwater data collection. Since a significant portion of Pike County depends on groundwater as a source of drinking water, it is important we continue to monitor the conditions. This information is useful for determining trends in the water levels throughout the county for management purposes as well as the observation and prediction of potential drought events.

Every four years, USGS presents Pike County with a brief synopsis of the groundwater data. In 2022, Lisa Senior of USGS presented the information at the November Pike County Conservation District board meeting. The presentation is also available on the District website. It was noteworthy that trends are becoming apparent in our aquifers but there is further research required to determine why. The groundwater levels were shown to be following a seasonal variation in water levels that is becoming

more predictable. USGS also published a new website where citizens can go to access the information collected. That information is available here: [PCCD Water Quality Report 2022](#).

The District received four separate grants through the Scenic Rural Preservation Program to fund this monitoring program. Since there are no additional funds in this program, the District reached out to the County Commissioners and were pleased when the County agreed to fund \$34,000 for another four years of data collection through the County Act 13 Marcellus Shale Funds they receive annually. The District thanks the Pike County Commissioners for their continued support of this important program.



Pocono Source Water Protection Collaborative

In 2022, a meeting of the Pocono Source Water Collaborative was held with Program Manager, Ellen Enslin coordinating. There are about 35 people attending the collaborative, including representatives from local water system (operators and owners), state and federal agencies, and Watershed Specialists from Monroe, Pike, and Wayne Counties. Topics for discussion include education and outreach for source water protection, and wellhead protection. An action plan was

developed for 2022, which focused on reaching out to the water system operators and seeing what their needs are and what they need from the collaborative for education and outreach. Ellen also participated in steering committees for the development of two Source Water Protection Plans for Matamoras Municipal Water Authority and Saw Creek Estates. The District also updated our website to include a web page with the information on source water protection.



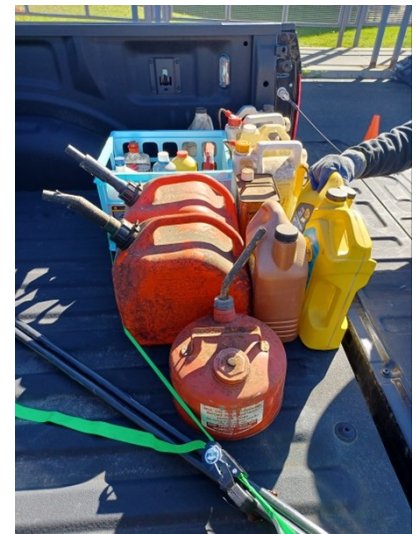
Collaborative Goals:

- o Enhance collaboration and cooperation to help communities prevent water pollution in water supply areas and protect public health.
- o Promote understanding of Pocono drinking water resources to ensure reliable, high quality drinking water is available as the backbone of our neighborhoods, our way of life and our children's future.
- o Exchange information and educational resources about effective stewardship measures to raise awareness and help citizens and local officials take action to protect our drinking water.

Household Hazardous Waste Event

In 2022, the Pike County Conservation District in partnership with the Pike County Commissioners, Pike County Office of Community Planning, the Pocono Source Water Protection Collaborative, and Delaware Valley School District held the first ever Household Hazardous Waste Collection event in Pike County. Household hazardous waste (HHW) is any product found in a household that is considered toxic, flammable, etc. and requires careful handling and disposal. This can include products such as pool chemicals, used motor oil, cleaning products, etc. The goal was to help residents dispose of these items in an environmentally responsible way instead of in the trash or down the drain. This protects our surface and ground water from contamination, helping to keep it safe for future use.

Through this program, over 6,500 pounds of household hazardous waste including 523 feet of fluorescent light bulbs were disposed of properly. With the assistance of Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, reimbursement for 50% of the cost of the program through PA Act 190 was applied (\$4,382.78). The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture CHEMSWEEP Program assisted in paying for the disposal of pesticides collected (\$1,674.00). The rest of the funding for this program came from Pike County. We received great response from the community and hope to continue this joint effort in the future.



District awarded PACD Mini Grants

Permeable Pavement

The District received a \$2000 mini grant from the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD) to develop an instructional video on the operation and maintenance needs of Best Management Practices (BMPs). The funding helped the District purchase video equipment to film and develop a video on permeable pavement. One of the sites identified in the video was a permeable pavement parking lot at the historic site Grey Towers in Milford, PA. The video developed was used for eLearning training that is posted on DEP's Clean Water Academy website. It can also be viewed on the [District YouTube Channel](#).



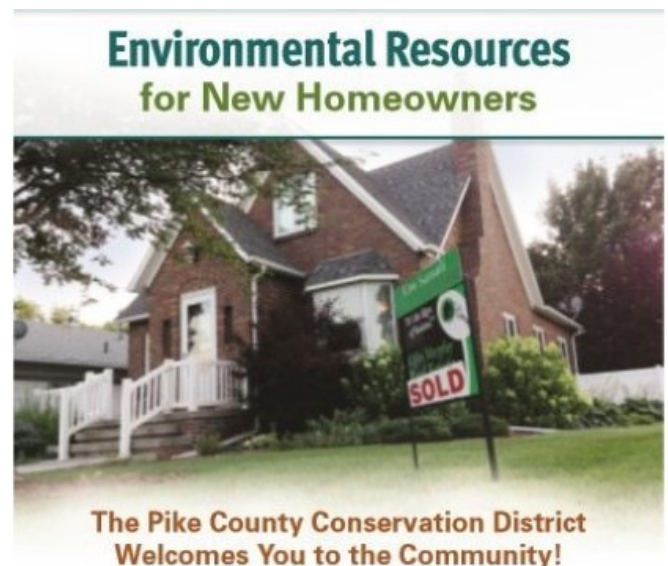
Trail Video Series

In addition to the permeable pavement video, District Communications Coordinator Devan George (right) and staff utilized the video production equipment to produce a series of videos which took the viewer on a short hike through a few trails in Pike County. Devan also coordinated with the Pike County Scenic and Rural Character Program (SRCP) coordinator to highlight trails which have benefited from the SRCP funding provided by Pike County and promoted their trail app and guide [Pike County Outdoors](#) which is a big hit with residents and visitors to the county.



Environmental Resources for New Homeowners Rack Card/Website

With funds from a PACD Mini-grant, Communications Coordinator Devan George developed a rack card for new homeowners that was distributed to local realtors and Municipal offices. The effort focused on answering questions the District and other conservation organizations are frequently asked. The rack card provides a link to a webpage developed on the District website with information for various resources throughout the county. For promotion and distribution of the resource, the District worked with the Pike/Wayne Conservation Partnership on a "Welcome to the Neighborhood" program the end of July 2022. The program was designed around promoting the new rack card for homeowners as well as provide information from our partners. A link to the webpage can be found by [clicking here](#).



District awarded DEP Environmental Education Grants

Bringing the Leaf Pack Network to the Wallenpaupack Area

The District received a grant for \$2,562 for a leaf pack project and is partnering with Stroud Research Center and teachers from the Wallenpaupack School District. Watershed Specialist Rachael Marques leads the project and hosted a fall event which was held for the public at Promised Land State Park. Leaf packs were staked in the stream with the assistance of the DCNR staff at Promised Land State Park. Weeks later, program participants returned to see what was gathered in the packs. The school portion of the event will be held in the spring of 2023. With the materials purchased, the District will be able to host similar events in the future.



Dingman Township Park Pollinator Garden

The Pollinator Garden grant funding totaling \$2,908 was awarded to the District in partnership with Dingman Township and the Penn State Master Gardeners to install a sun/dry pollinator garden on an existing lawn area and in a wet/shaded area at the Township Park. Program Manager Ellen Enslin coordinated the project to install wet/shade pollinating plants, signage, and soil. This was a project identified in the township master park plan and highlighted in the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors magazine in November.



Other Grant Activities

District Staff worked with NRCS engineers and DEP Staff to evaluate potential stream restoration sites along Moon Valley Road in Milford in the Spring. There was a stream rehabilitation project completed on a section of Moon Valley Road in the 80's through the Pocono RC&D Counsel. We continue to look for funding sources to assist landowners with the project which will need a considerable amount of funding to implement. The recommendations provided by the NRCS were given to the landowners.

During 2022, there were reporting requirement changes to the Growing Greener grant deliverables for the Watershed Specialist position. DEP now requests each Watershed Specialist track any best management practices that will be implemented through 319 or Growing Greener Grant projects for the entire county. Grant recipients must notify our office to enter in these numbers. Watershed Specialists were provided training and access to use the Practice Keeper software program for this task but additional funding was not provided.

Education and Outreach Around the County

- Monthly E-newsletter released with upcoming events, program updates and an article each month discussing climate change and its impacts to our natural resources.
- Hosted the arts and crafts tent at the Annual Festival of Wood event at Grey Towers National Historic Site in September.
- Earth Day hike at McDade Trail in Lehman Township which parallels the Delaware River along Route 209.
- Provided a \$500 PCCD Environmental Education Grant to Wallenpaupack School District to purchase tools to remove invasive species growing around the school and replace them with native trees and plants. This is a multi-year project which we hope to find additional funding for plantings.
- Assisted the PA Fish and Boat Commission stocking fish in the fall of 2022.
- Annual Road Cleanup along Route 402 to Keep PA Beautiful.
- Provided information to Wallenpaupack students on careers at the Conservation District at Academy Career Night .
- Attended the Annual Pike County Township Supervisors convention to discuss delegated program updates, funding available for the Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road program, and the latest information on Spongy Moth from DCNR.
- Worked with Monroe Conservation District to provide an online engineers workshop in May. Topics covered common mistakes on plans and applications, infiltration testing during construction, and critical stage inspections with NPDES permitted projects.



More...Educational Opportunities

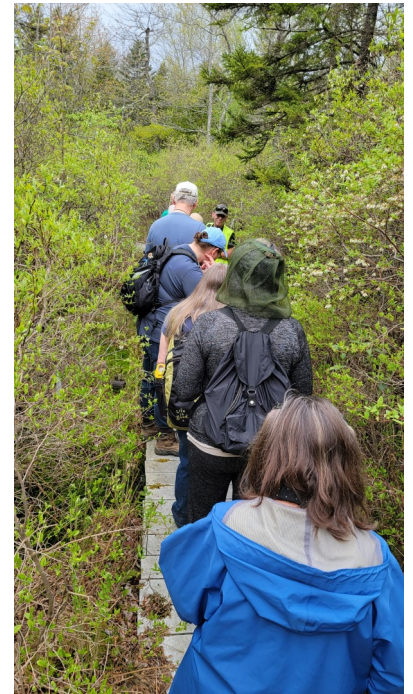
How to Make Grass Grow in Pike County

Resource Conservationist Jeremy Oettinger worked with other District staff to develop a one page resource for contractors and landowners who are trying to grow grass in Pike County. Our unique landscape often includes very acidic and rocky soils making establishing grass sometimes difficult without the right resources and guidance. [How to Make Grass Grow in Pike County](#) provides information on how to do a soil test, using native plants and what fertilizer to use. The information was distributed in the April E-Newsletter, on the District website, and at the Penn State Extension office where landowners can purchase a soil test kit.



Wetlands are Wonderful!

On May 14, 2022, the District, in conjunction with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, hosted a “Wetlands Are Wonderful” training at Camp Spears in Dingmans Ferry. This basic course on the identification of wetland hydrology, hydric soils and plant identification included both a classroom session and a short hike to explore a wetland via a boardwalk trail. The program provided the average citizen of Pike County with the information they need to know regarding wetlands in their community. Functions and benefits of wetlands were discussed to highlight how wetlands are an integral part of the environment in Northeast Pennsylvania that serve many purposes on the landscape. Common threats to wetlands were highlighted, giving attendees the tools to watch for potential wetland impacts in their neighborhoods. By understanding how wetlands work, landowners can protect the ecosystem in their own back yards. The program was well received and the District plans to continue to host a basic wetland program every few years.



On the Road with PCCD!

Communications Coordinator Devan George and Watershed Specialist Rachael Marques took the District’s Groundwater Flow Model and Enviroscope on the road this year to various venues. This is a great way to get to know our community and answer their questions about our groundwater and how to manage stormwater on your property. If you are interested in the District coming to visit your community or attend one of your events please contact the District office.

Venues visited for *On the Road!*

Black Bear Film Festival

Zane Grey Festival

Fly Fishing in Bingham Park with
Pike/Wayne Trout Unlimited

Gold Key Lake Estates

Pike County Senior Center

Newfoundland Library

Hemlock Farms Conservancy Day

Hemlock Farms Day

Salt Watch Program

The District participated in the Izaak Walton League Winter Salt Watch Program this past year. It was important to be a part of this program because our fresh water is an important resource in Pike County. Overuse of road salt has become an issue in a lot of areas, and this allows the testing of our water for chlorides, one of the main ingredients in road salt. Watershed Specialist Rachael Marques received permission to test the water at Diamond Creek, which is located near the main

road on Route 507. A test strip is put into a jar of collected stream water. The test strip indicates the level of chlorides in the water. We took a baseline number in December 2021 that was about 25 ppm, which is a low reading. The drinking standard for water is 250 ppm. Last year, Five different samples were collected from the creek at different times, during different weather conditions and the number stayed the same, 25 ppm. This program continues into 2023.



10 Million Trees Program in Pike

The Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership started in 2018 with a goal of planting 10 million trees across Pennsylvania. Though mostly focused on the Chesapeake Bay watershed, the Partnership received a grant to bring additional trees to the Poconos Region. In 2022, the Tanglewood Environmental Committee expressed interest in planting an area in their community near Kleinhans Creek. Together we planted 26 trees in their community as well as assisted with installation of tubes, stakes, and protective netting. In the coming Spring 2023, we are planning to receive and distribute about 1000 trees in Pike County!



The Wallenpaupack Area High School team called *We Rock The World* were the overall winners of the 2022 Pike Envirothon. Second place went to *The Walleye Warriors* of Delaware Valley High School. The 2022 Envirothon involved in school testing stations, with in person wildlife skins and skulls.

The 1st place team, *We Rock The World*, from Wallenpaupack Area High School represented Pike County at the State Envirothon Competition. The state competition was also held partially virtually this year, over several days in May.



Envirothon is a one-day educational competition designed to test the knowledge, skills, and problem-solving capabilities of high school students regarding our earth's natural resources. Each five-member team competed by applying their knowledge and problem-solving skills in subject areas that included: Aquatic Ecology, Forestry, Soils/Land Use, Wildlife, and a Current Issue which was "Waste to Resources."

The Pike/Wayne Envirothon and Pennsylvania Envirothon partner with the U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, Pennsylvania Game Commission, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resource Bureaus of Forestry and State Parks, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education to bring this competition to students each year. These committed partners provide educational reference materials for high school teams as well as technical expertise, and knowledge for the event.



Each year both Pike and Wayne Conservation Districts seek financial contributions to support this highly successful youth conservation program. Donations support the purchase of Envirothon T-shirts, educational prizes and awards, lunch and snacks. This year's event was supported by the Pennsylvania Trapper's Association. This project was financed in part by a grant awarded to Pennsylvania Envirothon from the Community Conservation Partnership Program, using Environmental Stewardship Funds, under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

Erosion and Sediment Control

The District has delegated responsibilities for administering portions of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program for stormwater discharges associated with construction activities. The NPDES program is a federal program from the Environmental Protection Agency that regulates discharges of pollutants through a point source into the waters of the United States. Construction stormwater discharges are managed at the state level under PA Code, Title 25: Environmental Protection, Chapter 102: Erosion and Sediment Control.

NPDES permits are required for earth disturbance activities of 1 acre or more or if a project is part of a larger common plan of development. Erosion and sediment permits are required for activities associated with road maintenance or timber harvesting activities that have 25 acres or more of earth disturbance. An erosion and sediment control (E&S) plan and post construction stormwater management (PCSM) plan are

required for all NPDES permits. District staff review E&S plans while the Department of Environmental Protection reviews the PCSM plan for permit applications. In 2022, the District Board of Directors and the Pike County Commissioners agreed to hire a District Engineer and pursue the Post Construction Stormwater Management (PCSM) delegation agreement through DEP. This PCSM delegation will allow the District to review the PCSM plans as part of the permit application process.

The new permit PAG-01 was released in March for projects between 1 and 5 acres with less than 30,000 square feet of impermeable surface area. This permit would not apply to most of Pike County due to restrictions that it cannot be in an Exceptional Value or High Quality Watershed.

In addition to reviewing plans to determine regulatory compliance, District staff inspect NPDES permitted sites to ensure E&S and PCSM plans are being properly implemented. District staff will respond to complaints regarding earth disturbance activities and provide technical assistance to potential permit holders.



In 2022, the District and DEP worked on several NPDES permitted projects including:

SR 84, Sections 450, 494 and 495

Pocono Lakefront

PPL Newfoundland to Blooming Grove

Blue Heron Wood Residential Subdivision, Individual Lots

Milford Highlands Subdivision, Individual Lots

Paddlers Pointe

Raymondskill Creek Estates

Westfall Site Brewery

Wild Acres Sewage Upgrade

SR 6, Section 408 Widening project

Waterways Management

The Pike County Conservation District works with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to provide technical assistance and oversight to residents and businesses that are planning to complete work in and around waterways.

Activities that change the current cross section of a stream or waterway or that encroach into the floodway of a water body can impact aquatic life, habitats adjacent to water bodies, or cause flooding resulting in property damage. Planning for properly addressing and minimizing these potential impacts is important whenever work in and around streams and waterways are proposed.

The District handles Chapter 105 (Waterways Management) General Permits, which authorize certain types of work in and along waterways including: Fish Habitat Enhancement; Small Docks & Boat Ramps; Bank Stabilization; Utility Line or Minor Road or Trail Crossings of streams or wetlands. Federal authorization is also acknowledged as a Non-Reporting Activity provided the proposed regulated activity complies with all terms, conditions, limits, best management practices, and processing procedures noted in PASPGP-6 and all applicable PADEP Chapter 105 General Permits. Non-Reporting Activities do not require further review by the Army Corp of Engineers.

Updates and changes continue to be made to Ch 105 E-permitting to facilitate ease of use for applicants and reviewers.



2022 Delegated Program Stats

E&S Control and NPDES Chapter 102

Technical Assistance Provided— 424

Initial Plan Reviews— 38

Follow-up Plan Reviews— 9

Site Inspections— 83

Project Acres— 491.21

Total Acres Disturbed— 95.12

Complaints Investigated— 8

Individual/General Permits— 3

Combined Staff Hours —4,763

Waterways Management Chapter 105

Technical Assistance Provided —204

Permit Acknowledgments —35

Complaints Investigated —7

Combined Staff Hours —865

Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road (DGLVR) Maintenance Program



The focus of the Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road (DGLVR) Maintenance Program is promotion of Environmentally Sensitive Road Maintenance Practices that reduce the impact of road runoff and sediment to local streams while reducing long term road maintenance costs.

In 2022, the District, with contracts with local municipalities, completed three projects and awarded two additional grants for Chauncey Thomas Road, a Low Volume Road project in Shohola Township, and Whitaker Farm Road, Phase 1, a dirt and gravel project located in Porter Township.

Bartleson Road, a Low Volume road in Palmyra Township, was completed in October 2022. Prior to completion of the project, Bartleson Road experienced many stormwater-related issues in the channels and existing inlets that caused wash outs and contributed sediment pollution to a nearby stream and pond. Stormwater flowed from an existing residential subdivision, created roadway flooding issues and shoulder

washouts. To address these issues, several improvements were made including the installation of three new culverts with inlet boxes due to proximity to residential areas. The roadside channel was reshaped and stabilized with erosion control matting and stable rip rap aprons were installed at all culvert outlets.

Old Greentown Road, a Dirt and Gravel road project in Palmyra Township, was completed in September 2022. This section of road was experiencing erosion and flooding due to poor road shape, insignificant ditches, and poor road base. Several Environmentally Sensitive Road Maintenance Practices were implemented including, the installation of a new culvert with a headwall and end wall, eleven turnouts and the removal of a shoulder berm that was preventing water from leaving the roadway. Road surface improvements included the addition of 452 tons of road fill to establish a proper crowned shape in the road and the placement of approximately 410 tons of Driving Surface Aggregate (DSA). DSA is a mixture of crushed stone developed specifically as a surface

wearing course for unpaved roads. DSA has a unique particle size distribution designed to maximize packing density and produce a durable road surface that performs better than conventional aggregates.

Bluestone Boulevard, a Low Volume road project in Westfall Township was part of a larger project to stabilize the road base next to Bush Kill (Millrift) Creek, an exceptional value watercourse. Poor road base and proximity to the stream was causing the roadway to slide down and towards the stream. The roadway was excavated to install a new base with geotextile and underdrains to deal with groundwater. Channel work was also completed to direct flows away from the road embankment adjacent to the stream.

District staff and the Pike County Quality Assurance Board continue to review policies developed within the state program, including the stream crossing policy, to review submitted DGLVR applications, and provide recommendations to the District Board to fund projects.

Forest Pests on the Rise in PA

Spongy Moth

2022 saw an uptick of Spongy Moth (once called gypsy moth) sightings in many areas across the state including Pike County. The District received numerous phone calls and inquiries from landowners with a majority of the sightings in Lackawaxen, Greeley and Shohola areas of the county. These calls were reported to DCNR and the County Commissioners. In August, the District met with the County Commissioners and representatives of DCNR to review mapping they had completed of the defoliation impacts.

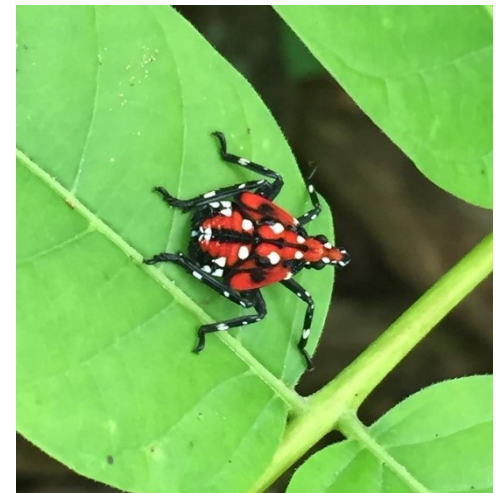
Residents have been urged to contact an aerial sprayer regarding the need for a spray program on their property for 2023. Community Associations and landowners who coordinate with their neighbors could potentially have a cost savings if they join together for a spray program. **There is no local, state or federal funding available to assist private landowners in treating their properties.** The District website has additional information on treating properties and an aerial sprayers list provided by DCNR.



Spotted Lanternfly

Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) is an invasive insect that arrived in the United States in 2014, and has since spread rapidly, officially declared in Pike County in 2021. This pest feeds on 70 different species of plants, including ornamental trees, fruits, and vegetables. The feeding damage can be detrimental to the plants, causing decreased plant health and even death. It excretes honeydew (a sugary substance) which can build up on surfaces, including lawn furniture, buildings, road signs, etc. The build-up of honeydew on surfaces promotes the growth of sooty mold (fungi), which can turn the surface black and sticky. The honeydew can also attract other insects, including nuisance insects, such as bees and wasps. There is ongoing research on ways to treat properties for these insects but for now the recommendation is to squash them! We anticipate an increase in these populations into 2023.

The District provided education on the SLF in our monthly newsletter and distributed circle traps to municipalities for local parks to capture these pests thanks to funding provided by the Department of Agriculture. Penn State Extension's website has a significant amount of information, visit <https://extension.psu.edu/have-you-seen-a-spotted-lanternfly>



What is a Conservation District?

The Pike County Conservation District is a legal subdivision of state government established under Pennsylvania's Conservation District Law (Act 217).

The District is responsible for conservation work within the county's boundaries. This includes conservation of soil, water and other natural resources. The District was established in 1956 by the Pike County Commissioners. The District has worked throughout its history to conserve soil, water and other natural resources.

The District is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. Members make policy decisions, plan programs, and coordinate efforts of other agencies in providing conservation assistance in Pike County. District staff expertise includes: natural resource conservation, watershed protection, grant writing, education, outreach, and program administration.

2022 Action Plan

The Pike County Conservation District Board of Directors, at its January 2022 meeting, adopted the 2022 Action Plan. This plan is developed by reviewing the 2020 Strategic Plan and identifying priorities. Below are some of the items that were completed from the 2022 plan.

- Watershed Specialist is working DEP on protocols and information to make it more consistent with DEP reporting for future use in uploading data to DEP portals for potential stream designation upgrades.
- Program Manager currently sits on the DEP Compliance and Enforcement Manual committee to review and update the current standard operating procedures and guidance.
- Worked with County officials and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources on assessing the spongy moth defoliation. Provided guidance to landowners on assessing their properties for potential spray program in 2023 as well as a list of aerial sprayers to contact.
- Developed a one-page worksheet on "How to make grass grow in Pike County" for educational and technical assistance to landowners and contractors.
- Pocono Sourcewater Collaborative worked on a survey to water operators to gauge interest in educational opportunities for them and users.
- Developed an education and outreach plan for 2022 which was implemented.
- Developed an annual work plan for 2022 which was implemented.
- Reviewed the District financial plan to assess progress and operating needs.
- District Board members attended a number of online trainings provided by Leadership development.
- During rebranding discussions identified the development of a municipal resource guide to improve communications between the District, the Pike County Office of Community Planning, the Pike County Economic Development Authority, and the Pike County Commissioners and Municipal officials. This tool can also be used for distribution to residents.
- Distributed a municipal survey to gauge how the District can communicate more effectively with municipal officials.
- Executive Director sends out quarterly emails to municipal officials on District programming updates.
- Executive Director sits on the Pike County Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and will be participating into 2023.
- Executive Director and Program Manager provided input to the Pike County Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- Program Manager participated in the development of the Pike County Trail Feasibility Study.

Board Meetings

Monthly on the third
Monday, at 9:00 am,
at the Conservation District.*

(*Unless otherwise advertised)

The public is welcome.

**Pike County
Conservation District**

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