



Pike County Conservation District

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Leadership

Education

Technical Assistance

Planning

Enforcement

From the Chairman

Do you know what a Conservation District does or how it benefits county residents?

Pike County Conservation District plays a vital role in protecting and conserving our county's natural resources, specifically our surface and groundwater resources and our soil. The Conservation District's mission is to protect and conserve these resources, acting as an advocate for high quality water and healthy soil.

The District is familiar with the challenges faced by our communities, and we work every day to reduce sediment pollution and ensure clean water and healthy soil for today and for future generations.

Pike County Conservation District is led by a volunteer-member Board of Directors, which helps to identify our county's conservation needs as well as programs and services that will effectively assist and serve our residents. The Board of Directors and staff work with county and municipal officials and many other partner agencies to carry out programs which help to address the long-term natural resource needs of our communities.

The District uses available funds from state and county government, applies for specialized grants and monetary awards for specific

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"All across the state, conservation district staff provide the "boots on the ground," to implement a joint mission of conservation of water and soil resources to benefit all Pennsylvanians.

*- Scott F. Savini
PCCD Board Chairman*



A fish survey was conducted on Little Bushkill Creek, Lehman Township. See page 10.

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District Leadership, left to right, front row: Kelly Stagen and Carole Linkiewicz. Middle row: Paul Ranello, John Sivick, John Milliken, Richard Caridi, Karl A. Wagner, Jr., Peter Helms, Mike Mancino, and Scott Savini. Back row: Ken Ersbak and Bob Engvaldsen.

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conservation projects, and charges fees for certain services to help cover operating costs, thereby reducing the amount of taxpayer dollars required for carrying out the programs or services.

Conservation Districts statewide, and our Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD), play a critical role in protecting and conserving Pennsylvania's natural resources. All across the state, conservation district staff provide the "boots on the ground," to implement a joint mission of conservation of water and soil resources to benefit all Pennsylvanians.

District staff are professionals who work on a daily basis in their counties; they understand the landscapes, land uses, critical watersheds and cumulative impacts to our soil and water resources.

Working with partners such as Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Agriculture, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Geological Survey, and local conservation partners, Districts do more for our natural resources than any other entity in the state. Pike County Conservation District is a great example of this process in action.

Included in this Annual Report is a summary of accomplishments made in carrying out our mission. We hope you will take a moment to read through and understand the multi-faceted programs which the District implements to benefit Pike County residents. We hope this information will provide you with an interest to learn more.

Scott F. Savini
PCCD Board Chairman

Staff

Sally Corrigan, *Executive Director*
Michele Long, *Administrative Manager*
Kelly Rodemich, *Technical Program Assistant/
Gypsy Moth Coordinator*
Ellen Enslin, *CPESC, Senior Resource Conservationist*
Chris Ingulli, *Resource Conservationist*
Marianna Quartararo, *Resource Conservationist*
Matt Barr, *Watershed Specialist*
Krista Gromalski, *Conservation Outreach Coordinator*

Our Mission

Pike County Conservation District is committed to natural resource 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.

Our Vision

Pike County Conservation District will be a recognized and respected leader in fostering a conservation ethic among government officials, non-governmental groups, the development community, community associations, land-owners and the general public that results in conserving the integrity of the natural systems that enrich the Pike County environment.

Directors

Scott Savini, *Chairman*
John Milliken, *Vice Chairman*
Richard A. Caridi, *Commissioner*
Pete Helms, Mike Mancino,
John Sivick, Kelly Stagen

Associate Directors

Ken Ersbak, *Treasurer*
Bob Engvaldsen,
Carole Linkiewicz, Paul Ranello,
Alan Sweetman, Karl A. Wagner

Commissioners

Matthew Osterberg, *Chairman*
Richard A. Caridi
Steve Guccini

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.

2017 Strategic Plan Goals

The Pike County Conservation District Board of Directors, at its December 19, 2016 meeting, adopted the 2017 Action Plan and the following goals for 2017. These goals were developed using the District's Strategic Plan, which was developed in 2015. The District's plan and these goals incorporate input received from Pike County residents and District stakeholders in their evaluation of the critical natural resource issues of Pike County. These six (6) key long-range goals will assist in the implementation of the District's Programs and Mission.

NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION - *Provide advocacy for Pike County's natural resource assets – protecting sensitive natural environments, conserving the quality and quantity of soil and groundwater resources and Pike County's special protection surface water resources.*

RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP - *Encourage and build stewardship with all audiences for Pike County's land, water and natural resources through proactive public outreach, education, and technical assistance.*

LAND USE MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION - *Provide leadership promoting conservation of natural resources through implementation of best management practices for land use and sustainable development in accord with the integrity of our natural resource base.*

CONSERVATION EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH - *Expand conservation outreach and education integrating it as a component of all of the District's conservation programs to achieve more effective implementation of these programs and to improve communication of the District's important role in the conservation of Pike County natural resources.*

PARTNERSHIPS, COMMUNICATION, NETWORKING, AND AGENCY RELATIONSHIPS - *Establish, nurture and build partnerships and a communication network that provides opportunities for broadening/expanding our outreach and increasing the success of achieving our conservation mission.*

GOVERNANCE and MANAGEMENT, FINANCIAL SUPPORT and INFRASTRUCTURE - *Support the District's Mission through responsible governance and financial management and through provision of adequate staff/management capacity and infrastructure resources.*



Erosion and Sedimentation Control

Pike County Conservation District continued to work with the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) throughout 2017 to implement state resource conservation programs delegated to the District by DEP within Pike County. The District carries out responsibilities for two separate but related state programs - Waterways Management (Chapter 105) and Erosion and Sediment Control (Chapter 102). Both of these programs are State regulations under PA Code, Title 25: Environmental Protection. (Waterways are discussed on page 5).

The Erosion and Sediment Control Program applies to land developments and other activities which disturb the earth. These earth disturbance activities are required to develop and implement an erosion and sediment (E&S) control plan which effectively minimizes the potential for sediment runoff from the disturbed site. E&S Plans are reviewed by District technical staff to be sure the plan addresses E&S controls and that best management practices (BMPs) meet state requirements.

District staff conduct site inspections to assure that BMPs identified in the plans are installed on site. The District also has the responsibility for responding to complaints regarding earth moving activities in Pike County on behalf of the Department of Environmental Protection.

District technical staff attended several listening sessions with DEP staff from the Harrisburg office. These sessions focused on suggested and proposed improvements to state E&S and permitting programs, and standard operating procedures, policies and guidance for these programs.

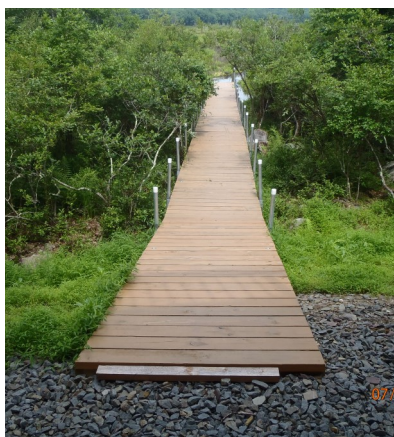


Large Projects

To protect and conserve Pike County's natural resources and to be sure conservation best management practices are being implemented and maintained, District technical staff continued to work with landowners/applicants and their engineers on several large projects in Pike County:

- Rivers Edge Residential Subdivision
- Pocono Ranchlands-Minks Pond Road Construction
- PPL-Blooming Grove-Honesdale Transmission Line Rebuild
- Tennessee Gas Orion Pipeline
- Columbia Gas Line 1278 Zinc Installation
- several Dollar General stores
- State Route 739 Shoulder Widening
- State Route 2001, Section 402 Widening
- Interstate 84 Reconstruction, Sections 448, 449 and 450
- Pond Eddy Bridge Replacement
- Paddlers Point
- Delaware Valley School District projects
- Westfall Senior Housing
- numerous other projects throughout Pike County

Please see Delegated Program Stats on page 5.



A wetland crossing at Westcolang Pond, Lackawaxen Township.



A stream culvert replacement project on Creek Road, Greene Township.

2017 Delegated Program Stats

E&S Control and NPDES - Chapter 102

Technical Assistance
Provided - 554
Initial Plan Reviews - 25
Follow-up Plan Reviews - 14
Site inspections - 227
Project Acres – 2,133
Total Acres Disturbed – 327
Complaints Investigated – 29
Individual/General Permits
Processed – 5
Additional Individual/General
Permits Managed - 42
Combined Staff Hours – 5,559

Waterways Management - Chapter 105

Technical Assistance
Provided - 51
Permit Acknowledgments - 27
Complaints Investigated – 18
New Site Inspections - 5
Total Inspections - 18
Combined Staff Hours – 2,898

Waterways Management

Properly addressing and minimizing potential impacts to streams, lakes and wetlands is important whenever work in and around waterways is proposed. Activities that change the current cross-section of a stream or waterway or activities that encroach into the floodway of a waterway can impact aquatic life or the habitats adjacent to these waterways, and can also cause flooding which results in property damage.

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

Through an agreement with PA DEP, the District carries out responsibilities for two separate but related state programs - Waterways Management (Chapter 105) and Erosion and Sediment Control (Chapter 102). Both Chapter 102 and Chapter 105 are state regulations under PA Code, Title 25: Environmental Protection. (Erosion control is discussed on page 4).

The District works with landowners on Chapter 105 Waterways Management on behalf of PA DEP. The District handles general permits which authorize certain types of work in and along waterways. General permits can include work such as: fish habitat enhancement, small docks and boat ramps, bank stabilization, and utility line or minor road or trail crossings of streams or wetlands.

The District can also work with landowners on Federal authorization provided the proposed activity complies with all terms, conditions, limits, best management practices, and processing procedures noted in the Pennsylvania State Programmatic General Permit (PASPGP-5) and all applicable PA DEP Chapter 105 General Permits. Some activities do not require further review by the US Army Corps of Engineers.

The PASPGP is reviewed and issued every 5 years. PASPGP-5 was issued on July 1, 2016 and is in effect until June 30, 2021. The application forms and reporting criteria have been adjusted to reflect these updates. The DEP forms for Chapter 105 General Permits have also been updated.



Driving surface aggregate was applied to Little Walker Road, Shohola Township.

Municipalities are encouraged to apply for 2018 Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program funding.

Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Roads Program

The focus of the Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume (DGLV) Road 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 fall 2017, one municipality completed several projects funded under Pike County Conservation District's DGLV Program.

Shohola Township's Parkers Glen Road project included the replacement and addition of culverts, regrading of the road profile, and placement of new stone driving surface. This project improved water discharges from the road to Twin Lakes Creek, a high quality, cold water and migratory fishery.

A second project was completed in Shohola Township on a portion of Little Walker Road. Improvements completed at this site included the addition of a 15" culvert pipe with headwall and endwall, installation of a teardrop structure to collect stormwater, and placement of driving surface aggregate (DSA). This project improved the water discharges from Little Walker Road to Walker Creek, a high quality, cold water and migratory fishery.

Developed by Penn State's Center for Dirt and Gravel Road Studies, 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.

District staff and Board members work with representatives from PA Fish and Boat Commission and the Natural Resource Conservation Service to administer the program. Both organizations sit on Pike County's Quality Assurance Board. This board prioritizes submitted DGLV applications and funds projects.

Learn More

Visit the District website:

PikeConservation.org/Programs-Services



Little Walker Road teardrop swale.



Parkers Glen culvert endwall.



Representative Mike Peifer, Watershed Specialist Matt Barr, Senator Lisa Baker, Executive Director Sally Corrigan, and Administrative Manager Michele Long met at Wayne Conservation District, Honesdale.

Making Connections

Nominating organizations provide a vital link between community groups and the Conservation District. This is especially important given the public's increased concern for environmental issues.

Nominating organizations have the opportunity to nominate individuals for the Board of Directors of the Pike County Conservation District. These nominated individuals 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.

The District thanks all of our nominating organizations who participate in the important process of nominating individuals to serve the community and oversee the natural resources of Pike County.

For more information on nominating organizations or if you are an individual interested in working with the Conservation District, please contact :

**570-226-8220 or
pikecd@pikepa.org**

Partners in Conservation

The Pike/Wayne Conservation Partnership is an alliance of over twenty government, non-government, non-profit and grassroots organizations working toward common goals for natural resource conservation, sustainable communities and citizen involvement in community planning in Pike and Wayne counties. The Partnership meets on a regular basis to share information, consider collaborative projects and provide updates on current activities.

The Conservation Partnership met with legislators in April 2017 to discuss issues of concern. These discussions focused on the importance of natural resources to our local economy and how our conservation community promotes projects and programs which support natural resources as an economic resource. Partner projects were highlighted in poster displays and discussions with legislators. Use of alternative energies and resource sharing to educate Pike/Wayne residents and visitors on the importance of natural resources were part of the meeting. Funding to protect water and forest resources that support our community's natural resource economic engine was a key part of the overall legislative meeting.

Executive Director Sally Corrigan, Administrative Manager Michele Long, and Watershed Specialist Matt Barr spoke with legislators on District programs including the District's Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Program and the surface and groundwater monitoring programs.

PCCD Nominating Organizations

Delaware Highlands Conservancy

Northeast PA Audubon Society

Pike County Planning Commission

Gifford Pinchot Audubon Society

Pike Co. Agricultural Fair Association

Pike Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs

Hemlock Farms Conservancy

Pike County Penn State Extension

Pike/Wayne Chapter Trout Unlimited

Milford Garden Club

Wayne/Pike Builders Association

Wayne/Pike Farm Bureau

2017 District Highlights

- Public Director Kelly Stagen and Farmer Director Scott Savini were sworn in as District Directors by Commissioner Richard Caridi; and Alan Sweetman and Jay Morrow were welcomed by the Board as Associate Directors.
- Matt Barr joined the District staff as Watershed Specialist in February and Krista Gromalski became Conservation Outreach Coordinator in December.
- The 2017 District Action Plan gained approval of the Board with many of the items directed at increasing District outreach.
- The District Board supported the work of Pike County's Tick Borne Disease Task Force by funding the printing of a public education brochure entitled Tick 101 for distribution throughout the county.

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Watershed Specialist Matt Barr at Hawley EarthFest.

Grants and Contracts

The District Board supported several grant applications including:

- ⇒ Milford Borough application for a Vandermark Creek streambank restoration project;
- ⇒ Lacawac Sanctuary's DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program application for purchase of the Watres family home, founder of Lacawac Sanctuary, and establishment of a Science Education Center;
- ⇒ Delaware Highlands Conservancy's application for grant funding for the Saw Creek Hunting and Fishing Club land protection project.

In other actions, the District Board approved a contract to fund the District's Watershed Specialist position through June 2018 under Growing Greener state funding; signed an agreement with Pinchot Institute to fund water quality monitoring in Pike County's Upper Delaware tributaries; reviewed the Cooperative Working Agreement with USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service; approved an agreement with Stroud Water Research Center for installing a water quality sensor on a Pike County stream, and adopted a Resolution supporting the District's participation in the implementation of strategies identified in the Pike County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) adopted in 2017. The HMP mitigation strategies are in direct correlation with the PCCD Strategic Plan and incorporates some aspects of the 2010 Pike County Act 167 planning effort.



District Vice Chairman John Milliken presented a \$500 Environmental Education Project Grant to Good Shepherd Child Care Center, in Milford Borough. Grant writer Angie Smith, of Penn State Extension, accepted on the center's behalf.

Annual Dinner

The Pike County Conservation District Annual Dinner, held in November, honored one of the District's long-time Board members Ken Ersbak and featured a night of trivia. The celebration began with a meal at Woodloch Springs and then a test of everyone's knowledge of the natural world and conservation history in Pike County. It was a fun competition with the County Commissioners team winning by a small margin.

Happy Retirement

The District Board and Staff honored Associate Director Ken Ersbak, who began with the District in 1997 providing assistance on the Surface Water Quality Program through Aquatic Resources Consulting. Ken became an Associate Director in 1998 and spent over 20 years in support of the District's programs and mission.

Ken's work with the District has provided a wealth of water quality data on the exceptional health of Pike County streams. Ken also played a key role as Chairman for the Pike County Quality Assurance Board for the Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Program and most recently served as District Treasurer.

Although Ken will be around part-time continuing his water quality work with the District, his expertise and presence on the Board will be greatly missed. All the best Mr. Ersbak in future endeavors!

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2017 District Highlights

- District Board and Staff completed the Annual Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup along Route 402 in Blooming Grove.
- Two \$500 PCCD Environmental Education Project Grants were awarded to Good Shepherd Child Care Center's streamside outdoor classroom and Delaware Valley High School courtyard outdoor lab.
- The District's Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Quality Assurance Board recommended funding for two projects in Shohola Township, which were approved by the District Board.
- The Board developed a Succession Management plan to address the 2018 retirement of Executive Director Sally Corrigan and completed a Long-Range Financial Plan which included recommendations for capital expenditures and an annual fund reserve analysis.



The District's 2017 fish survey crew, from left to right: Brian Snyder, Paul Ranello, Ken Ersbak, Tim Gregory, and Watershed Specialist Matt Barr.

Groundwater Assessment

The District, in partnership with the US Geological Survey (USGS), completed the tenth year of an on-going groundwater level monitoring study, which provides data that can be a useful tool in understanding drought triggers and groundwater tables.

Since 2008, the District has been measuring groundwater levels at twenty-four well locations in different geologic formations throughout the county. District staff sample and record groundwater levels at these locations monthly, and the information is posted to the USGS website located at:

groundwaterwatch.usgs.gov/countymap.asp?sa=PA&cc=103

Data and summary statistics such as well depth, most recent well level measurement, site number, and a short description of the local aquifer are available online. Tables and graphs of historical data for each well site are also available.

Data is being used to determine average depth to groundwater, annual fluctuation in water levels, and variable climatic fluctuations especially in periods when conditions may be dry and water table levels may be of concern.

Surface Water Monitoring

The District has been monitoring the health of Pike County's streams since the late 1980s. Annual fish surveys, macroinvertebrate investigations, and habitat assessments are completed throughout the county. A diverse community of fish and macroinvertebrate species in a stream generally indicates good water quality.

In 2017, eight streams were surveyed to assess fish populations and habitat, including Hornbeck's, Bush Kill (Mill Rift), Westcolang, Teedyuskung, Balliard, Rattlesnake, Little Bushkill, and Dimmock Meadows. In all the sampling conducted, seventeen species of fish were identified. Trout, which are fish that require clean, cold water, were found in five of the eight streams. Trout reproduction was evident by the presence of young-of-year (YOY) fish at Bush Kill (Mill Rift) and Dimmock Meadows creeks. No fish were found to have external abnormalities such as tumors or lesions.

Based on an assessment of the fish species found, each stream is given an Index of Biotic Integrity (IBI). Only two of the stream sites - Bush Kill (Mill Rift) and Dimmock Meadows - had IBI scores which were considered good (≥ 23). Three of the stream sites had IBI scores which were significantly less from previous years. These included Rattlesnake, Balliard and Westcolang creeks. These sites will be sampled by the District again in the next few years to determine if this was an anomaly or a sign of declining water quality.

Eleven streams were sampled for benthic macroinvertebrates, which are the small organisms without backbones which inhabit stream bottoms. Sites were sampled on Big Bushkill, Little Bushkill, Hornbecks, Dingmans, Adams, Raymondskill, East Branch Wallenpaupack, Sawkill, and Vandermark creeks, as well as two sites on Toms Creek. Four of the eleven sites surveyed in 2017 showed significantly higher IBI scores than over the past 10 years. These included Adams and East Branch Wallenpaupack creeks, and the two Toms Creek sites. Big Bushkill had the lowest IBI score of all streams surveyed.

The health of Pike County's streams is good to excellent.

Monitoring provides a baseline of stream health and serves as a reference point for potential changes in water quality.

View the District's official water quality report at:

PikeConservation.org

Water Research Sensor Stations

Watershed Specialist Matt Barr has been working with Nick Spinelli, Executive Director of the Lake Wallenpaupack Management District (LWWMD) and Stroud Water Research Center on deploying in-stream water quality monitoring stations in Pike County.

The sensor stations are being distributed throughout the Delaware River Basin by Stroud as part of the Delaware River Watershed Initiative and the William Penn Foundation's efforts to assist watershed groups in water monitoring. The sensor stations measure conductivity, temperature, depth, and turbidity in real-time and record the data on an in-field hard drive. Stations can also transmit the measurements externally via cell phone data. Two sensor stations will be deployed in the spring of 2018 on the Main and West branches of Wallenpaupack Creek. The data collected will be useful in understanding potential sediment loading to Lake Wallenpaupack. This information will help the LWWMD identify watershed areas where time and resources should be focused, and it will help the Conservation District in its ongoing effort to monitor water quality.

Stroud is providing a \$2,300 stipend for each station to cover maintenance, staff training, and other incurred expenses regarding up-keep of the stations.



2017 Water Resource Accomplishments

- The watersheds of Dingmans and Raymondskill creeks are more densely populated and more developed than most other watersheds in Pike County. Consequently, the streams and groundwater of these watersheds are at greater risk of contamination and disturbance. For this reason, District staff identified these areas as priority watersheds.
- Watershed Specialist Matt Barr has undertaken the task of organizing and analyzing water quality data collected since the late 1980s from the watersheds of Dingmans and Raymondskill creeks to begin the process of a full watershed assessment. Land cover, construction activities, sewage treatment, and septic systems will also be studied in these assessments. The ultimate goal is to develop watershed-based plans whereby protection and restoration efforts are identified, prioritized, focused, and effective.
- The District's cooperative project with USGS for a Special Baseline Groundwater Quality Study was completed in June 2017. This \$188,000 grant was funded from the state's Marcellus Legacy Program (Act 13 funds) through the Commonwealth Finance Authority and was matched by District staff time and over \$137,000 in USGS funds. The purpose of the study was to assess baseline groundwater quality in bedrock aquifers in the county. Seventy-nine water wells were sampled in the summer of 2015 to provide data on the presence of methane and other gases, bacteria, major ions, nutrients, metals and other elements, radon, and radioactivity. The official USGS report was released in December 2017 and is posted on the District's website.
- Funding was provided through a cooperative working agreement between the District and Pinchot Institute for Conservation Studies under a William Penn Foundation grant to assist with water quality monitoring in Pike County's Upper Delaware tributaries. The agreement provides \$5,000 toward surface water quality monitoring tributaries such as Big Bushkill, Little Bushkill, Toms Creek, Adams Creek, Saw Creek, and others. 2017 marked the fourth year of this working partnership.



Executive Director Sally Corrigan presented information on District programs and services to municipal officials at Woodloch Pines, Lackawaxen Township.

Municipal Outreach

The District made a concerted effort in 2017 to maintain open lines of communication and to build better partnerships with Pike County municipal officials. The District worked on grant projects, hosted workshops for officials and staff, attended the Annual Municipal Officials Convention and regular meetings of the County's Road Task Force, a monthly meeting of municipal roadmasters.

The District hosted two municipal workshops early in 2017. Executive Director Sally Corrigan provided a brief presentation highlighting the District's participation in state regulatory programs as well as District services such as grant writing assistance, technical guidance, and connecting municipalities with other environmental organizations in the region.

The workshops provided opportunities to discuss the relationship between the District and municipalities and to build better partnerships with the goal of better serving the residents of Pike County. They also helped to identify the future goal of increased communication and training for municipal staff members on District programs and services.

Activities in 2017 were an important step in building our working relationships with all Pike County municipalities and increasing opportunities for communication and exchange of ideas. The District sees these relationships continuing to grow.

Public Input Explained

Public participation in land development projects is important, but navigating the public comment process can be challenging. In 2017, District staff developed the brochure *Opportunities for Public Input on the NPDES Permit Process*.

It provides pertinent information for the general public and municipal officials to make it easier to participate in public comment opportunities on permit applications for projects proposed in Pike County. It explains how and when public comments can be made in the NPDES (National Pollution Discharge Elimination System) permitting process.

Many times the District gets questions like: "How can this project/development happen?" Or, "What can I do as a private citizen?" The answer: Get involved early in the planning process, especially for large development plans.

By attending local municipal meetings on a regular basis, you can keep informed about what is being proposed in your community. At the municipal level, there are opportunities to voice your concerns regarding projects at public meetings or hearings associated with developer presentations and township or borough review of proposals.

Opportunities for Public Input on the NPDES Permit Process



Opportunities for Public Input on the NPDES Permit Process is available for download on the District's website.

PikeConservation.org



Bridge Preserve Day

Dingman Township Supervisors designated May 20 as Bridge Preserve Day and hosted a special celebration at the Cornelia and Florence Bridge Preserve. The event recognized the work completed along the newest interpretive trail, and included presentations about natural features on the Preserve.

Located at 1082 Twin Lakes Road, the Preserve is a 300-acre parcel owned by Dingman Township. Mr. Charles Bridge had a vision for the property which centered on honoring his wife and mother by setting aside the land in perpetuity for use by local residents. Dingman and Milford Townships developed a master site plan for the property which included a series of walking trails. Dingman Township has been working over the past several years to find grant funds to develop trails and maintain the Preserve.

In 2017, Dingman Township Supervisors partnered with the Pike County Conservation District and the North American Land Trust to complete a project to install educational signage in the Preserve. Boy Scouts from Troop #71 helped the District to identify plants at the Preserve and install native plant identification signs along existing trails. Signage was also installed at the on-site rain garden to explain its benefits, such as stormwater management and groundwater recharge. The signs provide information to visitors as they explore the trails at the Preserve.

A trail map was developed to assist in the identification of features along the trail. Funding specific to this project was provided by the Department of Environmental Protection's Environmental Education Grants.

Gypsy Moth Program Update

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Division of Forest Pest Management did not conduct a Gypsy Moth spray suppression program for private lands in Pike County in 2017.

DCNR surveys indicated a low number of new Gypsy Moth egg masses. Also, a lack of sightings and complaints indicated numbers of caterpillars were reduced compared to previous years.

DCNR will monitor Gypsy Moth defoliation and populations in 2018 and will continue to work with Pike County Commissioners if the criteria measured shows a need for a spray suppression program.

Updated information on the Gypsy Moth program can be found on the District's website.





Above, students from Delaware Valley, Wayne Highlands, Wallenpaupack, and Western Wayne high schools who participated in Envirothon 2017. At right, Angela Colarusso, of Second Chance Wildlife Center, who gave a live animal presentation.



Envirothon 2017

The thirty-first annual Pike/Wayne Envirothon was held in April at Wallenpaupack Environmental Learning Center in Hawley with an exciting day of competition and a visit from Second Chance Wildlife Center.

This one-day educational event, coordinated by both the Wayne and Pike Conservation Districts, is designed to test the knowledge, skills and problem solving capabilities of high school students regarding our earth's natural resources. Delaware Valley, Wayne Highlands, Wallenpaupack, and Western Wayne high schools participated in the event. Five-member teams tackled subject areas including: Aquatic Ecology, Forestry, Soils and Land Use, Wildlife, and Agricultural Soil and Water Conservation Stewardship.

Wayne Highlands School District team Wumbo Wombats won the overall event. Lumens of Wallenpaupack Area School District took second place and Seagulls of Wallenpaupack Area School District took third place. The first place Wayne Highlands team went on to represent Wayne County at the State Envirothon event held in May at the University of Pittsburgh Johnstown campus. The highest scoring team for Pike County, Lumens from Wallenpaupack School District, represented Pike County at the state event.

This year's event included a program by Angela Colarusso, Founder of Second Chance Wildlife Center, who gave a live animal presentation. Animals included a skunk, raccoon, woodchuck and opossum. Yatsonsky's Farm donated ice cream for the event's traditional sundae bar.

2017 Envirothon partners included: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Pennsylvania's Fish and Boat Commission, Game Commission, Department of Conservation and Natural Resource Bureau of Forestry and Bureau of State Parks, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Education. Partners provide educational reference materials, technical expertise, knowledge, and manpower at the event.

Sponsors

Each year Pike and Wayne Conservation Districts seek financial contributions to support Envirothon. 2017 sponsors included:

Association of Property Owners of the Hideout, Inc.

Brookfield Renewable

Creamworks, Inc.

Davis R. Chant Realtors

The Dime Bank

Dirlam Brothers Lumber Company

Dutch's Supermarket

Elegante Restaurant and Pizzeria

Friends of Ray Tonkin

Honesdale Agway

Honesdale National Bank

Lake Region IGA

Northern Tier Hardwood Association

PA Trappers Association

Wallenpaupack Veterinary Clinic

Woodloch Resort

Additional funding for this year's Pike/Wayne Envirothon was provided by the Pennsylvania Envirothon Inc. through its education grant with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Environmental Education Fund.

Envirothon 2017 was coordinated by the Pike County and Wayne Conservation Districts.



Educational Event

Discovering Your Drinking Water

March 26, 2018

7:00 - 9:00 PM

PCCD Office

Drinking Water Protection Tips

Understanding where drinking water originates and how to protect this important natural resource was the featured topic at two workshops sponsored by the District in 2017.

Pike County is almost entirely dependent on groundwater to meet its drinking water needs. More than 98% of water consumed in the county originates as groundwater from private, community and municipal wells and springs. Our drinking water can become polluted when substances harmful to human health get into our groundwater. These pollutants can include road salt, cleaning supplies, home heating oil, medicines, weed killers, and fertilizers.

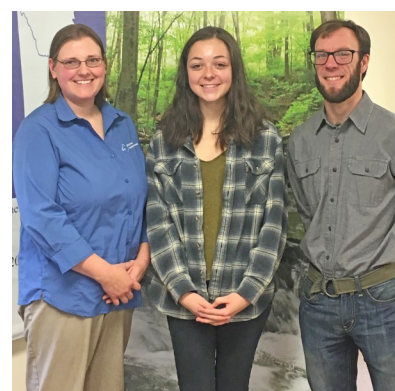
The District, in cooperation with Pike County Penn State Extension and the Pocono Source Water Protection Collaborative, presented information on the importance of groundwater and provided Pike residents with useful tips on maintaining good drinking water quality. A third workshop is planned for 2018.

Free Test Kits

A grant obtained by the District for these workshops provided the first ten registered participants with a water test kit, at no charge, to take home and test their own drinking water. Kits included tests for coliform bacteria, nitrates, pH and total dissolved solids. Test results were forwarded to homeowners along with any potential steps needed to improve drinking water in their home.

The District would like to thank both the Lackawaxen and Dingman Township Supervisors for allowing use of the townships' buildings in August and October for the workshops. A third workshop will be held March 26, 2018 at 7:00pm at the Pike County Conservation District Office.

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



Conservation Career Goals

Wallenpaupack High School student Rose LoDolce, center, who is interested in pursuing a career in the environmental field, attended the November meeting of the District Board of Directors, and met with PCCD Senior Resource Conservationist Ellen Enslin and Watershed Specialist Matt Barr to learn more about their roles in protecting Pike County's natural resources.

District Outreach Efforts

- District staff regularly attended monthly County Road Task Force meetings, improving communication and partnerships with municipal roadmasters and officials.
- Executive Director Sally Corrigan worked with Pike's planning, emergency management and municipal officials, to update the county's Hazard Mitigation Plan, which gained approval of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and Federal Emergency Management Agency in September. Included as part of this update are strategies for mitigation along with identified partners. Through this process, sites identified in the county's drafted Act 167 Stormwater Management Plan by municipal partners were assessed, re-identified, and included as action items in the Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- The District received a Department of Environmental Protection Environmental Education Mini Grant, which provides funding to demonstrate Best Management Practice (BMP) sites in the county. Tours of the BMPs are planned for spring 2018. District staff will discuss how BMPs help prevent pollution in waterways. Visit the District website for information on how to participate.
- Bushkill Elementary teachers Jennifer Peruso and Diane Litts from the East Stroudsburg School District, recipients of a PCCD Environmental Education Grant in the amount of \$500, used the grant for a project at the school. Thirteen classes (grades K-5) participated in planting and maintaining an outside garden at the elementary school. The \$500 grant was supplemented with donations and other grant funds.
- The District provided funding and staff participation in support of the Women in Science Symposium for over 300 high school students in the region in September.
- "Point or Non-Point," a District feature article, was published in the *Connections Magazine* September issue.
- District staff met with federal and state legislators on April 7 to discuss natural resource issues of concern.
- PCCD partnered with Monroe County Conservation District to host a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) workshop in January, designed for engineers, contractors, or other persons involved in NPDES permitting.
- To increase public information and interaction, the District expanded its digital presence including its website, monthly Enewsletters, Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube.

Board Meetings

Monthly on third Monday

(Unless otherwise advertised)

9:00 am at the District Office.

The public is invited to attend.

Contact Us

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