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2023 Action Plan

As presented to the Armstrong Conservation District Board of Directors on November 16, 2022

District Manager	
2023 Goals:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure efficient District Operations. - Retain staff.
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct bi-weekly staff meetings. - Review and update job descriptions as needed with staff on an annual basis. - Discuss staff suggestions to the annual action plan and report to the board. Adjust future Action Plans as needed for unforeseen circumstances or to capture new opportunities. - Continue current performance evaluation system. - Use competitive salaries/benefits to help retain staff. - Continue to utilize the County phone system, internet and IT department for technology resources. - Review current strategic plan on an annual basis and use the planning document to guide future action plans of the District. Begin the process to secure funding and development of a new Strategic Plan to guide the District over the next 5-7 years. - Continue workshops and meetings to bring non-governmental conservation organizations together for information sharing and the development of a coordinated effort to protect and restore natural resource concerns within the County. - Direct staff to be active participants in various planning functions and committees as the Board determines to assign staff as participants. - Ensure that adequate funds are available for the necessary cross training of staff. Make staff aware of training opportunities with a goal of having all staff cross-trained within 5 years across all major program areas of the District. Focus efforts on having at least 2 staff members certified to do Nutrient Management Plan reviews, be proficient in administering the Farmland Preservation Program, and the DGLVR program. - In coordination with FSA, Armstrong County Farm Bureau, and Penn State Extension, sponsor a District Cooperator Awards Annual Banquet. - In coordination with the Conservation Educator, conduct a nominating organization meeting with the County Commissioners, Chief Clerk, DEP Field Representative, and all Armstrong County Nominating Organizations on a bi-annual basis.
Ag Technician/Farmland Preservation Coordinator	
2023 Goals:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase participation of agricultural producers in Armstrong County in District Programs. - Utilize all grant funds to maximize their impact in Armstrong County.
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education and Outreach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Attend at least 1 Penn State Extension Pesticide Credit Meeting. o Attend at least 4 Farm Bureau meetings. o Attend at least 1 PA Farmland Preservation Association meeting or event. o Attend Southwest Project Grass meetings. o Continue participation in Pennsylvania Grazing Lands Coalition (PAGLC). o Attend ACCL Meetings through current term.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide education to the public through workshops and through articles in the Armstrong County Farm Bureau and Armstrong County Penn State Cooperative Extension Service outreach activities. ○ In coordination with the Conservation Educator, increase participation with the County's 4-H clubs. - Technical Assistance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to work on increased job approval authority through NRCS. Coordinate necessary job approvals with the Clarion NRCS technical office to determine priority approvals to obtain. ○ Provide information to Ag producers regarding the REAP Program; review applications for consistency with the program and inform producers of filing deadlines. District participation in REAP will be evaluated annually by the Board. - Grants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Administer the ACAP program and abide by all ROM's set forth by the SCC. ○ Pursue funding for Ag related BMP's and plans through DEP Growing Greener, PACD offerings, and any future available funding sources. ○ Administer grants for the Armstrong County Farm Bureau and other conservation organizations as directed by the Board. ○ Complete all work and reports to close out the Stubrick Ag BMP and B. Kimmel Ag BMP Growing Greener Grants. ○ Continue working to complete the Culp Ag BMP Growing Greener Grants. ○ Continue working on the Mahoning and Redbank Creek Ag BMP Grant. ○ Continue outreach efforts in the Buffalo Creek Watershed to implement the RCPP Project by identifying, contacting, and visiting agricultural producers in the watershed. - Farmland Preservation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to implement the County's Farmland Preservation Program as outlined in the current MOU and by utilizing all state and county funds in a timely fashion. ○ Continue to work towards securing easements through the RCPP Program. ○ Conduct annual inspections of all preserved farms. ○ Prepare operating budget for the ACALPB. ○ Work with the County GIS Consultant to update and maintain the theme layers of all farms participating in Ag Security Areas (ASA's) and theme layers essential to Farmland Preservation scoring criteria. Contact municipalities annually to either establish or continue ASA's within their municipal boundaries. - Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Train and assist the Conservation Educator in the Fall Tour, County Envirothon, Arbor Day Event, and Tree Sale. ○ Create database of Ag Producers in Armstrong County that will be notified of education and outreach opportunities and upcoming grant programs. ○ Complete all ROM's of the ACT and NM programs.
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AmeriCorps

2023 Goals:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote the District - Assist the staff members. - Accompany the MED to events.
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assist in expanding Education/Outreach Programs through the use of the MED. - Maintain GEO Trail. Place at least one new geocache per year. - Monitor Armstrong Conservancy Properties at least two days a month. - Assist Armstrong Trails with trail maintenance up to one day a week and digitize trail records. - Assist the Watershed Educator/Program Specialist with the following at least 3 times a month: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Installation and downloading of data from data loggers ○ Taking water samples at various projects

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tree plantings and maintenance ○ Construction and inspection of stream and AMD projects - Assist the Ag Technician/Farmland Preservation Coordinator with the following at least 3 times a month: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Surveying for drainage and BMP construction ○ Construction inspection - Assist the Erosion and Sedimentation Technician with the following at least 3 times a month: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Erosion and sediment inspections ○ Educational workshops - Assist the DGLVR Specialist with the following at least 3 times a month: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Construction inspection ○ Meeting with municipalities ○ Stream crossing surveys - Assist the Conservation Educator with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fall Tour, Tree Sale, Envirothon, various events. - Assist the MED Coordinator with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scheduling and staffing MED events. ○ Promoting the MED
Armsdale Building Coordinator	
2023 Goals:	- Complete the Armsdale Center for Agriculture and Conservation by October 1, 2023
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administer the current funding sources that the District has and explore new funding sources to complete the Armsdale Center. - Work with Young & Associates and Armstrong County to solicit bids, award contracts, and break ground on the Armsdale Center in early 2023.
Board	
2023 Goals:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retain Staff - Provide development opportunities for staff
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offer training and professional development opportunities to staff. - Continue implementation of the employee succession process. - Have a minimum of two directors or associate directors or the manager attend at least one PACD Executive Council or regional PACD meeting. - Continue District participation in the AmeriCorps program with a conservation assistant. - Assist in Conservation Award process. - Appoint voting delegates to and have those delegates attend at least one meeting per year for PACD, WPCAMR, RC&D, the DGLVR QAB, and any other organization that the Board chooses for membership. - Review the current strategic plan on an annual basis and use the planning document to guide future action plans of the District. Adjust future Action Plans as needed for unforeseen circumstances or to capture new opportunities. Begin the process to secure funding and development of a new Strategic Plan to guide the District over the next 5-7 years. - Ensure that adequate funds are available for the necessary cross-training of staff. Make staff aware of training opportunities with a goal of having all staff cross-trained within 5 years across all major program areas of the District. Focus efforts on having at least 2 staff members certified to do Nutrient Management Plan reviews, be proficient in administering the Farmland Preservation Program and the DGLVR program. - Investigate funding sources and assigning personnel for future building management and maintenance.
Conservation Educator	
2023 Goals:	- Promote the organization through education and outreach.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take over Tree Sale, Arbor Day, Envirothon, and Fall Tour, events from the Ag Technician after first year of conducting events jointly.
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education and Outreach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Develop new programs as directed by the Board. o Promote the organization via social media and other materials. o Attend Envirothon Coordinator events. o Attend PAEE annual conference. o In coordination with the Agricultural Technician, increase participation with the County's 4-H clubs. o Attend at least two Sportsmen's Federation Meetings. o Expand outreach opportunities of the MED. o In coordination with the MED Coordinator, approach local school districts to set up the MED during teacher in service days to incorporate the MED into curriculum. o Assist other staff members in meeting education and outreach ROM's of various programs. o Attend at least two Trout Unlimited Meetings. - Grants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Pursue funding for education and outreach grants through DEP Environmental Education, PACD, and any future available funding sources. o Network with other Educators from around the state to develop list of possible funding sources. - Events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Host the Fall Tour for Directors, Associate Directors, elected officials, and members of the press to highlight conservation projects through the County. o Hold the countywide Envirothon including all high schools within our service area. Seek sponsorships for the event. o Begin the process of creating a Junior Envirothon for middle school aged students. o Continue the Arbor Day Program that distributes evergreen seedlings to all third grade students in Armstrong County. o Conduct and expand the annual District fruit tree and seedling sale. o In coordination with the District Manager, conduct a nominating organization meeting with the County Commissioners, Chief Clerk, DEP Field Representative, and all Armstrong County Nominating Organizations on a bi-annual basis. o Coordinate an Elected Officials Breakfast or similar event for local, state, and federal elected officials to highlight the District projects from the previous year and present budget information for the upcoming fiscal year. - Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Produce annual report o Coordinate with the County IT Department to maintain the District's website. o Maintain the District Facebook page and other social media pages.
Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Roads Specialist	
2023 Goals:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase education and outreach offerings to municipalities - Increase number of municipalities participating in the DGLVR program on a regular basis.
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education and Outreach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Attend at least 1 Association of Township Officials County Level Meetings. o Conduct at least one local workshop for municipalities that participate in the DGLVR program. o Promote Penn State's Center for DGLVR Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance (ESM) workshop in 2023. o Continue to develop DGLVR demonstration projects. o Attend trainings offered by the DGLVR Center.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work with PennDOT Municipal Service Representatives along with PennDOT’s local Training Assistance Program (LTAP) when possible to partner and promote the DGLVR Program with PennDOT programs. ○ Represent the District through the PA State Association of Township Supervisors and PA State Association of Boroughs (PSATS & PSAB) organizations. ○ Administer and develop the ACD DGLVR Lend/Loan Program. ○ Develop and maintain a municipal officials media outreach network. - Technical Assistance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work with and assist interested municipalities with the DGLVR Program for reassessment, identification, and scope of work of potential work sites. ○ Work with municipalities to develop DGLVR project proposals. ○ Perform Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) evaluations as requested by eligible municipal entities for potential funding opportunities. ○ Train staff members of the District in all aspects of the DGLVR program. - Grants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide all information to the QAB and the Board of Directors in a timely fashion to allocate DGLVR funds. ○ Administer all contracts between the District and participating municipalities. ○ File all reports and replenishment requests in a timely fashion. - Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete all ROM’s of the DGLVR Program
Erosion and Sedimentation Technician	
2023 Goals:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase number of municipalities that have MOU’s with ACD - Increase knowledge of E&S regulations within the regulated community in the County.
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education and Outreach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Host at least one in person educational events for the regulated community. ○ Provide educational materials to Municipalities at least once a year. ○ Partner with Watershed Educator and DGLVR Specialist to provide educational events regarding stormwater concerns. ○ Serve on the Armstrong County ATV Committee. ○ Attend regional and statewide training events for the Chapter 102 program. ○ Participate in Clean Water Academy training on a regular basis. ○ Attend Armstrong County Coordinating Committee Meetings on a quarterly basis. - Technical Assistance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keep in contact with Armstrong County Planning Commission to work towards a Countywide Act 167 Plan. ○ Process all E&S, NPDES, and ESCGP plans in compliance with the Delegation Agreement. ○ Assist municipalities as they begin the process toward MS-4 compliance. ○ Retain current copies of municipal stormwater ordinances and assist those municipalities and their engineers who are interested in adopting stormwater ordinances. - Grants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As time permits, pursue funding sources for stormwater education opportunities. - Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete all ROM’s of the Chapter 102 Delegation Agreement. ○ Obtain CPESC certification when eligible. ○ Report all monthly activities to the Manager and Board of Directors.
MED Coordinator	
2023 Goals:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote the Mobile Environmental Display
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to seek events to promote the MED in both Armstrong and surrounding counties.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pursue funding for MED exhibits and related expenses of the MED through DEP, PACD, and any future available funding sources. - In coordination with the Conservation Educator, approach local school districts to set up the MED during teacher in service days to incorporate the MED into curriculum.
Watershed Educator/Program Specialist	
2023 Goals:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase participation of County’s Watershed Organizations - Continue to implement streambank stabilization, AMD, and riparian forest buffer projects in the County.
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education and Outreach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Attend at least two yearly meetings for each watershed organization. o Attend at least three Trout Unlimited meetings. o Attend regular WPCAMR Meetings. o Attend at least two Sportsmen’s Federation Meetings. o Actively participate with Master Naturalist Program. o Organize county wide Watershed Association fundraiser event. o Continue to assist with watershed organizations, both to promote existing organizations and to establish new ones. o Attend Penn’s Corner RC&D meetings. - Technical Assistance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Provide technical assistance within the limits of available staff time to all Armstrong County Watershed Associations, the Armstrong County Conservancy, and the Armstrong Trail to help these organizations attain their goals. o Provide technical assistance to municipalities to abate stormwater concerns. o Perform Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) evaluations as requested by eligible municipal entities for potential DGLVR funding opportunities. o Coordinate with DEP and local municipalities to investigate a potential AMD treatment project in the Sugarcreek Watershed. - Grants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Work with DEP to utilize AMD Funds. o Pursue funding for watershed restoration grants through DEP Growing Greener, PACD grants, and any future available funding sources. o Administer grants for local watershed organizations, Armstrong Trails, Armstrong Conservancy and other conservation organizations as directed by the Board. o Continue outreach efforts in the Buffalo Creek Watershed to implement the RCPP Project by identifying, contacting, and visiting individuals in the watershed that are interested in stream enhancement or forestry management projects. o Continue to seek grant funding for demonstration projects. - Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Complete all ROM’s of the Watershed Specialist program o Supervise AmeriCorps Members o File all progress reports, final reports, and requests for financial reimbursement in a timely fashion. o Monitor the effectiveness of previously completed AMD projects including Huling Run, Darmac 14, Silver Rock Phase I and Phase II. Utilize data loggers to assist in this process when possible. o Maintain ESM and stream crossing certifications through the DGLVR program.
All	
2023 Goals:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work to implement the current Vision Statement of the District – “The communities of Armstrong County, guided by the District and partners, fulfill the needs of citizens through efficient and responsible natural resources use.” - Foster partnerships with organizations that have a similar conservation mission.

Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to expand the Cooperator Assistance Program by making the information available to the public. - Seek out additional partnerships with Experience Armstrong, Outdoor Discovery Center, Armstrong Trails, Armstrong Conservancy, Armstrong Center for Community Learning, Trout Unlimited, Farm Bureau, Sportsmen’s Federation, all local Sportsmen’s Clubs, all local Watershed Organizations, and Armstrong County Sewage Enforcement Agency. - Each staff member will attend one professional development seminar in addition to the normal technical program offerings. - Each staff member will work on developing a ‘desk manual’ that outlines duties specific to his or her program. This manual should include quarterly report information, financial information, tracking sheets, and contact lists. This manual will be updated on an annual basis.
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Position Legend

District Manager	Holly Laird
Ag Technician/Farmland Preservation Coordinator	Jessica Schaub
AmeriCorps Member	Rachell Rottman
Armsdale Building Coordinator	Dave Rupert
Board	Directors and Associate Directors
Conservation Educator	Brooke Emmonds
Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Roads Specialist	A. Gregg Smith
Erosion and Sedimentation Technician	Kodie Rearick
MED Coordinators	Laura Sue and Don Stewart
Watershed Educator/Program Specialist	Maria Sorce