

## **2017 - Planning for Our Future .....**

### **The Annual Report of District Manager, David R. Rupert .....**

**T**he Armstrong Conservation District grew to meet several new challenges and evolved itself once again to cope with the fast changing conservation environment. Late summer saw the awarding of another Penn Vest grant for constructing another non-point source pollution control project in partnership with the Allegheny Valley Land Trust, and Clarion Conservation District. Numerous unanticipated situations and opportunities required the District to update our Long Term Strategic Plan. The Board of Directors and their facilitator decided to concentrate on a 5 year Strategic Plan to guide the district. Please visit our recently redesigned website to view the Strategic Plan. Our “2017 Action Plan” set forth numerous objectives that the Board wished to see fully implemented by the end of the year. As you read the individual reports of our Staff, you will be able to see how each person contributed to completion of the Annual Action Plan. The Board continued to redefine our Annual Action Plan in four main areas-Capacity Building, Technical Assistance, Resource Conservation, and Outreach and Education. Specific measurable objectives were then adopted by the District Board and assigned to the appropriate individuals or the Board as a whole for implementation. The highlights of the individual staff in the Annual Report will tell you how well those objectives were achieved.

In our continuing effort to build the District Capacity, numerous professional development opportunities were made available to the Staff, Directors, and Associate Directors. Staff meetings were conducted by the Manager on a bi-weekly basis to keep the staff informed, exchange information, and coordinate resources. The District continued to grow the Cooperator Assistance and Outreach Programs through updates to our website, informational brochures, field days, and the use of our Dayton Fair and crops night displays. 2017 saw the District expand its outreach efforts with the unveiling of our new Mobile Environmental Display that was developed in conjunction with the Carnegie Science Center. The District continued to participate in the AmeriCorps program and welcomed a new Corp member- Heidi Krigar. Two long time members, Larissa Rice and Katie Good left the District to pursue other avenues. The District continued to apply for Growing Greener Grants to help implement other facets of the District Program and worked to administer and close out those currently awarded grants. In December, the District was offered 3 additional Growing greener grants to be completed over the next 3 years. The District continued to be represented with delegates appointed to the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD), Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation (WPCAMR), Penn's Corner Resource Conservation & Development Council (RD&D), and the Dirt and Gravel Road Quality Assurance Board (QAB).

In the area of Technical Assistance, the District has provided assistance to several County organizations and Municipalities as they were striving to attain their

conservation goals. District Staff also worked to retain participation by local elected municipal officials in the creation and maintenance of Agricultural Security Areas (ASA's) within the County. The District, in partnership with the Arrowhead Chapter of Trout Unlimited (TU) and other local watershed associations continued to monitor the water quality of more sensitive streams in the Armstrong County area. The District continued its participation in the Commonwealth REAP program by providing assistance to area producers interested in applying for these tax credits.

In the field of Resource Conservation, the District conducted Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Plan reviews and performed the required site inspections of active earthmoving sites within timeframes established by the Commonwealth. District staff participated in Southwest Project Grass and provided technical and administrative assistance to the County Agricultural Lands Preservation Board as they selected the purchase of the sixth Agricultural Conservation Easement. Work proceeded on several Watershed Restoration Projects and those specific accomplishments may be found under the appropriate staff section of the Annual Report.

For 2017, the District continued its Outreach and Education efforts. Those efforts included the County Envirothon and active participation by all high schools within the County, the Arbor Day Program, the Fruit Tree and Seedling sale, the Armstrong County Agricultural Banquet. District also completely revamped the District webpage, publishing our Annual Report, various articles for newsletters and participation in local, regional, and statewide workshops, and our use of multi-media presentations to area groups about the natural resources of Armstrong County. The District continued its annual spring legislative Breakfast meeting for our local, state, and federal elected officials and continued to host the annual fall conservation tour of recently completed conservation work within the County. District staff continued working with local officials to expand participation in our Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road program. For 2018, we will continue to offer technical assistance to our Cooperators within the limits of our technical abilities and funding.

In 2017, the District hired another new employee. Ms. Casandra Wagner was hired as the District E&S Technician, but left after only 6 months on the job to pursue a different career path. Ms. Holly Dill was hired in August to replace Ms. Wagner performing E&S plan reviews, site inspections, and handling complaints. The entire staff continued developing professionally by being cross trained in all other areas of staff expertise.

For all of these efforts by the staff, I am proud of what the Armstrong District has accomplished in 2017 and look forward to implementation of our 2018 Action Plan. In 2017, the District created a new 5 year current Strategic Plan. The individual staff reports are also enclosed, so please review them over at your pleasure and provide us with your feedback so that we may better serve you in the future. I hope that 2018 doesn't blow by as fast as it seemed to in 2017. I know that as I approach 37 years as your Conservation District Manager it seems that time goes by more quickly.

Should you have any questions about the annual report, or any of the District Programs, please stop by our office, call me at 724.548.3425 or email me at [dr Rupert@co.armstrong.pa.us](mailto:dr Rupert@co.armstrong.pa.us) Please visit our new webpage at [www.armstrongcd.org](http://www.armstrongcd.org) or like us on Facebook

## **Resource Conservationist – Erosion and Sedimentation**

**Holly Dill** - [hadill@co.armstrong.pa.us](mailto:hadill@co.armstrong.pa.us)

**Phone: 724.545.3626**

My name is Holly Dill and as of August 2017, I am the Armstrong Conservation District's Erosion and Sediment Control Technician. I graduated from Gannon University in May 2017 with a BS Degree in Biology with a minor in Environmental Science. Prior to my graduation I held internships with the PA DEP and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The primary goal of my job is to prevent sediment pollution to Waters of the Commonwealth in Armstrong County. This goal is achieved by reviewing plans for earth disturbance projects, providing technical assistance in the design, construction and maintenance stages of projects, performing site inspections, investigating complaints, engaging the public and regulated community in education and outreach events, and also attending training events.

Thus far in my career I have reviewed eight erosion and sediment control plans, reviewed two NPDES plans, one General and one Individual, and investigated three complaints. I have performed fifty site inspections within Armstrong County and have also accompanied my counterparts in Indiana and Clarion counties on their site inspections.

In the upcoming months I have several training events scheduled. After my training period concludes, I am also planning two workshops. The purpose of the workshops is to assist both earthmoving contractors and engineers in the design, permitting, construction, and maintenance stages of their projects.

Some of my new and ongoing major projects include:

### **SR422 Wray Plan Road Cut Project**

This project is in Manor and Kittanning Townships on S.R. 0422. The purpose is to improve roadway safety and efficiency by altering the roadway alignments for Ping Wing Hollow Road, Wray Plan Road, and Lasher Road. This site is covered by a General NPDES permit until 2021 but is expected to be completed prior to that date. Total disturbed acres for this project is 18.9.

### **Spaces Corner Waterline Extension Project**

Rayburn Township Joint Municipal Authority has completed their project which allowed for the extension of water service to 160 residents in Rayburn Township. Approximately 31,000 feet of 8-inch waterline pipe, a 200,000 gallon storage tank, and a pump station were installed. Customers along Iron Bridge Road, McMillen Road, Cowanshannock Road, Johns TV Road, Lower Hays Road, Hays Hollow Road, Anderson Creek Road, Mechling Road, Sloan Hill Road, and State Route 28/66 now have public water.

### **Sloan Hill Waterline**

In addition to the previous Spaces Corner Waterline Extension Project, Rayburn Township Joint Municipal Authority has also completed another waterline project known as the Sloan Hill Waterline. This project involved an Individual NPDES Permit with a total disturbance of 4.01 acres. More residents along Sloan Hill Road, State Route 28/66, Hankey Lane, Mechling Road, McCauley Falls Road, and Painter Road now have access to public water.

### **Former Ford City Facility Slurry Lagoon Area**

PPG Industries, Inc. is in the permitting process of an environmental remediation activity for the PPG Slurry Lagoon Area located off of State Route 128 in Cadogan and North Buffalo Townships. The project involves installing a groundwater interceptor trench, a seep collection system, and a system to treat collected water that discharges into the Allegheny River. The total project acreage for this site is 152 acres. I will be working closely with the DEP Southwest Regional Office to protect our waterways.

I also have several smaller projects that I routinely inspect. If you notice a problem or have a concern regarding an earth moving project, please feel free to contact me.



Stormwater bio retention basin



Infiltration trench with rock filters

## **Dirt, Gravel & Low Volume Roads Specialist**

**A Gregg Smith - [agsmith@co.armstrong.pa.us](mailto:agsmith@co.armstrong.pa.us)**

**Phone: 724.545.3610**

The Dirt Gravel & Low Volume Roads Specialist is responsible for administering the Dirt, Gravel & Low Volume Roads Program (DGLVR) within the County. I have a degree in Civil Engineering Technologies and have been certified as a DGLVR Specialist through multiple trainings and workshops. I work with applicants to develop plans for projects and assist with the logistics of project work whenever possible. I am responsible for keeping all records of projects and maintaining an inventory of all completed and current work sites using a GIS system. Project inspections are done prior to work starting, during construction and when site work is completed. A portion of the annual DGLVR Program funding is required to be used for Training & Education purposes. The District applies these Training and Education funds toward demonstration construction projects and the purchase of equipment for the municipalities to borrow. This policy allows us to provide additional monies toward ESM construction and place more ESM techniques onto the roadways.

### **Dirt, Gravel & Low Volume Roads Program (DGLVR)**

A statewide program passed into law in 1997, as Section 9106 of the PA Vehicle Code. The program was established to reduce sediment and dust pollution by utilizing Environmentally Sound Maintenance (ESM) practices generated by unpaved roads. A local Quality Assurance Board (QAB) consisting of members from the PA Fish & Boat Commission, USDA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the District review and score project proposals and recommend which projects should be funded by the District. The District makes grants to the municipalities to perform ESM work on their roads. To be eligible for these grants, an employee or official responsible for the work for the municipality must attend a two day training workshop on ESM practices. The attendee remains qualified to participate in the program for five years before additional training is required. In 2015 the Program was expanded to include any paved or tar and chipped road which has an average daily traffic count of less than 500 vehicles. The Program funded 28 projects during the 2017 construction season. Two of these projects involved installing aquatic organism passages (AOP) across the stream. An AOP is used to replace a pipe which is normally used. The AOP provides a bank width opening and allows the aquatic life to travel further up the stream. The municipality receives a larger opening under their road which reduces flooding concerns and damage to the roadway. Another project involved fixing the drainage on one road which would wash out another road below it and place large amounts of sediment into the stream along with creating costly road repairs to municipality. A unique ESM technique known as a bank bench was installed with minimal cost by reshaping and

reusing an old abandoned logging road. To date, the program has assisted local municipalities apply ESM practices along 266 project sites by installing:

- 974 cross pipes
- 23 stream culverts
- 38,900 feet of piping
- 165,500 feet of under drains
- 775,000 sq. ft. of ditch stabilization
- 1,263,000 sq. ft. of vegetative management

### **2018 DGLVR Season**

Twenty seven projects are scheduled for the 2018 construction season totaling \$948,000.00 along with some District demonstration projects. A regional ESM training is scheduled in late March. Additional information about the DGLVR Program and a list of the 2018 projects can be found on the Armstrong Conservation District website.

### **Elevated Sand Mound (ESM) Design**

The District offers ESM design services if you are applying for an On Lot Sewage Disposal System Permit. You can contact me directly at 724 545 3610 or the District at 724 548 3425 for additional information.

### **MOBILE ENVIRONMENTAL DISPLAY (MED) Program**

The District debuted our Mobile Environmental Display (MED) in August 2017 at the Great Dayton Fair. Through a grant provided by the Colcom Foundation the District was able to build a 24' traveling exhibit to assist the District with our education and outreach mission. The EQT Foundation partnered with the Armstrong County Conservancy Charitable Trust and provided the District with a MED towing vehicle. The first MED exhibit is titled, "H2Oh! on the Go!", and is used to educate and promote the importance of water and resource conservation. Our MED travels to elementary, intermediate and secondary schools and compliments the curriculum by providing an interactive hands on experience. Our exhibit attends public gatherings, fairs, local festivals and community events. Since the release in August, the MED has been "On the Go!" for 51 days in 2017. We visited 18 schools, 3 county fairs, 3 festivals, 9 public events and 1 Envirothon. To date, more than 5,000 people have visited the MED and has been overwhelmingly received. The MED was the feature article of the Tribune Review – Living Section newspaper on August 21, 2017. If you have an event you would like the Mobile Environmental Display – H2Oh! on the GO! attend in 2018, contact the District for more information and availability.











The Mobile Environmental Display was made possible through the generosity of the Colcom Foundation. The Colcom Foundation's primary mission is to foster a sustainable environment to ensure quality of life for all Americans by addressing the major causes and consequences of over population and its adverse effects on natural resources."

"The EQT Foundation in partnership with the Armstrong Conservancy provided a towing vehicle for the Mobile Environmental Display. This towing vehicle is powered by Pennsylvania produced clean burning compressed natural gas. EQT is committed to contributing to the social and economic vitality of the regions where EQT employees live and work. By strategically providing financial, in kind and human capital. EQT seeks to promote the growth of strong, livable communities – an essential component of the company's long-term business success. The EQT Foundation is the primary driver of that effort. The EQT Foundation's environmental priorities are to support the preservation of local natural resources and encourage residents and businesses to employ acceptable conservation techniques and activities to minimize adverse impacts on the environment."

"The Armstrong Conservancy was founded in 1982 and operates a charitable trust. The Conservancy mission is to establish and deliver programs of the highest quality that enable the protection of land through education, purchase, easements, and by partnering with individuals and organizations having similar goals. The Conservancy has been able to preserve more than 1,200 acres in Armstrong and Clarion counties."

These partnerships showcase how economic development and conservation efforts can work hand in hand to sustain our natural resources. Continue to visit the District website and follow us on Facebook for future updates and location of the Mobile Environmental Display.

### **Resource Conservationist – Agricultural Conservation / Nutrient Management**

**Jessica Schaub - [jschaub@co.armstrong.pa.us](mailto:jschaub@co.armstrong.pa.us)**

**Phone: 724.545.3628**

I coordinate the Armstrong County Agricultural Land Preservation Program, review Nutrient Management Plans, and perform fieldwork as an Agricultural Conservation Technician. I also coordinate the Armstrong County Envirothon, Annual Tree & Seedling Sale, and act as the Coordinator for the Armstrong County Animal Response Team. You can contact me by phone at 724-545-3628 or email me at [jschaub@co.armstrong.pa.us](mailto:jschaub@co.armstrong.pa.us)

## **Nutrient Management**

Armstrong County has 11 agricultural operations that have current Act 38 approved Nutrient Management Plans for a total of 4,000 managed acres. I am currently working with 1 farmer in Kittanning Townships to develop their Nutrient Management Plans.

A farm is required to get an Act 38 Nutrient Management Plan if they are a Concentrated Animal Operation (CAOs). CAOs are defined as operations where the animal density exceeds two animal units per acre on an annualized basis (AEU). An AU is defined as 1,000 pounds of animal live weight. However, farms with less than 8AEUs are not required under this law to have an approved Act 38 Nutrient Management Plan regardless of the animal density on the farm.

## **Manure Management**

Every farm in Pennsylvania that land applies manure, whether they generate the manure or import it from another operation, is required to have a written Manure Manual Plan. For farms not defined as Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) or Concentrated Animal Operations (CAOs), Manure Management Plans can be prepared by the farmer. Manure Management Plans do not have to be submitted for approval but must be kept on the farm and made available upon request to DEP or the local county conservation District.

Pennsylvania Chapter 91.36 addresses pollution control and prevention at agricultural operations. Chapter 91.36 refers to the DEP Manure Management Manual (MMM) as containing standards for development of a Manure Management Plan. The MMM is available to assist farmers to develop a written Manure Management Plan.

The Armstrong Conservation District will host a Manure Management Workshop on February 20 and March 20, 2018 for farmers in Armstrong County. I will continue to work individually with farmers to create Manure Management Plans and hold workshops in the County as needed.

## **ACT Program**

I work with the NRCS staff at the Conservation District to assist producers and landowners with implementing Best Management Practices on their land. Funds from the PA Growing Greener Program, REAP, and other federal programs have provided cost-share incentives to farmers wishing to install Best Management Practices.

The Armstrong Conservation District is continuing to help farmers install best management practices (BMPs) in the Campbell Run Watershed (DEP Growing Greener Grant). Campbell Run Farms installed streambank fencing, riparian forest buffer, stream crossing, and a manure storage facility. We are currently working on implementing additional agricultural BMPs for their operation. Howard Boarts will install stream crossings and streambank fencing in 2018.

The Armstrong Conservation District is worked with 2 farmers to install BMPs on their farms in the Roaring Run Watershed. Ron Baker and Joe Vigo installed the following agricultural BMPs: Heavy Use Area Protection, Waste Storage Facility, Roofs & Covers, Roof Runoff Management, Underground Outlet, Critical Area Planting/Mulching, Water Control Structure, Fence, Livestock Pipeline, Watering Facilities, Animal Trail & Walkways, Pumping Plant, Spring Development, Access Road, Stream Access, Riparian Buffer, Subsurface Drainage, Water Control Structure, Rock Lined Channel, and Streambank Fencing.

The Armstrong Conservation District is continuing to help 2 farmers install agricultural best management practices (BMPs) in the Garretts Run Watershed. The agricultural BMPs could include up to 1 Heavy Use Area with Manure Stacking Facility, 1 Manure Storage Facility, Watering Facilities, Stream Crossings, and Streambank Fencing, and 2 Act 38 Nutrient Management Plans.

The Armstrong Conservation District was awarded a Growing Greener Grant for the 2016 application round for Paul Stubrick's Farm in Kittanning Township to install agricultural BMPs such as Heavy Use Area with Manure Storage along Spra Run.

The Armstrong Conservation District helped 5 farmers fill out REAP applications in 2017 for a total of \$195,480.00 in tax credits. The Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Program allows farmers and businesses to earn tax credits in exchange for "Best Management Practices" (BMPs) on agricultural operations that will enhance farm production and protect natural resources. Eligible applicants may receive between 50% and 75% of project cost as state tax credits for up to \$150,000 per agricultural operation.

### **Armstrong County Agricultural Land Preservation Program**

The Armstrong County Agricultural Land Preservation (ACALP) Board consists of seven board members that reside in Armstrong County; Bill Kronen, John Bennett, Paul Stubrick, Spurgeon Shilling, Terry Bowser, Marlene Kammerdiener, and Troy Goldstrohm.

The purpose of the program is to protect viable agricultural lands by obtaining agricultural conservation easements, which prohibit the development or improvement of the land for any use other than agricultural production. This program provides up to \$2,000/acre compensation to landowners in exchange for them to voluntarily give up the right to develop their private property.

The ACALP Board and the County Commissioners purchased 5 agricultural conservation easements from the following landowners; Suzanne and Edgar Bruce (Burrell Township), Meredith Patterson (Kiskiminetas Township), Scott Morrison (South Buffalo Township), George and Marsha Kepple (Sugarcreek Township), and Richard



Shirey (Redbank Township) for a total of 486 preserved acres. The ACALP Board is currently working on purchasing an agricultural conservation easement from Richard Shirey for 53.35 acres located in Redbank Township.

### **Armstrong County Animal Response Team**

The Armstrong Conservation District is working with the Armstrong County Emergency Management Agency and the PA State Animal Response Team (SART) to develop a County Animal Response Team in Armstrong County. The Pennsylvania State Animal Response Team (PA SART) was created through a private-public partnership to serve as a unifying network of organizations, businesses, federal and state government agencies, and individuals that supports the prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery for emergencies affecting animals. Because disaster response needs to happen at a local level, PASART builds County Animal Response Teams (CARTs) across the state.

The goals of the CART program are to facilitate a rapid, coordinated and effective response to any emergency affecting animals and to minimize the economic impact of emergencies affecting animals. One example of the role of a CART would be in the event of a large scale evacuation where homeowners would not be permitted to keep their pets with them at temporary shelters. CART would coordinate with local emergency managers to activate holding areas to temporarily house pets during the evacuation. CART would also be called out to help rescue livestock in an emergency such as a flood, barn fire, or a livestock trailer that overturned on the highway.

In 2008, ACART received a corral trailer, a 7 x 16 utility trailer, and a generator from PASART. In 2009, we received a \$500 purchase order from PASART to purchase emergency care and supplies for displaced pets. PASART also provided us with 30 animal cages and a large animal rescue glide. In 2010, ACART received 15 dog/cat collars, 20 dog leads, 2 Ketch-All poles, and 1,000 identification collars/bands. In 2011, ACART received \$383 from PASART to purchase emergency care and supplies for livestock. ACART also received a livestock rescue sling. In 2012, ACART purchased rope, livestock halters, swine panels, and sorting poles. All of the items that came from PASART were provided using funding from the federal Dept of Homeland Security, as awarded to them by PEMA. ACART Volunteers donated medical and office supplies in 2012. We received 2 small animal glides from PASART in 2014.

ACART was activated by 911 for the first time in 2012, once in 2013, 5 times in 2014, 6 times in 2015, 0 times in 2016 and 1 time in 2017. In order to succeed, we need volunteers who are willing to donate their time and services to help animals at the local level. Participation in the program is completely voluntary and training is available through PASART. If you are interested in volunteering your time or resources, please contact me at 724-545-3628 or e-mail [jjischaub@co.armstrong.pa.us](mailto:jjischaub@co.armstrong.pa.us). For more information on PA SART or to register to become a volunteer, please visit [www.pasart.us](http://www.pasart.us).

## **Armstrong County Envirothon**

Run Watershed, J. H. Hickman Surveying, Keystone Station, Elderton State Bank, EQT Foundation, Senate Engineering and Apex Energy, LLC. Ford City Subway donated lunches to the students and volunteers.

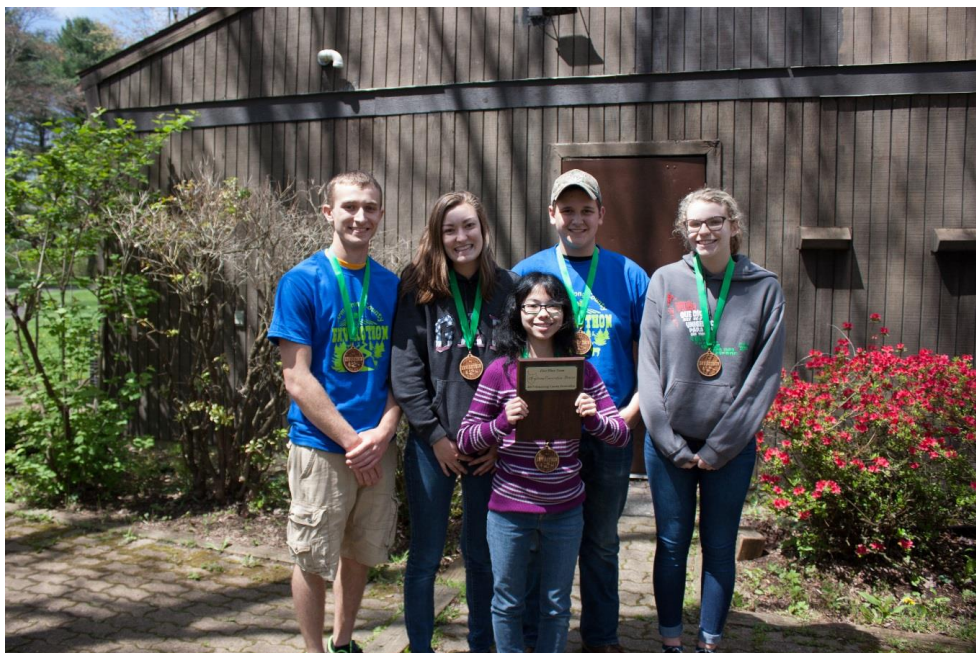
The 12<sup>th</sup> Armstrong County Envirothon was held at the Crooked Creek Environmental Learning Center on April 26, 2017. Ten teams of high school students from Armstrong High School, Apollo-Ridge High School, Leechburg High School, Lenape Tech School, and West Shamokin Jr. Sr. High School competed against each other in the event.

The Envirothon is designed to give students an opportunity to acquire and demonstrate their knowledge of environmental resources and their connection to each other and human activities. The students are challenged in the areas of aquatic ecology, forestry, soil / land use, wildlife, and a current environmental issue. The 2017 current environmental issue was "Agriculture Soil and Water Conservation Stewardship."

Technical expertise was provided by the following individuals: Grover Pegg and Karlee Kocon (US Army Corps of Engineers) at the Aquatics station; Gary Fujak and Rod Burns (PA Game Commission) at the Wildlife station; Laurel Hoffman (Kittanning NRCS) at the Soils and Land Use station, Dr. Holly Travis (IUP) at the Current Issue station; and John Brundege (DCNR) at the Forestry station.

Financial sponsors of the 2017 Envirothon are the Arrowhead Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Young & Associates, JESCAR LLC, NexTier Bank, Armstrong Sportsman League, Cowanshannock Creek Watershed, Crooked Creek Watershed, Bankson Engineers Inc., Roaring Run Watershed.

The West Shamokin High School winning team represented Armstrong County at the Pennsylvania State Envirothon at University of Pittsburgh Johnstown (UPJ) on May 23 and 24, 2017.



### **First Place from West Shamokin High School**

Ethan Adamson, Emily Cornman, Melody Trudgen , Matt Petras, and Sydney Dailey



### **Second Place from Armstrong High School**

Cole Wolfe, Mike Kunst, Cole Hickman, Josh Bowser, Mallory Bearer





### **Third Place from Armstrong High School**

Elizabeth Schawl, Megan Slagle, Laurie Enders

The next Armstrong County Envirothon will be held on April 25, 2018 at the Crooked Creek Environmental Learning Center. Competitors must be enrolled in grade levels 9 through 12 or equivalent home education program ranking. Teams comprising of five students are tested in the five subject areas including aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife, and a current issue. A new current issue subject is chosen each year.

If you are a business or an individual and would like to donate to the Envirothon, please contact Jessica Schaub at 724-545-3628 or e-mail [jschaub@co.armstrong.pa.us](mailto:jschaub@co.armstrong.pa.us). For more information about the Envirothon, please visit [www.envirothonpa.org](http://www.envirothonpa.org).

### **Annual Fruit Tree and Seedling Sale**

As a service to the area landowners, the Armstrong Conservation District conducts an annual fruit tree and seedling sale in April. The fruit trees and seedlings offered each year are dependent on the availability at the nurseries.

We sold 323 fruit trees and 4,300 seedlings for in 2017:

<b>Apple:</b>	Buckeye Gala, Cameron Select Honeycrisp, Idared, Nova Spy, Shizuka
<b>Apricot:</b>	Harogem, Sugar Pearls
<b>Cherry:</b>	Black Pearl, Danube, Kristin
<b>Peach:</b>	Contender, Redhaven, Sugar Giant, White Lady
<b>Pear:</b>	Seckel, Shenandoah, Sunrise
<b>Plum:</b>	Queen Rosa, Ruby Queen
<b>Seedlings:</b>	American Common Persimmon, American Elder (Elderberry), American Hazelnut, American Red Pine, Colorado Blue Spruce, Douglas Fir, Eastern White Pine, Norway Spruce, White Flowering Dogwood, Wild Black Cherry.



The Armstrong Conservation District also provides an annual donation of evergreen seedlings to all the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students in Armstrong County. These total over 900 seedlings distributed. We would like to thank Mr. Steve Misera and his students from Lenape Tech Natural Resources Department for all of their help to package the trees. The Annual Tree Sale and Arbor Day distribution would never be successful without their support and assistance. Thank you!

If you would like to receive an order form or if you would like to offer any purchase suggestions for next year, please contact Jessica Schaub at the Armstrong Conservation District Office at 724-545-3628.

### **2018 AMERICORPS MEMBERS**

**Heidi Krigar - AmeriCorps /** [hakrigar@co.armstrong.pa.us](mailto:hakrigar@co.armstrong.pa.us)

**Catherine Schnur - AmeriCorps /** [cmschnur@co.armstrong.pa.us](mailto:cmschnur@co.armstrong.pa.us)

**Phone: 724-545-3658**



My name is Heidi Krigar, and I am serving my first term as a Pennsylvania Mountain Service Corps member (a local initiative of AmeriCorps). From August 24, 2017 through August 10, 2018, I will be serving 1700 hours with the Armstrong Conservation District. I work closely with our Agricultural Technician, Jessica Schaub, who is serving as my supervisor during my internship. There is much I aspire to accomplish during my service with the Armstrong Conservation District, and I look forward to learning new things from the district staff.

The AmeriCorps National Service Movement engages thousands of Americans of all ages and backgrounds in a domestic Peace Corps. The members serve their communities in the areas of education, environment, public safety, and human needs

and receive a living stipend, educational scholarship rewards, and a wealth of experience. Located in Southwest and Southcentral Pennsylvania, PMSC provides service opportunities through nonprofit and government organizations across a 16,000 square mile region.

In the first six months of my AmeriCorps service term, I have been involved with many of the Armstrong Conservation District's programs. These programs include Agriculture, Watershed, and Dirt, Gravel, & Low-Volume Roads. The following report is a brief description of my involvement and contributions to each of the listed programs to date.

### **Watershed & Water Quality Activities**

On August 14, 2017, the Armstrong Conservation Districts' Mobile Environmental Display (M.E.D.) made its debut at the Dayton Fair. In the months to follow, the display had made numerous appearances at various schools throughout Armstrong County, providing students with an educational experience on the importance of water quality and water characteristics. This educational display, along with related educational materials and activities, is facilitated by the District staff and AmeriCorps members.

The Armstrong Conservation District's Watershed program has continuous water monitoring devices called data loggers. These loggers give information of the waters conductivity, level, and temperature. There is also a pH reader that gives the pH, conductivity, temperature, and total dissolved solids. The benefit of using these devices together, is the increase in accuracy with our monitoring systems. Water sampling consist of Alkalinity and Chloride to determine if the water is acidic. The results of these two samples determine whether a stream is healthy enough to support aquatic life. The current AmeriCorps members will be involved with the data loggers program at the start of the 2018 Spring season.

### **Agriculture Program**

In the first half of my service term, I have been most involved with the District's Agriculture Program. Nutrient Management Specialist Jessica Schuab serves as my on-site supervisor and welcomes my assistance with her numerous projects. In September, construction began on two of Jessica's Growing Greener grant projects. Ron Baker, a beef-cattle farmer of the Roaring Run watershed, received assistance in constructing a manure storage/heavy use area as well as two streambank crossings on his farm in Apollo. Dave Campbell, a dairy farmer of the Campbell Run watershed, received assistance in constructing a large manure storage area on his farm in Ford City. I took part in assisting Jessica Schaub and John Bohonak (NRCS) with surveys required for construction at the project sites. Additionally, I provided Jessica with photographs of the ongoing progress at the construction sites. These photographs were used for documentation purposes that are required for the construction checks Jessica preformed throughout the duration of these projects. As each of these projects came to



an end, I took part in assisting Jessica organize and submit invoices that were provided by each of the farmers. Through my involvement and experience with the Growing Greener projects, I have come to understand the need and the importance of these state-grant programs. Each project has provided me with a wealth of new information, and a wonderful learning experience.

In addition to Jessica's Growing Greener grant projects, I have also been highly involved in the Farmland Preservation Program. This year Jessica is continuing to preserve Richard A. Shirey's Farm and has successfully purchased an additional 53.35 acres for easement. Upon the successful purchase of the 53.35 acres, I completed the baseline documentation to prevent further development from occurring on the property.

### **Fall Conservation Tour 2017**

In addition to her Agriculture-based Programs, there are many other projects that Jessica partakes in. Her role in organizing the Fall Conservation Tour had allowed me to make many contributions to the 2017 tour. I quickly learned that there is a great deal of planning that goes into the Fall Tour event. My first assignment was to coordinate a route for the bus to navigate. During my route planning, I had to account for the distance between each stop, while paying close attention to the drive-time and chronemics of the presentations given at each of the tour stops. I was also given the responsibility of creating an event schedule which listed all six stops and the allotted time at each stop along the tour. I was then able to put this schedule into a formal "schedule of events" document to provide to the participants of the tour. Lastly, on the day of the tour I was able to partake in my long-time hobby of photography. I then provided the Leader Times with a quality group photo for their corresponding article of the 2017 Fall Conservation Tour.

### **A-CART**

In September of 2017, I represented the Armstrong County Animal Response Team (A-CART) at the second annual Paws & Claws event in Vandergrift. The event is a benefit for various local animal rescues, and includes vendors, contests, raffles, and a pet parade! During this event, A-CART was set up with a full display table where the public could purchase "Pet-Alert" stickers as well as access additional information regarding A-CART and volunteer opportunities.

### **Crooked Creek Environmental Learning Center**

A significant portion of our environmental education efforts are focused at the Crooked Creek Environmental Learning Center. At the ELC, children and adults alike are educated on environmentally-focused subjects during various weekend events, field trips, summer camps, and ELC work-days. Additionally, Armstrong County high school students who have superior environmental knowledge are eligible to compete in the annual Envirothon, hosted every spring by the Conservation District. District staff along

with the AmeriCorps member also attend the monthly Crooked Creek steering committee meetings.

### **Training Opportunities**

Since the beginning of my internship, I have had the privilege to attend many informational conferences, meetings, and trainings with the Conservation District. The following list contains the events I have attended.

1. September 20, 2017-Armstrong Conservation District Board Meeting
2. Project Grass Field Day & Pasture Walk @ Kananga Farm
3. Nutrient Management round-table meeting @ Mercer
4. No Till, Cover Crop, & Soil Health Conference @ Hermitage
5. Nutrient Management Annual Conference @ Clarion
6. Nutrient Management Training @ Cambria
7. January 18, 2018-Armstrong County Commissioners Meeting

### **Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Roads Program**

A major component of the Conservation District is DGLVR program. This program consists of environmentally-sensitive road maintenance practices, as well as funding of these practices for eligible municipalities of Armstrong County. This program assists in the prevention of stream pollution caused by runoff and sediment from a municipality's public roads. The Conservation District receives funding each year to award to eligible municipalities so that they may perform specific road maintenance. Funding awarded by the Conservation District typically covers the cost of project materials, while equipment and labor expenses are provided by the Municipality.

The Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Roads Program was a very large component of the District's 2017 Fall Tour as we highlighted three of the DGLVR program projects during tour stops.