



PERRY COUNTY  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

# 2021 Annual Report

## 2021 Board of Directors

Chair, Farmer Director—Oscar Campbell, Newport PA  
 Vice Chair, Farmer Director—Mel Weaver, Ickesburg PA  
 Treasurer, Public Director—Larry Gildner, Duncannon PA  
 Commissioner Director—Gary Eby, New Bloomfield PA  
 Farmer Director—Ken Martz, Duncannon PA  
 Public Director—Mike Clark, Newport PA  
 Public Director—Dave McLaughlin, Elliottsburg PA  
 Associate Director—Lloyd Byers, Liverpool PA  
 Associate Director—William Shilling, Liverpool PA  
 Associate Director—Shawna Weller, Loysville PA  
 Associate Director—Grant Finkenbinder, Duncannon PA  
 Associate Director—Scott Flanders, Liverpool PA  
 Associate Director—Marsha Snyder, Blain PA



## 2021 District Staff & Corresponding Programs

Sally Tengeres—District Manager

April Skethway—Administrative Assistant

Neil Imes—Resource Specialist

Erosion & Sediment Control Program, Dirt & Gravel, Low Volume Road Program and Farmland Preservation Program

Kristie Smith—Watershed Specialist

Watershed Specialist Program, Environmental Education, Keep Perry County Beautiful Coordinator, Recycling and Solid Waste Program Coordinator

Lauren Leinbach—Ag Resource Specialist

Chesapeake Bay Program and Nutrient Management Program

Ben Smith—Ag Resource Specialist

Nutrient Management Program, No-till Drill Rental Program Coordinator

## 2021 NRCS Staff

Kevin Morgan—District Conservationist

Samantha DiLorenzo— Soil Conservationist

Don Graybill— Engineering Technician

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## 2021 District Board Members

A Tribute to  
Jonas K. Stoltzfus  
~1943-2021~

“Jonas was an instrumental member of the agricultural community within the County and served as the Ag-Land Preservation Board Chairman for three decades. He was a man of many talents and passions, from beekeeping to poetry, in addition to raising grass fed beef cattle with his wife Judy on their family farm just outside of Blain, PA. Jonas has left us with a legacy of kindness and stewardship of the land that will never be forgotten.”



*Jonas and his wife Judy*



*Oscar Campbell,  
Chairman, Farmer Director*



*Mel Weaver,  
Vice Chairman, Farmer Director*



*Larry Gildner,  
Treasurer, Public Director*



*Michael Clark,  
Public Director*



*Ken Martz,  
Farmer Director*



*Dave McLauhlin,  
Public Director*



*Commissioner Director  
Gary Eby*

## 2021 Associate Board Members

(From left to right)  
Lloyd Byers,  
Grant Finkenbinder,  
Scott Flanders,  
William Shilling,  
Shawna Weller and  
Marsha Snyder.



*“A sincere thank you from all of us here at the Conservation District for your continued support of our programs.”*

## Cooperating Agencies & Contacts

Perry County Ag-Land Preservation Board—William Lyons, Chairman

Natural Resources Conservation Service—Kevin Morgan, District Conservationist; Samantha DiLorenzo, Soil Conservationist and Don Graybill, Engineering Technician

Penn State Cooperative Extension—Dr. Liz Bosak and Becky Kaucher

Farm Service Agency—Bobbie Jo Zimmerman, CED

PA Fish and Boat Commission—Richard Morder, Conservation Officer

PA Game Commission— WCO Scott Frederick and WCO Michael Smith

PA Dept. of Environmental Protection— Patrick McDonnell, Secretary

PA Department of Agriculture—Russell Redding, Secretary

DCNR Bureau of Forestry—Luke Book, Service Forester

State Conservation Commission—Karl Brown, Executive Director

Department of Transportation— New Bloomfield HQ

County of Perry Maintenance Manager—Marty Smith

Community Partnerships RC&D—Sam Price, Executive Director

Chesapeake Bay Foundation—Bill Chain, Agriculture Program Manager

Keystone 10 Million Tree Partnership—Brenda Seiglitz, Program Manager

PP&L Community Roots Program—Donna Haskins, Penn E&R

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful—Shannon Reiter, President



*William Lyons,  
Chairman  
Ag-Land Preservation  
Board*



*Kevin Morgan, NRCS  
District Conservationist*

## 2021 District Staff



*Sally Tengeres,  
District Manager*



*April Skethway,  
Administrative Assistant*



*Neil Imes,  
Resource Specialist*



*Kristie Smith,  
Watershed Specialist*



*Lauren Leinbach,  
Ag Resource Specialist*



*Ben Smith,  
Ag Resource Specialist*

*- Mission Statement -  
Conserving Natural Resources For Our Future*



*This was a lucky find at the Land  
Judging event, a one-cent coin piece  
from the 1800s!*

## A Message From The District Manager

This year marked the loss of two of Perry County's strongest ag leaders, Jonas Stoltzfus and Oscar Campbell. Oscar was a traditional dairy farmer and Jonas raised organic grass fed beef. They may have had different views on farming, but protecting Perry County farms and agriculture for future generations was a shared passion.

Jonas Stoltzfus served on the Perry County Agland Preservation Board since its inception. He was there in 1988 when a small group of farmland preservation enthusiasts began brainstorming on how to best protect the most productive farmland in Perry County using a new Farmland Preservation Program created by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. After numerous program changes, feast or famine funding levels, and years of advocating for the preservation of farms later, we have now achieved 9,854 acres preserved with 369.46 acres initiated in 2021 that are expected to be under ag easement by the end of 2022. It saddens me that he will not be here to celebrate that 10,000 acre achievement with us, yet his legacy is written into those 71 farms and will remain there in perpetuity.



*Jonas Stoltzfus and William Lyons*



*Oscar Campbell and Michael Clark*

Oscar Campbell served on the District Board from 1993-2021 as Chairman for 28 of those 29 years. Driving those impressive numbers was a dedication to live up to the responsibility of serving as a director by advocating for the Conservation District and Perry County agriculture, steering productive Board meetings, supporting staff through advice and event participation, and of course delivering entertaining stories at the annual dinner meeting.

Their perseverance and long-term dedication to advancing the mission of their respective organizations set the gold standard for leadership and blazed a path for Perry County's next crop of leaders. They will be missed, fortunately the example they set through their service remains for us to follow. Conservation Districts were established under the concept that local leadership is best able to identify the needs of a

community and meet those needs. We are blessed in Perry County to have people like Oscar and Jonas who were willing to accept those challenges and step up to serve their community. As a result, the District remains in capable hands under our current roster of directors and associate directors. My gratitude goes out to Michael Clark for serving as the Conservation District's new Chairman and to William Lyons for serving as Chairman on the Perry County Agland Preservation Board.

I would also like to recognize and thank our energetic team for their tireless efforts to meet program goals, overcome inevitable set backs and adjust to changes in workload requirements to pursue the mission of conserving natural resources for Perry County's future. As always, I wish to thank all of our Directors, Associate Directors, partners, volunteers and supporters. We can accomplish so much more when we work together. As we head into 2022, I look forward to all the new opportunities and challenges that may arise. I hope you enjoy reading about the District's 2021 activities and accomplishments as much as we enjoy sharing them with you!

Sincerely,

*Sally*

# Our 2021 Highlights



January— Kristie & Lauren donate blood to the Central Pennsylvania Blood Bank at the New Bloomfield Firehouse



January— Lauren & Ben attended the Keystone Ag Show



January/February— Site visits with NRCS for the Growing Greener Grant Streambank Stabilization Project at Nevin Rice's Farm



April— Significant progress was made this year on the riparian buffer along Montour Creek at the Lynn Sheaffer Dum Memorial Park in Elliottsburg. The trees are doing well and 'Monty' the turtle is loving his streamside habitat!



May—Sally was recognized with an FFA Honorary Chapter Degree and Kristie was recognized with an FFA Citation of Appreciation at the West Perry FFA Banquet held at the Saville Brethren in Christ Church pavilion



August—Sally served sweets and treats at the No-till Group meeting at the Burkholder Family Farm



August—At the Perry County Fair, (left) Nevin & Mary Anne Rice are recognized and awarded the title of Farmer of the Year and (right) Oscar & Winnie Campbell are recognized and awarded the title of Friends of the Fair



October—Dickinson College students learn about soil health at Little Germany Farm in Elliottsburg, home of Dave & Patti McLaughlin



## State Programs

### Dirt & Gravel, Low Volume Road Program

The Perry County Conservation District partners with the State Conservation Commission (SCC) and the Penn State Center for Dirt and Gravel Road Studies to improve roads to reduce pollution that directly impacts Perry County's streams. Since 1997, Perry County has spent \$1,662,911.38 on Dirt and Gravel Road (DGR) projects and \$627,994.39 on Low Volume Road (LVR) projects. Funding is provided through yearly allocations by the SCC and distributed to each qualified county based on potential workload. The District then distributes the funds to eligible municipalities. Eligibility depends on meeting project criteria and the program requirement that each municipality have a current employee(s) working directly on the project that has attended the two-day Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance Workshop. During 2021, three dirt and gravel road projects were completed - Shumaker Road in Jackson Township implemented practices to improve road surface runoff, subsurface runoff, road ditch stabilization and added approximately 1,284 tons of driving surface aggregate (DSA). Greenwood Township's project on Reward Road Phase 3 consisted of adding approximately 900 tons of DSA. Juniata Township's project on Walker Hill Road consisted of installation of cross pipes and approximately 800 tons of DSA. All three projects reduced the sediment and dust entering Perry County's streams while leaving each road more drivable and easier to maintain.



*Reward Road– Phase 3  
Greenwood Township  
Culvert Project*

### Erosion & Sedimentation Control Program

Pa. Code Title 25 Chapter 102 was created to require persons proposing or conducting earth disturbance activities to develop, implement and maintain BMPs to minimize the potential for accelerated erosion and sedimentation during construction and plan for post construction stormwater management. Through a delegation agreement with the Department of Environmental Protection, the Perry County Conservation District reviews Erosion and Sediment Control Plans (E&S Plans). Each E&S plan is reviewed for technical adequacy under Chapter 102 requirements. A Federal regulation that works in conjunction with the state E&S program is the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Program. This regulation requires earthmoving activities disturbing one acre or more to obtain an NPDES permit which is reviewed by the District. In 2021, thirty one (31) Erosion and Sediment Control Plans were reviewed and approved. On an average year, Perry County typically processes 10-15 NPDES Permits. However, in 2021 twenty two (22) NPDES Permits were processed which caused a great deal of review time in the office. Forty (40) construction site inspections were conducted with a total of 212 technical assistance contacts. As a result of e-permitting, which went live in early 2021, the District was tasked with learning the requirements and review process of this new permit. District technicians attended numerous trainings on procedures and guidelines for implementation.



*Rockville Estates Stormwater Infiltration Basin*

## Nutrient Management Program

The Nutrient Management Act (Act 38) has been in effect since October of 2006. The State Conservation Commission has oversight of the state-wide Nutrient Management Program and conservation districts are delegated to administer it at the county level. Act 38 requires concentrated animal operations (CAOs) to develop and maintain a site specific Nutrient Management Plan (NMP). A CAO is defined as an agricultural operation with 8 animal equivalent units or more where animal density of all livestock on the farm exceeds 2 animal equivalent units per acre suitable for manure application on an annualized basis.

The goal of the program is to protect and maintain soil and water quality through the development and implementation of NMPs and agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) on livestock operations that: possess livestock, generate, store, and/or spread manure. Examples of BMPs may include: a certified concrete manure storage tank, or HDPE lined lagoon, a roofed solid manure stacking area, a composting facility, reinforced animal stream crossings, concrete barnyard areas, a vegetated or riparian buffer between the barnyard and a well or stream, rain gutters to divert clean water around barn yard areas, fence to improve pasture management and/or prevent animals from accessing streams to protect stream banks from erosion, but there are so many more! The District is delegated to administer the Pennsylvania Nutrient Management Program in Perry County. Currently, there are 15 Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) 15 Concentrated Animal Operations (CAOs), and 4 Volunteer Animal Operations (VAOs) in Perry County. The District is responsible for reviewing and approving NMP amendments, reviewing updates, conducting status reviews, investigating complaints, maintaining technician certification, and providing education and outreach within the community. In 2021, the District received 7 NMPs for triennial review and approval: 3 CAFOs, and 3 CAOs and 1 VAO; one of which was from the Juniata County Conservation District's Ag Technician to complete their NM program certification. The District has a Nutrient Management Reciprocal Agreement in place with the JCCD that allows certification reviews and shared workload if needed. The Perry County Conservation District conducted 10 annual status reviews on 5 CAFOs, 4 CAOs, and 1 VAO.



*Manure Storage*

## Technical Assistance Efforts

The Pennsylvania Resource Enhancement and Protection Program (PA REAP) is a State Tax Credit program administered by the Pennsylvania State Conservation Commission. The District offers fee based assistance to farmers seeking help with completing an application and determining BMP and Plan eligibility. The District charges a fee of \$50 to verify three or less REAP BMPs, and \$100 for four or more REAP BMPs per application and/or required plan, as well as a \$150 fee per Plan reviewed for completeness. In 2021, the District verified plan completeness for 2 operations as well as meeting with 8 farmers to discuss what plans they need to have in order to be eligible for REAP.



*A no-till drill, one of the most popular equipment purchases*

## Chesapeake Bay Program

The Chesapeake Bay Program was created by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to promote and facilitate the installation of conservation best management practices (BMPs) in the Bay watershed to support the Pennsylvania Watershed Implementation Plan efforts. Through this delegation agreement, the District provides technical assistance on an as needed basis, assists with REAP applications and associated BMP verifications, conducts 50 farm inspections to check that required agricultural plans are in place, receives and processes complaints, and offers educational outreach and workshops. Conservation plans are also written for farms that are going through the preservation process or are already preserved but need an updated plan.

During 2021, 6 plans were written covering 244 acres of farmland.

In the spring of 2021, the District completed 2 initial inspections for the Chesapeake Bay Program's fiscal year of 2020-2021. During the second half of 2021, 45 initial inspections were completed, 14 of which were able to produce the plans needed for their operation. The inspection list is created by randomly pulling 2 farm operations from each township. These operations are sent a letter, after July 1st, informing them that they have been selected for an initial inspection. That letter asks the operator to call and schedule an appointment for the District to come out and complete the inspection. During the inspection, the plans are reviewed or a determination is made on what plans are needed. If the reviewed plans are up-to-date and administratively complete at the time of the inspection, the inspection is closed and marked complete. If plans cannot be produced or plans are not administratively complete, the operation is given 90 days to write the plans themselves or hire someone to write the needed plans. In addition to the inspections, the District also offered educational events that included an evening meeting that focused on managing residue and a pasture walk. Both events are described within this document. The District provides free technical assistance to farmers who are seeking assistance. Issues can range from soil erosion, compaction, poor pastures, to animal heavy use areas. Assistance starts with a farm visit and proceeds with either practice recommendations being made or connecting the farmer to the person with the expertise level needed. We received 2 on-farm technical assistance requests as well as multiple calls where assistance was provided over the phone.



*A midden left behind by an active earthworm*

## District Programs

### No-till Drill Program

The District has four No-till Drills that are available to be rented out to residents in Perry County. Three of which are 10ft wide John Deere 1590 no-till grain drills, which are primarily used for seeding large crop fields either to be harvested for grain, silage, or to serve as cover crops destined to be used as a green manure. No-till & cover crops help to keep the soil intact, improve soil water retention and infiltration, retain nutrients for the next crop to be planted, keeps the soil biology active between

primary crop harvests, and reduces the presence of weeds. The fourth no-till drill is a smaller Land Pride LP 606 with a 6ft wide grain bin that is convenient for reseeding pastures, small crop fields, and small hayfields. While this drill can plant the same grain or cover crop seeds as the larger John Deere drills, it has an additional seed bin for planting a wide variety of light and fluffy native grasses such as Brome or



*The District's Land Pride drill demo at Land Judging*

of 1,862.9 acres in no-till throughout Perry County! 541.5 of these acres were in cover crops. The District's drill committee met to discuss rental fees, the number of program drills, the maintenance status of each drill, the use of County-wide Action Plan funding for the purchase of a new drill, and which model to purchase. An Esch 5612 Drill was chosen to be added to the fleet, a first in the program's history. This was impart due to the Esch's unique features such as: a 12ft planting width, 5.5 inch row spacing, foam pad seed meters, and its ability to rotate into a narrower towing and transport width without sacrificing planting width. The committee also made a change to the Drill Rental Program to include an additional per diem fee of \$25.

### **NRCS Partnership**

During fiscal year 2021 (October 1st through September 31st), the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff in Perry County was comprised of two full time staff members, 1 part time employee, and a volunteer. Conservation planning highlights included writing 35 conservation plans on over 3000 acres and documenting conservation practices applied on over 80 plans for a total of over 3900 acres. Installation highlights consisted of the following cropland practices and enhancements; 1.5 acres of grassed waterways and diversions were installed to prevent gully erosion (5), 3,500 acres of conservation crop rotation/ no-till farming/ cover cropping, and over 150 acres of nutrient management. On farmsteads and livestock operations the following conservation practices were completed; 4 waste storage facilities, multiple waste transfer systems, over 5000 square feet of heavy use protection, several hundred feet of underground outlet, and an energy use reduction project to a poultry operation. On pastures the following grazing practices were completed; installation of 1000 feet of fence to improve grazing operations, 200 feet of stabilized animal trails, and 10 acres of prescribed grazing. On forest land multiple contracts were completed with nearly over 500 acres treated either through planning or practice implementation (shelterwood cut or herbicidal spraying). This year 21 contracts (CSP & EQIP) were secured that will provide Perry County producers/ landowners with over \$730,000 to treat resource concerns and improve water quality in Perry County. We are expecting another banner year in contracting with over 25 applications that have been accepted and a busy construction season with all these new contracts. We were also the sponsoring agency for 4 Capital RC&D grazing grants that will fund pasture improvements on these operations. The work done by NRCS in conjunction with the Perry County Conservation District and other partners has provided a variety of benefits to the environment, the private landowners, and the public right here in Perry County. Submitted by Kevin Morgan, NRCS District Conservationist.



*Kevin Morgan and Samantha DiLorenzo of the NRCS Perry County Field Office instruct at the demo pit during Land Judging*

### **District Highlights**

#### **Annual Tree Seedling Sale**

In preparation for spring, the District promotes and publicizes our Annual Tree Sale through the use of brochures sent out to a lengthy list of previous customers and a paid advertisement featured in the local newspapers the first week of March in hopes of attracting new buyers. The seedlings that are selected each year are native species that have been recognized to grow well in the average backyard habitat, as well as the wildflower seed mixes that are offered. These are all intended to benefit our local birds and wildlife. Proceeds from the sale are used



*A bundle of White Pine seedlings*

towards environmental education programs sponsored by the District, such as the Envirothon & Land Judging events. On average, over 3,000 trees are sold each spring. We graciously thank the community for their continued support of this program and we look forward to organizing it every year!

In 2021, we offered four types of conifers: Norway Spruce, Colorado Blue Spruce, American Arborvitae, and Eastern White Pine. The deciduous varieties that we offered were Sugar Maple, Red Oak, Sawtooth Oak, American Hazelnut, and Pink Lady Winterberry. Under the umbrella of 'Habitat Enhancers' we offered a Northeast Perennial and Annual Wildflower seed mix, a Butterfly and Hummingbird seed mix, and a new Showy 32 variety wildflower and grass seed mix. A fan favorite, though, were the wooden Bluebird Nesting Boxes hand-crafted by the local West Perry FFA Chapter.



*Hand-crafted Bluebird Boxes*

## Our District YouTube Channel

For the second year in a row, our YouTube Channel proved to be an excellent tool to give three meaningful educational activities the attention they deserved. The first project was a 'Tree Chat' Envirothon training video produced in Big Spring State Park within the Tuscarora State Forest with DCNR Service Forester & Educator Luke Book. He explained the many aspects of forest ecology, introduced the names of several invasive species, and elaborated on the importance of mature forests and their relationship to water quality. He also talked about what careers in the forestry field are like and how to get involved for students who were interested. The second project was the first of its kind, a virtual Perry County Envirothon Awards Ceremony recognizing all the student teams that participated and placed third, second, or first during the event. It was very well received and shared to our District Facebook page as well so the students could share their 'winnings' with family and friends. The third project was an all-inclusive effort between the District, NRCS, a local flower business owner Heather Stogner, and the Perry County Beekeepers Club to celebrate National Pollinator Week during the month of June. Throughout the video, viewers meet their local contacts for pollinator programs, listen to some tips and tricks for pollinator garden establishment, and learn about the unusual pollinators that don't get enough credit for all the work that they do. This video was also posted to our District Facebook page and has been viewed over 100 times! Making these connections with nature and technology was a very productive endeavor, one we will continue to develop well into the future. Interested viewers can type Perry County Conservation District PA into their YouTube search bar.



*Luke Book, DCNR Service Forester*



*Heather Stogner, owner of Free Range Blooms*



*A noisy cicada!*

## Grazing Group Pasture Walk

The District held their first pasture walk with the newly formed grazing group on October 13, 2021. This was a morning meeting hosted by Merlin and Loren Martin of Spring Meadow Farms in Elliottsburg. We started the walk in a field that had recently been planted with Triticale after this past summer's annual grazing mix, then ventured back into permanent grass paddocks. We dug holes to look for compaction layers and soil health indicators and discussed how landscape plays a part in paddock management. We discussed the use of subsoiling to prevent animal trails from the constant traffic from milking twice a day. We had a demonstration of a Batt-latch gate kit which is the reason that the Martin's are able to move their cows 3 times between milking sessions. There were 9 people in attendance.



*'Digging for soil health' in the Martin's pasture*

## No-till Group Meeting

The District held their summer no-till group meeting on August 5, 2021. This was an evening meeting hosted by Ryan and Sean Burkholder of Burkholder Family Farms in Millerstown. The Burkholder's had their planter, drill, and combine out for participants to look at. Most of the evening's conversation centered on the planter. Ryan discussed the new closing wheel set up that he was trying out on one row unit and why he was trying that out for a season.



*'No-till Talk' among Perry County producers*

The spring slug struggle came up in discussion which led to additional thoughts and comments on Integrated Pest Management and how pests run in cycles. The idea of vertical tillage as a slug management tool was considered but the general consensus was that the detriments to the soil from the additional tillage outweighed the potential slug reduction benefit. There were 22 people in attendance.

## 2021 Capital RC&D Spring Cover Crop Survey

In November of 2020, three members of the ACES NRCS staff conducted the Capital RC&D Fall Cover Crop Survey within Perry County. Their team returned in the Spring of 2021 and observed 457 crop fields total. The rate of fall cover cropping with spring verification in Perry County was reported as 56.5%.

<b>CROP</b>	<b>RESIDUE &lt;15%</b>	<b>15-30%</b>	<b>30-60%</b>	<b>&gt;60%</b>	<b>TOTAL OBSERVED</b>
BEANS	1.4	2.7	17.8	78.1	146
CORN	5.4	3.0	8.7	82.9	298
FORAGE	0.0	20.0	0.0	80.0	10
VEG	66.7	0.0	0.0	33.3	3
ALL CROPS	4.4	3.3	11.4	80.9	457

<b>% WINTER COVER</b>	17.5%	<b>% TRAD</b>	39.0%	<b>% CC LATE</b>	0.0%
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## County-wide Action Planning

An integral part of Pennsylvania's Phase 3 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan is the development of individual County Action Plans (CAPs). Throughout 2021, the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission worked with consultant Herbert, Rowland & Grubic Inc. (HRG) to develop Mifflin, Juniata, Dauphin, and Perry County-wide Action Plans. Meetings were held virtually each week between all of these entities and by the close of September, each County had an encompassing document that listed their priorities, target areas, and projections pertaining to Best Management Practices and Implementation objectives to reach pollution reduction goals at the local level. During the fourth quarter, these CAPs were submitted to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for final review and consideration for block grant funding. The first round of Perry County's goals and objectives were selected to be funded in the amount of \$390,320.00. These items were the purchase of an additional no-till drill, a cover crop incentive program, and Phase 1 of the Baken Creek Alternative Restoration Plan. The District also received \$20,000.00 dedicated to BMP verification through remote sensing technology to be performed by the Chesapeake Conservancy and \$10,000.00 to hire a summer Intern. These deliverables and funding streams are due to begin in the early spring of 2022. We are looking forward to continuing this effort to reduce water pollution in Perry County!

## District Outreach & Education

### Presentations & Displays

We strive to reach more students and members of the public with our programs by participating in community events, providing in-classroom demonstrations, submitting press releases to the local newspapers, conducting presentations as requested, and posting to social media and our new YouTube Channel. During 2021, we were able to provide 18 trainings with a total of 1,329 participants. These trainings included the 'Tree Chat' video for Envirothon, the National Pollinator Week video for the public, a Creek Ecology workshop for students, and a Cover Crop & Equipment Demo day for farmers. 36 mass outreach activities were also conducted with a range of topics including the importance of soil health, Keep Perry County Beautiful activities, and the 'Have You Herd?' display on backyard livestock manure management plans at the Fair.



*2021 District display at the Perry County Fair*

## Erosion & Sedimentation, Dirt and Gravel &

### Low Volume Road Program Outreach

Perry County routinely performs technical assistance throughout the year. In 2021, 212 technical assistance contacts were made by either phone conversation, email, or meetings held in-office or on-site. The District continues to assist residents of Perry County for compliance with Chapter 102 regulations. In 2021, project site visits with technical assistance provided by PSU Center for Dirt and Gravel Road Studies, were held at Shumaker Road Jackson Township and Reward Road – Greenwood Township. These technical assistance visits helped municipalities with design and implementation of projects.

## Newsletters

We use the District Winter and Summer Newsletters to promote our events and programs and also provide information on current issues and topics where multiple inquiries have been received. Both our summer and winter newsletters include updates and offerings associated with the Perry County Action Plan, a calendar of events planned and updates from our local NRCS office. Our Winter 2021 Newsletter offered up how to access our environmental education video series on our very own Perry County

Conservation District YouTube Channel and new podcasts featuring local

environmental stories from Perry County farmers on Anchor. The District's Annual Tree Sale was featured along with a list of seedlings being offered and how to make the purchase. The No-Till Drill Program section included our updated fee schedule along with the number of acres planted using the District's four no-till drills in 2020. We included information about state requirements for winter manure spreading and the definition of winter under the Nutrient Management (Act 38) and Manure Management Programs (Chapter 91). 'What You Need To Know About Chapter 102' addressed soil erosion, sediment pollution, the frame work for erosion and sediment control regulation, and steps required to maintain compliance. The District's Summer 2021 Newsletter focused on agriculture. Topics that included diversity in Cover Crop mixes, a discussion on vertical tillage, a REAP update, and a Chesapeake Bay Inspection Program reminder. We teased the 'Let's Talk Residue' and Grazing Group meeting as upcoming summer events and spotlighted our Farmland Preservation Program for nearing the very impressive 10,000 acre milestone. A National Pollinator Week video and a tree planting opportunity were also shared. The Spotted Lanternfly has reached Perry County and guidance on how to report them was included.

## Envirothon

The District sponsors the Perry County Envirothon competition each spring, which is open to all students in grades 9 through 12. The winning county team also gets sponsored to travel and compete at the State Envirothon. "The mission of the PA Envirothon is to provide students with the knowledge and tools necessary to address the natural resource challenges of today's world."

In 2021, the traditional activities within the Envirothon program both at the county and state levels were still in a transition period that called for some creative solutions. Here in Perry County, we decided to 'host' the competition on Earth Day April 22 with the 'divide and conquer' concept. District staff split up and ran the event separately at each school district but all in the same time frame. The tests were standardized from the PA State Envirothon Board, which made the overall logistics much easier. The only testing station in Perry that had an interactive hands-on component was the Forestry segment, identifying parts of a tree using Red Oak tree cookies. Greenwood High School had 7 teams, Newport had 1 team, West Perry had 7 teams, and Susquenita had 2 teams. When the results were in, Greenwood's Team 1 was the overall County winner with members Luke Lower, Will Finkenbinder, Carter Bennett, Kolby Seibert, and Andrea Clark. They went on to compete in the virtual State Envirothon on May 10 and placed 34th out of 58 other competing teams. Carter Bennett was also chosen as the winner of the T-shirt design contest and received a \$25 prize and a framed copy of his wearable artwork.



2021 Perry County Envirothon Winning Team: Greenwood High School students (L to R) Carter Bennett, Luke Lower, Will Finkenbinder, Kolby Seibert, and Andrea Clark with Advisors Krista Pontius and Mike Clark



2021 Envirothon T-shirt Design Winner: Greenwood H.S. student Carter Bennett

## Land Judging

The District serves as the coordinator and sponsor of the county-wide land judging competition for students in grades 9 through 12 each fall. Land judging sites are chosen on a rotating basis with local farmers. This event is designed to provide a hands-on learning experience for students so they can effectively evaluate the composition of soil and determine the 'best use' for the land and select appropriate best management practices. In 2021, the event was held at the Martz Farm in Duncannon on November 9, which turned out to be a beautiful sunny day. In total, we had 50 students compete from West Perry, Greenwood, Susquenita, and Newport High Schools. There were five stations: The Demo Pit was presented by Kevin Morgan and Samantha DiLorenzo of the NRCS Perry County Field Office, the Alternative Energy segment was presented by Mike Rash of Morrison Geothermal Inc., the two Test Pits were run by District staff, and the Farm Talk and No-till Drill demo was presented by Ken Martz and District staff. Andrea Clark of Greenwood took first place and was the recipient of the Steel Trowel Trophy. Emily Clark of Greenwood took second place and Leroy Brofee of Greenwood took third place. Congratulations to these young people! We want to thank Ken Martz, who is one of our District Board Members, and his wife Sandy and family for graciously hosting this event on their beautiful farm.



*2021 Land Judging winners (front L to R) Greenwood students Andrea Clark, Emily Clark, and Leroy Brofee. (Back L to R) Kristie Smith, Samantha DiLorenzo, Sarah Keller, Ken Martz, Larry Gildner, and Commissioner Gary Eby.*

## Spotted Lanternfly Outreach

The District was a recipient of a Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture grant in the fall of 2021 to monitor the population of Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) in the eastern part of the county and provide outreach to residents. Circle traps, sticky trap accessories, and educational signage were purchased and 12 'hot spots' were identified along the railroad corridor running through the County to be monitored every Friday afternoon starting in September through November. High populations of SLF were observed in the circle traps throughout the Marysville & Duncannon areas.

Outreach and trap resources will be offered to residents in those areas and monitoring will continue in the spring of 2022.

Information on how to 'help stop the spread' was also sent out within our 2021 District Summer Newsletter and posted several times to our District Facebook page.



*A circle trap and sign on a maple tree in Newport Borough*



*Spotted Lanternfly egg masses on a yellow birch tree at Susquenita Elementary School*



*An adult SLF found in the parking lot of Susquenita High School*

## Watershed Initiatives

### Keep Perry County Beautiful

The District serves as the coordinator for the local Keep Perry County Beautiful (KPCB) affiliate of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful. Programs such as the Great American Clean-up, Pick Up Pennsylvania, the International Coastal Clean-up, and America Recycles Day are shared events by all of the local affiliates throughout the state.

In 2021, we were able to continue our regional involvement with Vintage Tech for electronics recycling through Dauphin County's Recycling Center and it has remained a free resource opportunity for Perry County residents. We were also able to get back in the Juniata River on August 4 to do some much needed 'tire extraction' with the use of a \$500 mini-grant received through Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful. A group of 24 dedicated Keep Perry County Beautiful volunteers and Perry County Conservation District staff came armed with kayaks and canoes for the day working between the Newport River Bridge and the Howe Township Boat Access. 124 tires were removed from the river bed along with 22 bags of trash and approximately 4,000 pounds of random junk including 2 grocery carts, 1 (rather nice) bike, 2 trash cans, 2 5-gallon buckets, 1 rain barrel, several pieces of pvc piping, 8 hubcaps, 1 inflatable mattress, 5 torn floatation tube toys, 16 golf balls, lots of scrap metal, several pieces of aluminum siding, 1 length of rain spouting, numerous glass bottles & aluminum cans, a broken boogie board, lots of broken fishing equipment, a Newport wrestling t-shirt, a bottle of laundry detergent, 3 lawn chairs, a fisher price playhouse, and a frisbee. The photo album was shared on the District's Facebook page and received many positive comments.

Our annual Tire War was held at the Loysville Community Club on September 18 with help from 15 volunteers and Tyrone Township. Perry County residents brought in 590 tires to be properly recycled within our 4 hour timeframe. The breakdown was 543 car tires, 31 truck tires, and 16 tractor tires. Huntingdon came in first with 1,573 tires, Juniata was second with 1,193, Perry in third, and Mifflin in fourth with 283.

In celebration of the County's Bicentennial, we organized a tree planting on October 24 in partnership with the Friends of Spring Township, the Perry County Historical Society, and the Lynn Sheaffer Dum Memorial Park committee. Even though the day started off as cold and rainy, we accomplished to plant 100 trees along the property line closest to route 274. Many hands were at work on this day and the trees were 'in memory' or 'dedicated' to someone special. The seedlings were courtesy of the Keystone 10 Million Tree Partnership, as part of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.



*Scenes from the Juniata River Clean-up and our awesome volunteers all together on August 4*



*Tire War volunteers at the Loysville Community Club on September 18*



*Sheltering trees at the Lynn Sheaffer Dum Memorial Park in Elliottsburg during the Bicentennial Celebration on October 24*

## Keystone 10 Million Tree Partnership

'Clean Water Grows on Trees' is the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's slogan for this state-wide initiative that is designed to assist partners in producing more local community tree plantings that result in meeting the challenges of reducing pollution, which supplies cleaner water for Pennsylvania.

In 2021, we hosted two landowner distribution tree seedling giveaways. The first one was the Arbor Day Giveaway that took place on April 30th at the District office and the other was hosted at the Lynn SheafferDum Memorial Park Bicentennial Plaza in Elliptsburg on October 28. Each giveaway resulted in 250 seedlings finding a new home within the County.

We also assisted Saville Township with planting 44 seedlings in the square of Ickesburg as part of a stream buffer and 'pocket park' on October 12.

On October 24, Perry County celebrated our Bicentennial at the Lynn Sheaffer Dum Memorial Park in Elliptsburg, PA. Ten different varieties of trees and shrubs were planted with help from many volunteers, it was a very special day shared by all. All the shelters, stakes, and seedlings were provided to the District from the K10 Partnership. Over the years, this program has provided the leverage and resources it takes to keep the momentum going for planting buffers in our County!



*Arbor Day Giveaway—April 30*



*Scenes from the Bicentennial Planting*

## County Assistance

### Farmland Preservation

In 2021, Perry County Ag Land Preservation Board preserved 190.88 acres on the Lorena Rice farm. Mrs. Rice's farm is a crop and livestock operation located in Blain, PA. The farm is located within the Ag Security Areas of Jackson Township and SW Madison Township. The Rice Agricultural Conservation Easement was fully executed on January 14th, 2021. The Ag Land Preservation Board received State Board approval on the Clarence & Lois Martin Easement on December 16th, 2021. The Martin Farm is a crop and livestock operation in Shermans Valley in Elliptsburg, PA that will add 146 preserved acres to the program. The Board is also working on a generous 280 acre easement donation on the Nevin & Mary Ann Rice farm in Blain, PA. The Rice donation is a crop and dairy operation that is contiguous to 235 previously preserved acres.

Dennis & Brian Cauffman's farm, also a crop and livestock operation, is contiguous to 136 previously preserved acres that we anticipate completing in 2022. Lastly, the NRCS Federal Regional Conservation Partnerships Program (RCPP) has created an opportunity to apply for purchasing a Federal Ag Conservation Easement on the Daryl and Wanda Brookhart Farm, a crop and livestock operation in Liverpool, PA. Looking forward to 2022, we anticipate a total of 10,000 acres preserved!



*The Lorena Rice Farm, 190 acres preserved on January 14th, 2021*

## Recycling & Municipal Solid Waste

The District serves as the Recycling Coordinator for the county. Grants are processed to obtain state support for educational outreach and program assistance. The PA Department of Environmental Protection is the cooperating agency. The county recycling options rely heavily on the township sites and their supporting groups. The municipalities, dedicated volunteers, the County of Perry, KPCB, and local businesses all work together to provide convenient recycling opportunities to our residents. In 2020, a total of 1,604.23 tons of materials (glass, plastic, paper, cardboard, aluminum, mixed metals, electronics, organics, and leaf/yard waste) from both residential and commercial operations were collected and reported within the county. During 2021, technical assistance efforts to re-establish a recycling program at the Loysville Community Center for Tyrone and surrounding townships faced issues due to the local service provider Advanced Disposal being bought out by Waste Management and the continued struggles of increased hauling & labor fees, fuel prices, small-scale volume of material, and overall unsubsidized costs affecting rural areas. The feasibility of a key card system was discussed with Oliver Township but they decided that no action would be taken at this time due to the same challenges. Efforts will continue in 2022 and global markets are always in fluctuation. The District provides Solid Waste Planning and oversight for the county as we promote the implementation of the 2015 Solid Waste Plan. Administrative support is offered on an as needed basis to municipalities who create and implement their own ordinances. In 2021, outreach was conducted by phone and email to rebuild the list of members who are interested in serving on the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) for the upcoming 2025 Solid Waste Plan revision. The reported Perry County municipal waste tonnage collected was 12,874.3 tons.

## Awards & Recognition

### Keep Perry County Beautiful Volunteer of the Year

Roger Austin is a local resident of Elliotsburg, PA where he is a teacher and wrestling coach at West Perry High School. He began volunteering with PA Cleanways in 1989 by lending a hand with a roadside illegal dump clean-up through the Adopt A Highway initiative. Although Keep Perry County was officially established in 2009, Roger has volunteered with us every year (with over 30 years of experience, including his involvement with PA Cleanways in the past) and continues to offer his support. Just like the wizard behind the curtain, he's always in the background making the magic happen, coining his title as 'the illusive volunteer'! He is always instrumental in the process of getting the canoes ready for our annual Juniata River Clean-up, which is the most critical part of that entire operation. In addition to volunteering with us, he takes these stewardship efforts a few steps farther by inviting Keep Perry County Beautiful into his classroom to give presentations, has supported the student sports teams as they complete their road-side litter clean-ups as part of the academic community service program, and always comes prepared with a shovel during tree planting projects at the Lynn Sheaffer Dum Memorial Park. Roger is one of the nicest and hard-working people you will ever meet. The way he demonstrates his commitment, passion, and foresight to help the environment and the community is undeniable. He, and his son Max, are avid outdoorsmen and their skills and strength have been very much appreciated over the years! It is an honor and privilege to work beside Roger, as he provides the most sincere and positive, yet humble, example for others to follow in our corner of the world. We all agree that there needs to be more people like him! "Anything I can do to help, just let me know" is his signature response.



*2021 Volunteer of the Year Roger Austin and KPCB Coordinator Kristie Smith*



*Oscar W. Campbell  
1942—2021*

## ~A Tribute to Oscar Campbell~

A native Perry County farmer of Newport, Oscar served on the District Board for 29 years, providing his leadership for 28 of those years as Chairman. He was a true steward of the land, being one of the original pioneers within the County to adopt the use of no-till in his daily practice, which he continued for decades. Being a very vocal and diligent advocate for conservation, Oscar was recognized with the Cooperator of the Year Award in both 1976 & 1990 and received the 1996 Master Farmer Award & the Dairy of Distinction Award. He also valued the Farmland Preservation Program so much that he donated his acreage in 1999. Land Judging was his favorite District educational program, which he hosted on his family's Century Farm many times. Throughout his life, he also served on the local board of Sire Power, the Juniata Township Board, Newport School Board, the

Perry County Farm Bureau, and the Perry County Extension Board. When he became a retired dairy farmer and focused his energy toward volunteering in the community, Oscar & his wife Winnie were of strong assistance in the Antique Tractor show and parade at the Perry County Fair for 25 years. They were recognized as Friends of the Fair in August of 2021. Oscar was also a very talented wood-worker and he loved spending time with his grandchildren. He always had a great story to tell and appreciated a good laugh. Oscar will be remembered fondly and missed greatly.

To continue his support for the District after his passing, he asked those in our community to consider a contribution to the Perry County Farmland Preservation Program in his memory.

## Digging Into The District Archives

In 2020 & 2021, we had the time to organize, label, and sort hundreds of old photographs, slides, and files that had been boxed up and neglected for the last 20 years since things went digital. Seeing the finished collection, in chronological order from 1951 through 1999, really painted a picture of how the District has transitioned throughout the decades, but the core mission and unique programs have remained the same. We would like to give credit to Bill Briggs, Jim Bistline, and Tom Balthaser for their photography work when they were District partners. Without their fingers on the shutter button, all of these pictures would not exist. We hope you enjoy this little trip down memory lane!



*March 10,  
1963—Tree  
planting demo  
with FFA  
students at  
Glenn Smith's  
Farm*



*February 14,  
1966—Young  
Farmer's  
Program at West  
Perry. Sam  
Wagner, Bill  
Briggs, and  
brothers Don and  
Art Dum look at  
Soil Profiles.*

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