



THE CONSERVATION REPORT

(717) 240-7812

Cumberland County Conservation District

FALL 2004

Conservation District Presents 2004 Awards

At the annual Conservation District picnic in August, the Conservation District presented three conservation awards to some well deserving recipients. The Watershed Protection award was presented to the Pennsylvania Senior Environmental Corps (PaSEC) – Capital Region. The Pennsylvania Senior Environmental Corps is a community based organization that depends on lifelong experience, talents and time of seniors to address local environmental concerns. PaSEC – Capital Region is very active with watershed groups and performing the water monitoring for some of these groups. PaSEC – Capital Region has performed water quality monitoring on some of the agricultural best management practices grants the District has received. Their data is also posted in an online database for members to view and use for their interpretation.

The Conservation Organization of the Year award was presented to Brehm-Lebo Engineering, Inc. Brehm-Lebo Engineering, Inc. is a multi-disciplinary firm which offers a full range of civil and structural engineering, planning and surveying services for both the private sector and municipal clients. They have a staff of highly qualified and trained individuals that assures prompt, accurate results through a comprehensive approach to each project.

The final award was the Chesapeake Bay Clean Water Farm award presented to Todd and Leroy Chestnut. The Chestnut family owns and operates a large beef and crop operation outside Newburg, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, which consists of both owned and rented land. The Chestnut's run approximately 145 steers, 8 heifers, 100 cows, 65 calves and 3 bulls. They have been very involved with the Conservation District, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Farm Service Agency and have current conservation plans on both the owned and rented acreage which are followed closely.



From the left: Dianne Martin, Bill Apgar, and Carol Oman representing PaSEC; Todd Chestnut representing Chestnut Farms; Doug Brehm, Brian Resinger, and Greg Lebo representing Lebo Engineering Inc.



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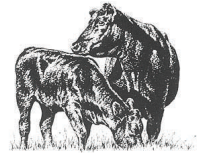
Project Grass Funds Available

Project Grass is a cooperative effort by local farmers and county conservation districts, with assistance from United State Department of Agricultural agencies to improve agricultural productivity throughout Pennsylvania. Project Grass originally had its origin in sixteen southwestern Pennsylvania counties, but in the last few years chapters have developed throughout Pennsylvania.

Project Grass's objectives are as follows:

- Enhance Pennsylvania's agriculture through better utilization of grasslands.
- Improve the economic position of Pennsylvania's farmers, particularly farmers working small farms.
- Achieve better utilization of land and water resources for improved environmental quality.

The South Central Chapter of Project Grass received a Growing Greener Grant in 2003 to assist producers in Cumberland and surrounding counties. These funds may be used for any best management practice that implements or complements a rotational grazing system—fence, water system, stream crossing, alleyway stabilization to name a few practices. The funding is a 75% cost share with 25% landowner match. All livestock producers are eligible to apply for this cost share program (beef, dairy, equine, exotic, sheep, etc.). The Cumberland County Conservation District is currently accepting applications for potential projects. If you are interested in submitting an application please contact the Cumberland County Conservation District at 717-240-7812 by December 31, 2004.



Cumberland County Envirothon

The 2005 Cumberland County Envirothon is in the planning stage and we are researching new sites to hold the event. Currently, the District uses two alternating locations for the event, Pine Grove Furnace State Park and Carlisle Fish and Game Association. Multiple sites allow the students to experience different locations each year rather than the same site year after year. A goal of the Conservation District is to come up with three or four sites that can become regular locations and be alternated every year. This is a process similar to the State Envirothon. For the 2005 Envirothon, the current issue is managing cultural landscapes. This topic hits close to home to Cumberland County with Gettysburg Battlefield located just to the south. This topic deals with issues related to what the landscape was like historically, including land use, wildlife etc. and how the land is going to be managed today.

The 2004 event was well attended with six schools, totaling 25 teams and 112 students. The Conservation District hired a caterer to provide a mid morning snack and lunch for all attendees and all participants received a Cumberland County Envirothon t-shirt. The final scores of the top three teams were close and the competition this year was very competitive. The Vermicious Knids from Cedar Cliff, placed third with a score of 308. Second place was taken by the Corn Chunks from Cumberland Valley with a score of 324. The 2004 Cumberland County Envirothon champions, with a score of 330, Bundle of Sticks from Cumberland Valley, represented Cumberland County at the State Envirothon on May 24 and 25, 2004 at the University of Pittsburgh, Johnstown Campus. The team placed 33rd out of 64 participating teams.

The District continues to try and get more schools involved in the Envirothon with a goal of having all High Schools eventually participating. If you would like more information about the Envirothon, please visit the District's website at



*2004 Envirothon Champions—
Cumberland Valley High School*

Cumberland County and the Chesapeake Bay Program

Cumberland County has been actively involved in PA's Chesapeake Bay Program since the signing of their first contract in 1987. Today, more than 15 years later, Cumberland County has signed 55 contracts with landowners and paid nearly 1.2 million dollars to assist with Best Management Practice (BMP) implementation.

Although the Bay Program has been a success in Cumberland County, the signing of the Chesapeake 2000 Agreement has spurred change across the County and the Commonwealth. As part of this agreement, PA has made a commitment to help remove the Chesapeake Bay from the federal Clean Water Act's list of impaired waters by 2010.

To help accomplish this goal, PA has developed a draft form of a new Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy. Based on new scientifically based water quality criteria, the Tributary Strategy establishes new nutrient reduction goals and identifies new Best Management Practices which are meant to help achieve the new goals.

Cumberland County, along with the other PA counties that participate in the Bay Program, is in the process of developing a county specific Bay Tributary Strategy. The individual county plans will provide the guidance necessary to help achieve nutrient reductions within each county. Cumberland's plan will identify the BMP's and methods which are best suited to the county, while complimenting the statewide strategy.

Although many new BMP's are being proposed, existing BMP's are an essential part of the Bay program and should continue to be so. Current structural BMP's offer incentives to farmers while helping to accomplish environmental goals. Many of the proposed BMP's will require farmers to make management decision changes with minimal tangible benefits. As many of you know, selling, delivering, and tracking these new practices will be an immense challenge, especially when considering the current funding levels and the 2010 deadline. However, if the nutrient reduction goals are not achieved by the deadline, the repercussions will be even less appealing. Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) may be established throughout the Bay watershed, imposing stricter regulations on industry and in particular the agricultural community.

Although Cumberland County realizes the challenges ahead, we will continue to push for financial and technical assistance for our agricultural producers. Although our core strategy will revolve around existing BMP's, we are excited about the possibility of utilizing new practices, methods, and strategies to help accomplish one unified goal...conserving the Chesapeake Bay and our natural resources!

A copy of the *Executive Summary of Pennsylvania's Draft Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy* can be accessed at the following web address:

<http://www.dep.state.pa.us/hosting/pawatersheds/chesapeakebay/docs/StrategySummary811.doc>

REVISED NOTICE OF INTENT/APPLICATION FORM FOR NPDES PERMIT

As of August 8, 2004, the Department of Environmental Protection has revised the Notice of Intent for coverage under the General NPDES Permit or Application for an Individual NPDES permit for storm water discharges associated with construction activities. The District will no longer accept any old NOI/Application forms after November 1, 2004. The new NOI/Application document number is 3930-PM-WM0035 Rev. 8/2004 and replaces all other versions of the form. Applicants should carefully read the instruction section to assure the NOI/Application is completed correctly. Administratively incomplete packages will be returned to the applicant for further information. The District review of the erosion control portion of the package does not begin until the package is deemed administratively complete. A letter from the District will be sent to the applicant notifying them their package is administratively complete. Standard review time of the erosion control plan from this point is 30 days.

Revisions to the NOI/Application reflect changes to new Department guidance policies. These changes help the Department collect and analyze data across the state. Listed below are some of these changes:

1. Sample notice letter to municipality and County with land use information questions.
 2. Latitude and longitude requirements and collection method.
 3. Form FP-001 Certification of Origin of Clean Fill.
 4. Type, source and location of any fill materials.
 5. Post construction storm water management section with best management practices identified.
- Identification of geology which provides a potential for contaminated run-off from the project site.

Copies of the revised NOI/Application form can be obtained on DEP's website at www.dep.state.pa.us under keyword "Stormwater". Please contact the Cumberland County Conservation District at 240-7812 with any questions regarding the use of the new NOI/Application form.



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TREE SEEDLING SALE

The Cumberland County Conservation District has scheduled the annual tree seedling sale for April 14 & 15 2005. A mass mailing to customers who have ordered from the district at least once in the last three years will be sent out in February. If you haven't ordered from the Conservation District in the past and would like to receive an order form you can call the District Office at 240-7812 or email the district at www.cumberlandcd.com and you will be added to the mailing list.

Tree seedlings available for 2005 include: White Pine, Douglas Fir, Colorado Blue Spruce, Concolor Fir, White Oak, Red Maple, Sawtooth Oak and Serviceberry.

Myrtle Clumps and a northeast wildflower mix will be sold as groundcover and red oak acorns are available for those who want to start their own seedlings. Six varieties of flowering bulbs and tree shelters ranging from two to five feet will also be included in the list of items for sale. All profits from the tree seedling sale go toward environmental projects in Cumberland County.

Orders must be received at the Conservation District Office by March 29, 2004.

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