

# CRAWFORD COUNTY

## CONSERVATION DISTRICT

21742 German Road, Meadville, PA 16335 (814) 763 5269

# 2008 Annual Report



Looking at a Great Year!

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Crawford County Conservation District is to protect, conserve, and restore the natural resources of the county for present and future generations by actively seeking resources and partnerships to achieve these goals through voluntary cooperation.

## WHO WE ARE



**Crawford County Commissioners: Morris Waid, Jack Preston, & C. Sherman Allen**

(Photos, from Left) Commissioner Morris Waid at the District's Annual Dinner Meeting; Commissioner-Director C. Sherman Allen swearing in new Director Greg Kedzierski; Commissioner Jack Preston speaking at the District's Open House.

## Crawford County Conservation District

### District Directors



**District Directors: Sarah Sargent, Vern Knapp, Heidi Morehead, George Greig, Greg Kedzierski, Glenn Kenny, and C. Sherman Allen**

(Photos, from left) Chairperson Sarah Sargent doing a program, Vice Chairperson Vern Knapp at a District Annual Dinner, Secretary/Treasurer Heidi Moorhead at a "Maple Day" event, and Farm Director George Greig, Chairman of the Legislative Committee, about to present an award. Not shown: Farm Director Glenn Kenny.

**Associate Directors** : (No picture) Robert Agnew, Carol Custead, Andy Hyde, Ryan Nageotte, Jason Pears, Dennis Rynd, Matthew Shaffer, Rob Waddell, Lewis Walker



### **District Staff**

**(Photo, from left:)** Brian Pilarcik, Watershed Specialist; Lynn Sandieson, District Manager; Tracey Crawford, Agricultural Engineering Technician; Kathy Uglow, Environmental Educator, Maria Anderson, Erosion and Sediment Control Technician; Laura Dengler, Administrative Assistant, Kevin McCaslin, Nutrient Management Specialist

### **Transitions for the District**

The year 2008 saw some changes for the Crawford County Conservation District Board. Chairperson Phyllis Hoople retired from the board after 20 years of selfless volunteer service. Commissioner Roger Williams retired after 16 years of faithful service as Commissioner-Director, and Farmer Director Jack Dibble passed away in September of 2007. (Please see more information on these outstanding Conservation Leaders further on in this report.)

Long-time farmer director C. Sherman Allen was elected County Commissioner, and replaced Roger Williams as the Commissioner Director on the Conservation District Board. Associate Director Sarah Sargent was appointed to the board by the County Commissioners and was quickly voted in as Chairperson. We are also pleased to announce that Mr. Greg Kedzierski and Mr. Glenn Kenny have joined the board as Directors. Welcome!

### **What is a Conservation District?**

Conservation Districts are responsible for the conservation of soil, water, air, and natural resources within their counties. First formed by national legislation in the 1930s to combat the affects of the dust bowl's soil erosion, Districts are now found in every state and territory in the United States. In Pennsylvania, Districts are subdivisions of state government as defined by Conservation District Law. They fall under the umbrella of the State Conservation Commission.

### **How is the District Administered?**

The guiding principal behind Conservation Districts is that local people are best suited to identify and protect the natural resources in their areas. The Conservation District is administered by a local board of 7 Directors who are nominated by county-wide organizations and appointed by the County Commissioners to serve four-year terms. Board members serve their communities

voluntarily. They set the policy and the goals and objectives of the Conservation District. The District staff is charged with carrying out the conservation district's program.

## District Annual Dinner Meeting

The Crawford Conservation District held its Annual Dinner Meeting on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008, at the Blooming Valley United Methodist Church in Blooming Valley.

A catered luncheon was enjoyed by the 100 attendees, followed by a talk on Energy Conservation given by **Geoffrey Bristow**, Regional Manager of the Northwest Regional Office of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Energy and Technology, **(shown speaking in photo below right.)**

Director **Heidi Moorhead** served as Master of Ceremonies for the dinner, where Awards were presented to the following people for their outstanding accomplishments in Conservation:



**Wendy Kedzierski** of Allegheny College Creek Connections was awarded the Environmental Educator

of the Year award. Presenting the award on behalf of the Conservation District, Watershed Specialist **Brian Pilarcik** praised the excellence of Ms. Kedzierski's work to educate students of all ages about local stream and watershed issues. He also cited her cooperative spirit and willingness to help out with conservation projects wherever the need arises, including extensive work with student-led riparian plantings across the county.



This year's award for excellence in Conservation Farming was accorded to the **Hart Farm** of Cochranon, managed by **Al and Don Hart**. The award, presented by **Carl Pelino**, District Conservationist of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, is granted by the Conservation District to a farm operation that has employed Conservation Best Management Practices to conserve soil and protect water quality. In presenting the award to **Don and Donna Hart**, Pelino noted that the very first Conservation Farmer Award that the Conservation District ever gave – back in 1956 – was awarded to Al Hart, Don's father. Pelino said that the Hart's have a long history of installing traditional conservation practices such as drainage and cropland erosion control. They have distinguished themselves recently by employing more complex practices aimed at water quality management around barnyards and handling farm wastewater, accomplishments designed to protect local streams.



The 2007 Award for Excellence in Conservation Forestry was earned this year by **Dr. Henry and Elaine Burkholder** of Roundtop Farm near Meadville. In addition to having a long-standing history as good stewards of the forest on their 270 acre farm, the Burkholders have completed many forestry practices such as grapevine control, sustainable timber harvesting, and timber stand improvement. They are members of the Northwest Pennsylvania Woodland Owners Association, have been enrolled in the Pennsylvania Forest Stewardship Program since 1996, and

in the American Tree Farm Program since 2007. In announcing the award on behalf of the Conservation District, Mark Lewis, Service Forester for the DCNR Bureau of Forestry, praised the couple's commitment to forestry and the record amount of good practices they have energetically implemented in a short period of time.

On behalf of the Crawford County Conservation District Board, an award for Outstanding Service was presented to former Commissioner **Roger Williams**. Commissioner Williams was appointed Commissioner-Director for the Conservation District Board in January of 1992 and served until his retirement in December of 2007, a total of 16 years of Service.



In presenting the award on behalf of the Conservation District, District Manager Lynn Sandieson thanked Commissioner Williams for his outstanding conservation leadership, including helping with the District tree seedling sale, chairing the District's Legislative Committee, and stumping for the adoption of a County Farmland Preservation Program. "Commissioner Williams has supported Conservation District programs enthusiastically", Sandieson said. "He has always been dependable, rarely missing a meeting, and he cares deeply about conservation, community, and helping people. We are grateful for his service."

**Phyllis Hoople** also received an Award for Outstanding Service to the Conservation District, following 21 years as a Public Director on the Conservation District Board, the last fourteen of which she served as Chairperson.

In presenting the award on behalf of the Conservation District, Sandieson thanked Hoople for, "...Keeping the board energized, focused, and entertained through countless meetings, building our leadership skills and helping us all to come to a consensus as a group and get going to make things happen."

During her time as a Conservation District Director, Mrs. Hoople chaired the District Operations Committee and the Conservation Education Committee, and voluntarily used her vacation time to represent Crawford County at state meetings.

Sandieson praised Hoople for the instrumental role she played in promoting leadership, ethics, and professional development for District Directors and staff statewide, serving as co-chairperson of the State Conservation Partnership "Working for Tomorrow Leadership and Development Committee." "In doing so," Sandieson said, "she has made an enormous difference in developing district capacity in the state of Pennsylvania."



Mrs. Hoople also served on the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts Executive Board as Treasurer and Secretary, and was repeatedly elected to represent Northwestern Pennsylvania Conservation Districts as the NW PA Regional Director, Sandieson said. "She is taking away a plaque, but leaving us a legacy."

## Woodcock Creek Nature Center



The Crawford County Conservation District runs the Woodcock Creek Nature Center and Stainbrook Park, both located just north of Meadville on German Road in Woodcock Township. The District offers year-round educational programs for the public at the center, and keeps the park open in the summer for the enjoyment of Crawford County residents and visitors.

Kathy Uglow, Environmental Educator for the Conservation District, is responsible for setting up a wide variety of programs at the Nature Center. To see our current schedule of events, please check out the District's web site at: [www.crawfordconservation.com](http://www.crawfordconservation.com), or call Kathy at the Nature Center.

In 2008, we offered 36 programs to approximately 970 attendees. Listed below is a sampling of the programs offered. Thanks to all our program presenters for their time and expertise!



^DCNR Forester Mark Lewis does a winter tree ID walk



<District Environmental Educator Kathy Uglow during "Water Week" story hour

## 2008 PROGRAMS OFFERED:

"PA Fur Bearers", (Ryan Nageotte); **"Landscaping with Native Plants"**, (Scott Sjolander); **"Snowshoeing Adventure"** event, (Allegheny College Outing Club); **"Winter Bird Walk"** (Sarah Sargent); **"Great Backyard Bird Count,"** (Sarah Sargent); **"Winter Tree Identification"** (Mark Lewis); **"Maple Magic"** (*all-day* event, all staff); **"Rain Barrel"** workshop, (Brian Pilarcik); **"The Day Before Earth Day"** , (Recycling) (Brenda Schmidt); **"Bluebirds,"** (Andrew Troyer); **"Water Week—Source Water Protection"** ,(Diane Carson); **"Bees"** (Charlie Vorisek); **"Breakfast & Birds"** (Sarah Sargent); **"Bats"** (Terry Lobdell); **French Creek Sojourn** (two-day canoe/kayak event); **"Nature's Recycling—the Do's and Don'ts of Composting"** (Gloria Kelly); **"Looking at Bugs—Macroinvertebrates!"** (Darran Crabtree and the Crawford County Senior Environmental Corps); **"Family Fishing"** (Valerie Tarkowski and Brian Pilarcik); **"Bluebird House Building"** (Tracey Crawford) **"Butterflies"** , (Pat Lace); **"Map & Compass"** , (Brian Pilarcik); **"Potato Printing"** (Tracey Crawford) **"Summer Tree Identification"** (Mark Lewis); **"Basic Maps"** (Brian Pilarcik); **"Using the Compass"** (Brian Pilarcik); **"What is this Bug and Where Did it Come From"** (Mark Lewis); **"Nature's Recycling...the Do's and Don'ts of Composting,"** (Gloria Kelly); **"Bright Stars and Constellations,"** (Jim Lombardi); **"Fall Nature Scavenger Hunt"** (Allegheny College Interns); **"Fall Foliage"** (Mark Lewis); **"Bats"** (Terry Lobdell); **"Canine Rescue Dogs"** (Michelle Silka); **"Waterfowl Identification"** (Kevin Jacobs); **"Nature Inspired Writing: A Haiku Workshop"** (Heidi Blakeslee); **"Aerial Photos"** (Mark Lewis); **"Print Your Own Gift Wrap"** (Tracey Crawford)



Watershed Specialist Brian Pilarcik leads the French Creek Sojourn;

Laura Dengler shows how to make Maple Syrup (Maple Magic Day)



Tracey Dengler Crawford demonstrates Native American Maple sugaring (below left)



### Additional Nature Center Activities

**Self-guided Tree Identification Walk** - The Nature Center and adjoining Stainbrook Park has a self-guided tree identification walk set up by Mark Lewis of the DCNR Bureau of Forestry. There are trail keys in the Nature Center, and you may also access the trail key on the District's web site, [www.crawfordconservation.com](http://www.crawfordconservation.com).

**Bat Houses** - Bat expert Terry Lobdell has established a number of bat houses (**see photo, right, of Terry showing one of the houses at a Nature Center Program**) around the Woodcock Creek Nature Center. Our winged companions keep troublesome insects under control naturally. Bat houses are also for sale at the Nature Center.



**Native Plant Gardens** - The outside of the WCNC features native plant gardens as well as bird feeders. The natural setting provides a good spot to view wildlife.

**Interactive Displays** are always available at the Woodcock Creek Nature Center, and the displays are always changing. Some shown in 2008 were: A Touch Screen Environmental Quiz computer, Wetlands, Stormwater, Pervious Concrete, Integrated Pest Management, Insects, Freshwater Mussels, Energy Conservation, "Animal Groups" (touch board display), animal tracks display and play area, Maple Displays, Tree and Leaf Identification, Butterflies, and Birds and Birdsongs.

The district had help creating displays for the Nature Center this year from Matt Knittel, who created displays as part of his senior thesis at Allegheny College. Some of the display topics that Matt developed were: Your Environmental Footprint; Reduce, Reuse and Recycle; Water Usage and Conservation; Energy Usage and Conservation, Agricultural Best Management Practices and Farming to Lessen Environmental Impacts. A big thank you to Matt and to his faculty advisor, Dr. Eric Palant..

In addition to the displays, lots of free educational materials are available at the Nature Center for people of all ages and interests.

## Watershed Work

### **COMMUNITY WATERSHED INVOLVEMENT**

*The Crawford County Conservation District worked to provide watershed education to various schools, watershed associations, community groups, workshops, etc. Some of the most notable events were:*

**Educational Outreach Efforts** – The Crawford County Conservation District assisted with or led a number of educational programs around the county including stream investigations, classroom programs, as well as many others.

- Presented at the Earth Force youth training day at the Erie County Conservation District
- Coordinated an "Earth Day grocery bag project" with Valesky's and H&H Grocery Stores and the **Saegertown** and **Second District Elementary Schools**.
- Did "Watersheds" presentations for the First Grades at the **West End Elementary School**.
- Did presentations at **Conneaut Lake (K, 1, 2)**, **Saegertown (K, 1, 2)** and **West End (K, 2). Elementary Schools**.



- Manned an educational station and presented a *"Recycling Relay"* program at the **Pymatuning Sportman's Club Youth Field Day** on June 28. There were about 200 youths at the field day.
- Conducted *"The Great Secchi Dip-In"* at **Pymatuning and Conneaut Lake**
- Gave two presentations for **Creek Connections Summer Teachers' Institute** participants at the Nature Center.
- Hosted a display at the Crawford County Fair. Staff also served as Smokey Bear helpers at the fair.
- Gave a presentation about the Nature Center and our education programs to an Environmental Education class from **Allegheny College**
- Gave three afternoon programs for a group of eleven **home-schooled** children at the Nature Center.
- Did Enviroscope presentations for three groups of fourth graders at **Cochranton Elementary School**
- Provided a *"turkeys"* lesson/activity for 60 preschoolers from the **Cambridge Springs Head Start** and one class at the **Sunshine Preschool**.

**Clean Water Festival at the Pymatuning Waterfowl Expo** - On September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008 the District worked to help coordinate a Clean Water Festival at the PA Fish and Boat Commission Linesville State Fish Hatchery. The event included presentations on freshwater mussels, pesticides, reptile and amphibians, as well as much more. Nearly 800 participants attended the annual event.

**Titusville Middle School Field Day** - On October 9, 2008 the Crawford County Conservation District helped Mike Reynolds and Eric Mowrey of Titusville Middle School coordinate a field day for the entire 7<sup>th</sup> grade class. Over 100 students participated in a digital microscope investigation conducted by The Pitt Titusville and Clarion University Science in Motion, and a creek critter investigation led by the Conservation District, and a water chemistry station led by Allegheny College Creek Connections, as well as many other events.

**Conneaut Valley High School Nature Field Trip** – The District and the DCNR Bureau of Forestry hosted the Conneaut Valley High School Nature Field Trip at Stainbrook Park. Mr. Frank Bizjak brought students from the 9-12<sup>th</sup> grades to the Park for a day of hands-on education in watersheds, nonpoint source pollution, forestry, soils, wetlands, and wildlife.

**Green Tips Campaign** – The Crawford County Conservation District, in conjunction with Erie and Warren County Conservation Districts, developed a "Green Tips" conservation campaign for county residents. The project was funded by a PACD mini grant and a WREN grant. Through the program a series of conservation tips were developed in a TV commercial format on topics such as Rain Barrels, Household Hazardous Waste Disposal, and Water Conservation. The project also involved developing a Green Tips website to distribute additional information. You can view the website at <http://www.greentipsonline.com/>

#### **VOLUNTEER EFFORTS**

**Conneaut Lake High School** – On Earth Day, 2008 60 CLHS students completed a large scale wetland planting project on the Sperry Farm, just south of Conneaut Lake. The project involved planting a large number of hardwood and conifer trees, several shrub exclosures, as well as live stakes.

**Titusville High School** – On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 40 Titusville High School Students traveled all the way to French Creek to become the first high school to plant on the main stem of French Creek. The students assisted with a CREP planting on the Price property just north of Saegertown.

**Maplewood / Saegertown High Schools** – On April 24<sup>th</sup> nearly 120 MHS and SHS teamed up to implement 2008's largest planting project. The site was along an un-named tributary of Conneaut Outlet on the Hart Farm, near Cochranon. The students spent a sunny day planting hardwood and conifers, installing tree shelters, planting shrubs, and driving live stakes in a recently fenced out pasture.



**Linesville High / Conneaut Valley High Schools**– On April 29<sup>th</sup> 60 LHS students teamed up with 25 CVHS for Valley's first ever riparian restoration project. The two schools planted a wetland restoration project near Hickernell with a large number of potted shrubs.

**Cambridge Springs High School** – On May 2<sup>nd</sup> high school junior Jake Held led a group of 40 CSHS students in a riparian planting on the Held property near Cambridge Springs. The students planted hardwoods, conifers, and livestakes along a section of Little Conneautee Creek. The planting day was the result of months of preparation by Jake, who used the planting as his senior project.

**Penncrest School District**- MHS also completed the third student led tire recycling project in Crawford County. Over 100 students from Maplewood, Cambridge Springs and Saegertown HS picked up and shipped out over 5000 tires from a site near Titusville. Over the three year project the students have removed a total of 15,000 tires from two separate sites.

**Cochranon High School** – On November 6<sup>th</sup> CHS students under the leadership of Ms. Simoan Ray completed the first ever riparian project by a Crawford Central school. A group of 20 students planted the last section of the UNT to Conneaut Outlet on the Hart Farm that Maplewood and Saegertown HS started in the spring.

**Pymatuning Lake Clean Up** - On November 5th the District worked with Linesville High School, Pymatuning State park, and the Pennsylvania Environmental Council to coordinate a clean up of the north end of Pymatuning Lake. A group of 70 students picked up trash from some of the more heavily used areas of the shoreline including the Spillway area, Espyville Marina, Fries Road Access, Linesville facilities, and others.

### **Joint Crawford-Mercer County Envirothon**

**(Photo, Right) Officer John McKellop of the Pennsylvania Game Commission discussing Birds of Prey at the Envirothon Training Day >**

This year the District hosted an Envirothon Training Day on April 30, 2008 for interested High School Students. The training was held at the Woodcock Creek Nature Center. Thanks again to all the agency folks who turned out to help, and to the dedicated teachers who are serving as Envirothon Advisors.

The 2008 Crawford and Mercer County Envirothon, sponsored by the Crawford and Mercer County Conservation Districts, was



hosted by Pymatuning State Park near Jamestown.

The event tests students' environmental knowledge in five categories: Wildlife, Soils, Forestry, Aquatics, and a current issue, which was on the environmental impacts of recreational activities this year. Students from grades 9 through 12 represent their schools on five-person teams that can answer questions collectively as they rotate through challenging resource "stations".

Twenty-five teams from twelve area High Schools responded to just such challenges on Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>.

The event was held along the shores of Pymatuning Lake in sunny, 70 degree weather. In addition to the conservation districts, support and prizes were provided by the DCNR Bureau of Forestry, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, Pennsylvania Game Commission, DCNR Bureau of State Parks, and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. First Place in Crawford County and also in the overall Crawford-Mercer Competition was won by the "Frisky Five" Team, of Cambridge Springs High School. The winning team is comprised of students Jake Held, Katie LeSuer, Nichole Pierce, Tanner Yerkey, and Melvin (MJ) Snyder. Their faculty advisor is Mr. Richard Gosnell. It is the fifth year in a row that a Cambridge Springs High School team has taken home the first place trophy.



**Figure 1 First Place Winners - Cambridge Springs HS "Frisky Five"**

Second Place was won by the Conneaut Valley "Indians 1" Team, of Conneaut Valley High School. Team members include Philip Burnham, Anthony Summers, Sam Naas, Robert Turick, and Tyler Jones. They are coached by faculty advisor Mr. Frank Bizjak.

Third Place honors were won by the "Wombats" Team from Titusville High School, coached by faculty advisor Patricia McKellop. Team members are Evan Dity, Shawny Cornell, Alicia Hetrick, Anna Yashinski, and Ian Hopkins.

Their teammates, the "Titusville Crowsenravens", comprised of Corey Henderson, Natalie Ernecoff, Alyssa Lesko, Maureen Millmore, and Rebecca Deane, took Honorable Mention (4<sup>th</sup> Place).

First Place winners "Cambridge Springs Frisky Five" also won awards for the best performances in the Wildlife, Forestry, and Current Issue categories. Best score in the Aquatics competition went to second place winners "Conneaut Valley Indians #1". The best performance in the Soils and Land Use competition was awarded to Saegertown High School's "Pop Goes the Weasel" Team, comprised of Kegan Hyde, C.J. Evangelista, Marin Sandieson, Danielle Houck, and Caitlin McGowan. The "Pop Goes the Weasels" are coached by Mr. Chris Greco.

The first place team (Cambridge Springs "Frisky Five") won the right to go on to represent Crawford County in the Pennsylvania State Envirothon Competition held at Penn State University, Centre County, on May 19<sup>th</sup> and May 20<sup>th</sup>. Sixty-five teams representing nearly every county in Pennsylvania competed in the event.

All expenses for the trip to the state competition were paid for by the Crawford County Conservation District's Environmental Education Fund, funded by our tree sale. Our thanks to the Pennsylvania DCNR Bureau of State Parks, and to Linda Armstrong in particular, for hosting us at Pymatuning State Park. A big THANK YOU goes out to our co-hosts, the Mercer County Conservation District. We would also like to thank the USDA Soil Conservation Service; the DCNR Bureau of Forestry (Mark Lewis); our PA DEP Field Representative, (John Green); the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (Valerie Tarkowski); and the Pennsylvania Game Commission for all their help and dedication.

### **Erosion & Sediment Control Program Accomplishments**

Maria Anderson, Erosion and Sediment Control Technician for the Crawford County Conservation District, reviewed 98 Erosion & Sediment Control Plans in 2008. She also issued Seventy-nine General Permits. The District collected \$6000 in Erosion and Sediment Control Review fees, and \$1500 in NPDES Clean Water Fund permit processing fees. A total of 7 General NPDES permits were issued. Maria responded to 49 citizen complaints, performed over 68 inspections related to erosion and sediment control and 36 inspections related to encroachments, and provided technical assistance to 36 individuals in E & S (Chapter 102) and to 32 people for encroachments (Chapter 105). (Inspections of sites related to complaints are not included in the totals.) In addition, Maria assisted with various riparian and wetland planting projects and presented Chapter 102/105 information at a pond workshop held in Titusville.

### **Dirt and Gravel Road Program**

The Crawford County Conservation District has participated in the State Dirt and Gravel Roads Program since 1999. The goal of this program is to protect the waterways of the county and improve water quality by redirecting and reducing runoff from dirt and gravel roads. The program also helps townships make a more stable and durable road surface, reducing potholes, dust, and maintenance. Townships with personnel who have received Dirt and Gravel Road training submit projects for road improvements which are then ranked and recommended for approval by a Quality Assurance Board (QAB) as funds permit. The Crawford County Conservation District Board issues final project approval. To date, over 1.3 million dollars has come to Crawford County townships for this program, making it the fourth most active in the state. The overall program is administered by the State Conservation Commission.

The Crawford County Conservation District provided technical assistance to Sadsbury, Athens, Summit, Randolph, Oil Creek, Beaver, Wayne and Richmond Township in 2008. We had one active Dirt and Gravel Road Project for 2008 for Dewey and Three Bridges Roads in Athens Township. Final touches will be put on this project in the spring of 2009.

The Crawford County Conservation District also participated in the fourth Dirt and Gravel Roads Assessment. Roads within the county were re-evaluated to document new problem sites and to de-list problem sites that have been addressed.

# Agricultural Conservation Planning and Best Management Practices Installed

## 2008 Completed Conservation Practices

### Agricultural Best Management Practice Growing Greener County Environmental Incentive Grant

Crawford County Fairgrounds		Water Well	1
Roof Runoff Mgmt	1	Prescribed Grazing	71.5 ac
John & Chad Kunz		Harold Proper	
Underground Outlets	356 ft	Milkhouse Waste Sys	1

### STUDENT RIPARIAN PLANTING

Pat Mahoney	2.2 ac
Linesville HS & Conneaut Valley HS	
John Sperry	
Conneaut Lake HS	
Doug Price	
Titusville HS	
Hart farm	5 ac
Cochranon HS/Maplewood HS/Saegertown HS	
Peter Held	
Cambridge Springs HS	
Pymatuning Shoreline Clean-Up	
Linesville HS	

### (EQIP)

Dan Burdick	
Underground Outlet	1306 ft
Pipeline	737 ft
Kathy Field	
Fencing	8690 ft
Riparian Forest Buffer	2.2 ac
Prescribed Grazing	50.5 ac
Happy Hill	
Fencing	4185 ft
Donald Hart	
Tree Planting	5 ac
Habitat Management	5 ac
Fencing	2790 ft
Kelly Hyde	
Fencing	2365 ft
John Kunz	
Waste Storage Facility	1
Underground Outlet	356 ft
Subsurface Drainage	657 ft
Long Farm	
Fencing	7509 ft
Animal Trail	415 ft
Pat Mahoney	
Fencing	10,865 ft
Riparian Forest Buffer	2.4 ac
Tree planting	2.2 ac
Habitat Management	2 ac
Wilfred Wilhelm	

Chris Shearer	
Riparian Forest Buffer	1
Roof Runoff Mgmt	1
Watering Facility	4
Prescribed Grazing	5.4 ac
Chris Shearer	
Roof Runoff Mgmt	1
Underground Outlet	500 ft
Water Control Structure	2
Gerald Teed	
Access Road	380 ft
Ron Troyer	
Roof Runoff Mgmt	1
Heavy Use Area	.1 ac
Waste Storage Facility	1
Francis Weiderspahn	
Fencing	6493 ft

### Cover Crop and Residue Management

Lowell Agnew	John Kunz
Robert Agnew	Lost Acres Farm
Allen Farms	Paul Manross
Andrew Grove Farms	Ron McCorkle
Doug Coulter	Eugene Morton
Mark & Irwin Creacraft	Greg Scheitzer
Richard Deeter Jr.	William
Roncaglione	
Robert Dersch	Rynd Home Farm
Craig Hayes	Merle Spaid
Happy Hill	Urbanick Dairy
Jeff Jones	

### CTA

Larry Crom	4.8 ac
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### Wildlife Reserve Program (WRP)

Eric Watson	6.1 ac
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### Conservation Reserve Enhance Plans (CREP)

Bonny Bell Farms
Robert Skelton
David Davis

## REAP

Act 55 of 2007 created the **Resource Enhancement and Protection Program (REAP)**. REAP 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. The program is administered by the State Conservation Commission and the tax credits will be granted by the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue.

Eligible applicants may receive between 25% and 75% of project costs as state tax credits for up to \$150,000 per agricultural operation. The amount of tax credit available to a recipient is dependent on the type of BMP implemented.

In 2008, \$10,000,000 in PA tax credits was allocated to this program state-wide, so not all applications were able to be funded. Three farmers in Crawford County were awarded funding under this program in 2008.

## NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

The Plan Development Incentives Program (PDIP) is a state funded cost share opportunity for all farmers interested in developing a nutrient management plan. In 2008, this cost share advantage was available to include volunteer operations.

Concentrated Animal Operations (CAO) and Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) remain the focus of this program. Eight new volunteer plans were developed and another ten plan amendments were initiated to reflect the new Act 38 regulations.

### New Plans

Don Bortnick  
Doug Coulter (PDIP, CAB II)  
Gerald Hamilton (EQIP)  
William Long (EQIP)  
Larry Hoffman (CAB)  
Jeff Rainey (PDIP)  
William Roncaglione (EQIP)  
Gerald Teed (EQIP)

### Updated Plans

Allen Farms (EQIP)  
Dave and Charlene Bish (PDIP)  
Donald Hart (EQIP)  
Craig Hayes (PDIP)  
Dan Herrick (PDIP)  
Infield Brothers (PDIP)  
Rynd Home Farm (EQIP)  
Paul Manross (PDIP, CABII)  
Francis Weiderspahn Jr (PDIP, EQIP)  
John Sperry (own)

## FARMLAND PRESERVATION

Crawford County's number one industry is agriculture. Crawford County residents are used to being surrounded by beautiful fields, farms, and forests, and having a land base that is capable of providing the fruit, vegetables, meat, grain, wood products, and syrup for the community.

That scenario is changing. Because of the automobile, people can now easily move out of town. With the financial pressures on farms today, some find it easier to sell the family farm as real estate for development rather than to continue in farming. Crawford County is no stranger to this trend. Between 1987 and 1997, farm acreage went from 236,481 to 207,215, a loss of nearly 30,000 acres. During that decade, the number of farms in the county also decreased from 1,281 to 1,069. Although statistics are not yet available, the trend appears to have accelerated since 1997, with farms going into bankruptcy and parcels being sold off for non-agricultural uses. Some of the best farmland is being lost to other uses.

The Directors of the Crawford County Conservation District, listening to the concerns expressed in the community, made the establishment of a farm land preservation program in Crawford County one of their highest priorities for 2004. With the help of Crawford County Commissioners Roger Williams, Morris Waid, and Jack Preston, and the Crawford County PA Farm Bureau, they succeeded in reaching that goal.



On December 16, 2004 the State Agricultural Land Preservation Board approved the Crawford County Farmland Preservation Program. Crawford County is the 55<sup>th</sup> county in the state to join the Farmland Preservation Program. Under the program, a farmer may choose to keep his property in agriculture and receive payment for the difference between the property's value as a farm and its value for development.

The farm still belongs to the farmer, and he may use the payment for whatever he wishes. Pennsylvania leads the nation in the number of agricultural acres saved in this way; assuring that there will be sufficient land base to produce food and fiber locally for coming generations.

The Crawford County Ag Land Preservation Board purchased Agricultural Easements on its first two farms (Gerber and Coulter) in spring of 2008. Also, the program received substantial help from the Crawford County Commissioners and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture in the form of a Community Environmental Incentive (CEI) Growing Greener II Grant for \$200,000.00. This grant expanded the pool of money for easement purchase available in the County, allowing more acreage to be bought. In Summer of 2008, the Board began work toward purchasing the easements on the beautiful 600 acre Hart farm near Cochranton.

**Crawford County Farmland Preservation Board of Directors:** Jack Lynch, Chairperson; Scott Preston, Vice-Chairperson; Dick Deiss, Secretary; Board Members Rick Rendulic; Richard Ferguson; John Tautin; and Dennis Hindman; Associate Member: Ronald Staab

Crawford County Conservation District  
2008 Year End Financial Report

The Conservation District receives funding from County, State, and Federal Sources. It also depends on local fundraising efforts.

Balance on Hand January 1, 2008	\$230,718.36
<b>INCOMES</b>	
County Commissioners (Salaries)	310,477.13
State PROGRAM Grants	128,378.64
State PROJECT Grants	81,564.43
Federal Project Grants	5,770.27
Fundraising (Education Fund)	26,038.25
Rental Income	4,117.46
Interest Income	3,624.31
NPDES Permit Fees (Clean Water Fund)	2,750.00
E&S Plan Review Fees	9,330.00
Miscellaneous	6,763.08
<b>Total Incomes</b>	598,813.57
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	
Commissioner Reimbursements	80,324.78
County Commissioners (Salaries)	310,477.13
Travel	13,042.52
Building/Park Expenses/Maintenance	20,856.31
Office Supplies, Postage, Copying	6,436.51
Utilities	10,885.42
Computer and Internet	2,040.40
Telephone	2,785.80
Meetings and workshops	4,721.88
Bank service charges	531.26
Dues	2,501.00
Insurance	2,918.00
Fund Raising	17,423.59
Education	8,320.71
Treasurer's Bond & Audit	3,922.00
Program Equipment & Supplies	82.29
State PROJECT Grants - Construction	33,165.67
State PROJECT Grants - Contractual	8,970.17
Federal Project Grants - Construction	.00
Federal Project Grants - Contractual	1,008.53
Dirt and Gravel Road Program	41,946.04
Other (PACD, FLP, LD)	14,389.73
Misc.	4,193.95
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	590,943.69
Ending Balance December 31, 2008	\$ 238,588.24



**CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIPS**  
**USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**  
**Personnel Changes**

In 2008, District Conservationist Carl Pelino retired after 26 years of service to the Crawford County Community. Carl began work in Crawford County in 1982. His years here have been marked by a high level of productivity coupled with exceptional service. Toward the end of his career, Carl was repeatedly tapped by NRCS for leadership roles within the organization. His creativity, common sense, team building skills and easy going nature will be missed by all. Carl is an avid hunter, fisherman and golfer and will be thoroughly enjoying those activities in the years to come .



**Carl Pelino explaining soils 1**



**Welcome Jody!**

In December 2008 Jody Lasko replaced Carl Pelino as the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Supervisory District Conservationist for West Field Team 1 covering Erie, Crawford, Mercer and Lawrence counties. She is stationed in Meadville.

Jody worked approximately 8 years in Crawford county as a Soil Conservationist and 2 years in Erie County as a District Conservationist. Jody, her husband Dan and 3 children raise freezer beef and pork on a farm that has been in Dan's family since the early 1900's.

Jody began her NRCS career 13 years ago as a Rangeland Management Specialist. The daughter of a ranch foreman, she grew up in the native rangeland of Central Texas. She has a B.S. in Range and Ranch Management from Tarleton State University in Stephenville, TX.

## PA DCNR BUREAU OF FORESTRY

*Service Forester: Mark Lewis*

### **Insect & Disease Update**

It seems that there are a couple “new” insects to be on the lookout for. **Emerald ash borer** is a small green beetle that infests only ash trees. It has been found just south of us in Mercer county so be on the lookout! **Asian long-horned beetle** infests mostly maples and has done some major damage in New York. It has very long, black and white striped antennae. Finally, there is **Sirex wood wasp** that can infest our native and non-native pines. White, red, and Scots pines are some of its major targets. See your local forestry office or Penn State Extension for more information on these and other insects.



**Forester Mark Lewis on a Tree ID Walk at the Nature Center**

### **Tree Planting**

We continue to plant trees throughout the county on riparian waterways. Last year we accomplished our 50<sup>th</sup> project. We now utilize students from every school district in the county and from seven different schools. Funding for these riparian planting projects is slated to continue into 2011! If you have a potential project site, contact the DCNR Forestry office or the Crawford Conservation District. To date we have planted more than 25,000 trees along Crawford County waterways.

### **Timber Stand Improvement (T.S.I.)**

Timber Stand Improvement is accomplished by thinning out existing timber stands. Removing low value trees to create more room for high quality individuals can jump-start a timber stand into increased production. The wood generated by these cuts is harvested for firewood or left to decay and be reintroduced in the nutrient cycle of the forest. The Bureau of Forestry marked 95 acres of TSI throughout Crawford County. Cutting grapevines out of timber stands can also lead to increased forest productivity. Landowners removed grapevines from 43 acres of Crawford County timber stands in 2008.

### **Timber Sales**

As timber prices continue to drop around the region, now may not be the best time to sell your timber. If you can afford to wait until the markets stabilize, then keep a weather eye on the horizon for an upturn in prices. If you are not able to wait on the markets then remember that competitive bid is the best way to get the most out of your timber during these financially tough times. Use a professional forester for all timber harvests to safeguard your investment.

**IN MEMORIUM**  
**DIRECTOR JACK DIBBLE**  
July 19, 1923--September 10, 2007

Jack V. Dibble was sworn in as a rural Crawford Conservation District Director in January of 1995, and served faithfully for 12 years.

Born on July 19, 1923 in Titusville, Jack attended Titusville High School and served in the U.S. Army during World War II from 1943 to 1946. On May 14, 1949, Jack married Mary Gill at the Assumption Church in Oil City. Mary passed away on February 21, 2007.

Jack was employed by the Pennsylvania Railroad as a block operator for 22 years. He also served as a Forest Fire Warden and worked as a foreman at Oil Creek State Park, a job from which he retired in 1984. In addition to these activities, Jack was involved in several business ventures, including Dibble Excavating, Dibble's Grocery, and the Deluxe Carwash on Central Avenue Extension in Titusville. An expert in both apples and horses, Jack owned Church Run Orchard and Church Run Belgian.

He was strongly supportive of the landmark decision to move the conservation district to its present location at the Woodcock Creek Nature Center, and leant the expertise he gained as foreman at Oil Creek Park toward the development of the district's maintenance plan for Stainbrook Park. When the District had a "Grand Opening" picnic to celebrate the move to its new facility, Jack provided a beautiful pair of Belgian horses to pull a wagon, giving visitors a ride from Stainbrook Park to the Nature Center. He frequently treated the district board and staff to apples and apple cider from his orchard.

Jack is survived by three children, Alan Dibble and his wife Mary, Lorraine Dibble Schwab and her husband Charles, and Susan Dibble, all of Titusville, and by nine grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, two brothers, a sister, and many nieces and nephews.

Jack will be remembered for his dependability, congenial personality, vision, and gentle humor. He will be sorely missed by all .

