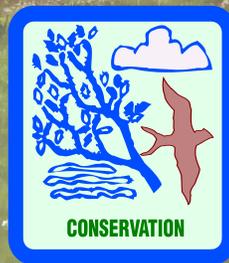


Cameron County Conservation District

2014

Annual Report



Serving Cameron County Since 1967

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Who We Are

What is the Cameron County Conservation District?

The Cameron County Conservation District, formed in 1967, under the *Conservation District Law*, is a subdivision of state government and is one of 66 Conservation Districts throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The District office is located in the Cameron County Courthouse at 20 East Fifth Street and currently houses a three member staff. The purpose of the Conservation District is to promote conservation, maintenance, improvement, and wise use of the land, water, and other natural resources.

Cameron County is approximately 397.2 square miles, with a population of approximately 5,100 and is over 90% forested. The office is open Monday through Fridays from 8:30 AM until 4:00 PM. This is done through the administration of the following programs:

Environmental Education - The District strives to provide quality programs that relay important conservation information to the citizens of the area. These programs include the WILD Envirothon, My Growing Tree, Birth of a Tree, Growing Up Wild, Project Wet, Wonders of Wetlands, Agriculture Producers Workshop, Contractors Workshop, After-School Programs, Arbor Day and the Wild About Nature Field Day. Also, educational programs are available to the schools in the county for any age group. These activities are funded through a TREES & MORE Sale held each Spring.

The Dirt and Gravel & Low Volume Roads Program - This program is designed to fund environmentally sound maintenance of roadways that have been identified as sources of sediment pollution. Funding is available to local municipalities that maintain dirt, gravel and low volume paved roads. The Cameron County Conservation District Quality Assurance Board, which consists of a District Board Member, NRCS staff member, and a Waterways Conservation Officer from the PA Fish & Boat Commission accepts and reviews applications for projects.

The Chesapeake Bay Program - This program provides cost share assistance for the installation of Best Management Practices to correct existing manure and nutrient problems from agricultural operations.

Watershed Specialist - The District provides technical assistance to the Bucktail Watershed Association. Services provided include, but are not limited to: group start up coordination, presentations, grant writing, grant administration, water quality monitoring, technique trainings, interpretation of results and project assessments. The Watershed Specialist manages streambank stabilization and fish habitat improvement projects.

Erosion and Sediment Control - The District administers the Chapter 102 Erosion Control program through a signed delegation agreement with the Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Water Quality. The District Technician reviews and approves E&S control plans and permits for earthmoving projects. Inspections of these sites are conducted to assure the plans are properly implemented.

Dams and Waterways Management - The District Technician facilitates the Chapter 105 program that enables the District to locally approve General Permit applications, such as stream crossings or utility line stream crossing. This decreases the processing time that it normally takes to have a permit approved through the regional DEP office in Williamsport. The District is also able to handle complaints locally, seeking voluntary compliance before referring sites to the regional DEP office.

Cameron County Conservation Board of Directors:
Chairman, Frank Galford; Vice-Chairman, Bob Martin; Paul Lyon, Pat Rodgers, Mark Johnson, LuAnn Reed and Commissioner, Phil Jones.

Associate Directors: Dr. Joseph Blackburn, Nelson Haas, and Jim Zoschg, Jr.

District Staff: Jan Hampton, District Manager, Todd Deluccia, Watershed Specialist, and Kate Morgan, Conservation Resource Technician.

Conservation Education

In 2014, the Cameron County Conservation District (District) held several educational programs for local youth from pre-school through twelfth grade. District Manager, Jan



Salamanders with St. Mark's Daycare

Hampton presented a Dragonfly program for the Cameron County Family Center at Sizerville State Park. The Family Center learned unique qualities about dragonflies and made a dragonfly craft to take home. Conservation Resource Technician, Kate Morgan shared "The Salamander Room" with the St. Mark's Community Daycare Center, at Sizerville State Park. Children were able to look at live salamanders and then create their own salamander magnet to take home.

Hampton visited grades first through fourth at the Woodland Elementary School. While visiting first grade, Hampton read "The Growning Tree" and each student received the Pennsylvania State Tree, Eastern Hemlock, to take home and plant. Hampton then visited second grade, presenting a lesson on wetland destruction and utilized the Enviroscape to show effects of water pollution on a small community. Hampton, talked to third grade about wild turkeys and students made a stuffed turkey from socks to take home. Fourth grade students learned about habitat and conservation.



4th Grade with "Lester and Clyde"

Hampton, shared a story about "Lester and Clyde", two frogs who lose their home due to habitat pollution and destruction.

Hampton assisted Jim Clark, Penn State Extension

Water Resource Educator, with a Sinnemahoning Stakeholders Grant to immerse Cameron County High School students in the world of quality water testing and research on emerging contaminants, especially estrogen in water supplies. Baseline data was collected for estrogen on twenty sites in the Emporium area, including the Emporium Water Company and the Mid-Cameron Authority's sewage treatment plant. Mr. Faulk, a Cameron County High School biology teacher and high school students were trained on proper water sampling protocol and the process for testing water samples in a laboratory setting. They visited the Penn State Ag Analytical Lab and Emerging contaminants Lab at PSU. A Power Point presentation was produced for sharing with other classmates and the community.

The 8th Annual Wild about Nature Field Day for 4th, 5th and 6th Grades was held at the Sinnemahoning Wildlife Center. Students were blessed with an amazing autumn day adding to a very productive and educational day. Students visited stations on Bats, presented by Morgan, Turtles & Salamanders, presented by District Watershed Specialist Todd Deluccia and DCNR Technician, Jess Bierley, Tree ID, presented by DCNR Technician, Don Weis, Lightning Bugs, presented by Hampton, a Nature Hike, led by CCOYA Director, Don Bickford, the Nature Center, led by DCNR Educator, Kim Lott and Non-Poisonous Snakes, presented by Fish and Boat Commission WCO, Bill Crisp. Over 150 students and adults participated.

The WILD Envirothon Study Day was held at the Keating Sportsmen's Clubhouse. The Cameron County School District (CCSD) had ten students in attendance. The Wild Envirothon was also held at Keating Sportsmen's Club, where about 70 students in ninth through twelfth grade from the CCSD and five different McKean County school districts, competed in five different events (*Education, continued on page 5*) (*Education, continued from page 4*) including,

wildlife, aquatics, soils, forestry and the current event on sustainable agriculture and buying local. Three teams from the CCSD participated. The CCSD's Greasy Muskellunges team of Hunter Prosper, Tucker Britton, Nate Andrus, Cameron Horning and Austin Smoker came in third over-all. The other two CCSD teams were: The Sunflowers-Kendyl Guisto, Jase Gillette, Mc Johnson and Autumn Abriatis and the Mean Green Environmental Team-Bruno Nicholetta, Keith Spehalski, Jordan Causer, Jordan Crosby and Andrew Grimone.

Birding Bonanza The big event for the month of June was the Birding Bonanza at Sizerville State Park.



Live bird program at Birding Bonanza

Participants made their own wooden birdhouse, under the tutelage of Todd Deluccia. The day was a great success. Activities included two live raptor

shows, a guided bird walk, kid's crafts and educational booths. Over 300 participants attended the event throughout the day.

Cameron County Fair Hampton enjoyed working with the Fair Board to create a Nature Treasure Hunt for Fair week. Each day a natural treasure was hidden somewhere on the fairgrounds and clues were offered describing it. Items used were a quartz rock, a milkweed pod, a Tiger Lily, a mushroom and Sycamore bark. Each participant received a coupon for the local ice cream shop.

In addition to local community education programs the District is well represented on the Education & Outreach Committees of the PA Wilds Planning Team, Dirt & Gravel/Low Volume Roads, the Pennsylvania Conservation District Association and the State Envirothon Board, by Hampton.



Birding Bonanza crafts



Watershed Restoration—Stream Projects

The Cameron County Conservation District was very busy in 2014 with streambank stabilization and fish habitat enhancement projects, eight sites were completed. The goal of these projects is to protect streambanks from erosion and enhance fish habitat, all while making it aesthetically pleasing.

The Sizerville Fish Habitat Enhancement Project was completed on East Cowley Run. An older splash dam had become dilapidated and was in disrepair. This is a very popular spot for fishermen within the park so the structure was removed. In its place a log crossvane was installed which is similar to a splash dam. The log crossvane creates a large scour hole downstream of the structure.

The Foltz Streambank Stabilization was the continuation of a 2012 project. In 2012 four log framed stone deflectors and eight multilog deflectors were installed to stop streambank erosion along Sinnemahoning Portage Creek. In 2014 the District installed random boulders throughout the project site to further enhance fish habitat. A large log crossvane was also installed.

The Boyer Streambank Stabilization was on North Creek. This location had a ten foot high and 150 foot long streambank that was severely eroded and compromising a foot bridge. A 150 feet long modified mudsill cribwall was installed. This will protect from further erosion and provide overhead cover to aquatic species in North Creek.

The West Creek Stabilization was completed near the West Creek Rail Trail. A 200 foot section of streambank had severely eroded, creating nearly 30 feet tall banks causing the old railroad ballast to fall in and nearly half of the trail was gone. A large tree was removed that had fallen into West Creek which caused most of the problems. Then 240 ton of stone was placed to protect the bank. The bank was rebuilt so that the trail could be replaced.

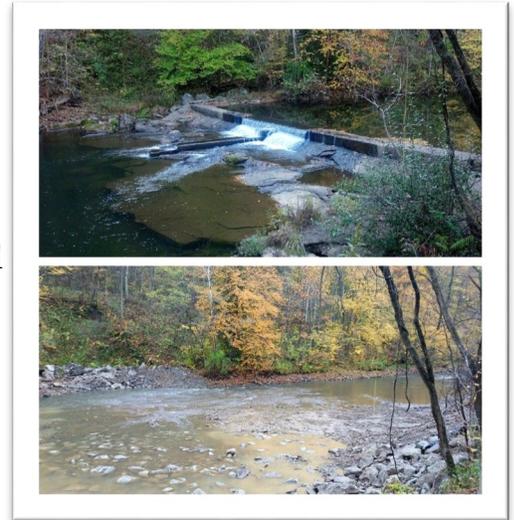
The Hicks Run Fish Habitat Enhancement was a project partnering with DCNR Elk State Forest and Elk County Conservation District. This was a training opportunity for Elk County to

learn how these types of structures are installed. Two locations were selected, one in Elk and one in Cameron County. One site was completed in 2014, at the Hicks Run Campground.

A log crossvane was installed for habitat along with three single log deflectors to protect the eroding bank upstream of a bridge. Log deflectors protect the bank by slowing water velocity against the bank and turning the concentrated flows towards the center of the stream. Random boulders were also installed and a very dilapidated splash dam was removed. The second location will be completed in 2015 and will be the installation of three log crossvanes.

The Stampee Streambank Stabilization was located along West Creek. A 300 foot long streambank was severely eroding to where it was encroaching a dirt road and farm field. Ten multilog deflectors were installed along this stretch.

The largest project of 2014 was the Moateville Streambank Stabilization. The District has worked at this site before. This site had eroded again creating a 500 feet long streambank that was roughly twelve feet tall. Several years ago the streambank was graded back and twelve multilog deflectors were installed. The project worked but eventually the deflectors turned the water away from the bank so hard that it undermined the streambed below the structures and the structures up lifting out in high water. The District tried making repairs but were unsuccessful. In 2014 (*Stream, continued on page 7*)



Top—pre removal, Bottom—post removal.

Watershed Restoration – Acid Mine Reclamation

The Cameron County Conservation District continues to work in the Sterling Run drainage. In 2013 Growing Greener was awarded in the amount of \$678,333 for the permitting, design, and construction of the PORT14 and FIN32/33 Passive Treatment Systems.

The way these systems work is simple but effective. The polluted water enters a vertical flow wetland (VFW). In this VFW the water must go through a layer of mushroom compost and limestone before it enters the piping of the pond. This removes the oxygen so that metals don't clog the system and brings the pH of the water up. The water enters a precipitation basin where it is oxygenated again and metals drop out in a solid form. The clean water enters one more pond where it goes into a surface flow wetland (SFW) which helps clean up the water a little bit more before entering back in the stream.

Construction of the PORT14 site began fall 2014 with construction aimed to be completed in spring 2015. This system will have one VFW and one SFW. This site does not require the precipitation basin because it has low metal

(Streams, continued from page 6) a massive 140 log modified mudsill cribwall was installed to protect the streambank. Sixty-three loads of rip rap and mixed stone were also installed. The project experienced high waters in fall and most of winter. The District is very optimistic that things will work out this time.

The last big project of the year has been in the works for several years. This site was an old water company dam in the Driftwood Branch locally known as the Picric or Steel Dam. This dam had become obsolete and was no longer in use by the Emporium Water Company (EWC). This location was a safety hazard and a fish passage barrier. Years ago Trout Unlimited attempted to put a fish ladder in but when fish needed the ladder in summer to seek thermal refuge upstream, they could not get into the ladder. In years when Cameron County experienced warmer summers and lower water flows small localized fish kills would occur at this site. After years of negotiating with the

landowner and EWC, the dam was finally removed in 2014. The concrete was demolished and used on site. After removing rebar from concrete it was placed on both banks for protection from erosion. The remainder of the concrete was placed in the large scour hole. In 2015 the District is planning habitat restoration. Although this site was a local landmark and treasured by many that grew up swimming and hanging out there, the benefits of removal far outweigh any benefit of it staying.

levels but has high acidity levels. The completion of this site should clean up the majority of Portable Run to where it should support life again.

The FIN32/33 site is contributing over 60% of the pollution entering into Finley Run and is over 40% of the pollution entering the Sterling Run watershed. When this system is complete more work will need to be done but it is a major step in the process. This system will be completed in 2015 and consists of three VFW, one precipitation basin, and a SFW.

It has been a goal of the District for a long time now to get the Sterling Run drainage back to the beautiful trout streams that they once were. Work has been completed in May Hollow in the past at the MAYH49 and the County Landfill locations. Those treatment systems are working well taking water that has a pH of around 3.2 and bringing it up all the way to almost completely neutral at 6.8. With the completion of two new systems in Finley and Portable along with the work already done in May Hollow, acid mine drainage in Sterling Run should take a major hit.

With the eight sites completed in 2014, the District stabilized over 2000 feet of stream. Funding for projects came from Headwaters RC&D Sinnemahoning Watershed Grant Program, PA Fish and Boat Commission's Sinnemahoning Grant Program, and Growing Greener. Since 2006 the District has stabilized over five miles of streams creating top quality habitat for aquatic life. The District continues to do this in a low cost way.

Agricultural Conservation

The Cameron County Conservation District continued efforts to support the local agricultural community by providing four educational workshops on regulatory updates that affect agricultural operations. The District hosted the 11th Annual Agricultural Producers' Meeting on February 26th. This annual meeting provides agency updates from four of the District's partnering agencies including the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Farm Service Agency, the State Conservation Commission and Penn State Extension. The meeting also provided an update on Manure Management.

The District followed up this meeting with three Manure Management Plan Development Workshops focusing on three different farm types, traditional, equine (horse) and backyard. Splitting the workshops into three smaller groups allowed the District to assist farmers with plan development on a one-on-one level by not having more than five farms per workshop.

The Manure Management Manual was updated in 2011 and explains how manure management plans (MMP) are developed to reflect current state and federal regulatory requirements. A MMP is required for anyone that generates manure (livestock) or spreads

NRCS – 2014 Review

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) continues to serve Cameron County by providing technical and financial assistance. In 2014, three landowners continued involvement in the Conservation Stewardship Program. Thirty-nine acres of hay field were managed by mowing in a wildlife friendly manner, a method of chemical drift reduction was utilized on crop/hay land, and supplements and feeding areas were rotated on a rotational grazing system. Two acres of pollinator habitat were maintained. Ten acres of forest land were maintained in a Hardwood Crop Tree Release project and a High Level Integrated Pest Management Plan was implemented for 361 acres of forest land.

manure on their operation. Some examples include a crop farmer that has no livestock on his operation but buys and spreads manure from his neighbor. Another example may be a landowner that has two horses for recreational riding housed on their property.

Manure can be a valuable resource for operators to utilize, it can drastically reduce fertilizer costs when applied properly. As a result of these planning workshop twelve operations developed proper manure management plans. Participants also were eligible to receive free soil tests and manure sample kits if they developed a MMP. These sample kits allow operators to properly manage their soil and crop needs with the manure they are already generating on their operations. All four workshops funded by a Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts Mini Grant.



District Conservationist, LouAnn Swope and Farmer, John Mason



High tensile fencing project.

NRCS also provided cost share assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program to three landowners. 1500 feet of interior, high tensile fencing was installed to subdivide a pasture. One acre of Critical Area Treatment seeding on disturbed areas and five water bars were installed on an access road. Four acres of cover crop were installed following corn silage. Wildlife structure was completed on two and half acres of forest land and wildlife openings were created on five acres.

Erosion Control & Wetlands and Waterways Mgt

There was an increase in Chapter 102: Erosion and Sediment Control permits and a decrease in Chapter 105: Dam Safety and Waterways Management in 2014. The District reviewed one National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES): General Permit, one NPDES: Individual Permit and one NPDES: General Permit – Major Amendment. The District also reviewed three Erosion and Sediment Control General Permit # 2 (ESCGP-2) and three ESCGP-2 Major Amendments.

The ESCGP-2's were the first the Cameron County Conservation District has received and were for both natural gas and propane transmission line replacement and repairs. Two of the lines were replaced and earth disturbance

Chapter 105: Dam Safety & Waterways Mgt

Outreach Events	2
Event Participants	131
Technical Assistance	13
News Releases	2
Incomplete Applications	4
Incomplete - Denied	2
GP 1	2
GP3	3
GP5 (Denied)	1
GP7	5
GP8 (Denied)	1
Complaints	10
Project Sites Inspected	16
Total Inspections	24
Non-compliance (Referred)	4
Permit Fees Collected	\$2,900.00

Chapter 102: Erosion and Sediment Control

Outreach Events	5
Event Participants	146
Technical Assistance	11
News Releases	5
Incomplete Plans	8
Complete Plans	21
Initial Technical Reviews	9
Follow Up Reviews	9
Project Acres	788.218
Disturbed Acres	89.031
ESCGP-2 (w/Amendments)	6
NPDES: General (w/Amendments)	2
NPDES: Individual	1
Complaints	6
Project Sites Inspected	18
Total Inspections	48
Permit Fees Collected	\$3,000.00
E&S Fees Collected	\$3,865.00

was completed by the end of the growing season. The remaining permit was a multi-county project, that was issued in early 2015, and will start construction in spring 2015.

The District was awarded a Pennsylvania Association of Conservation District (PACD) Mini-Grant to present a workshop on timber harvesting best management practices. This project will be a partnership with the Warren, McKean, Potter, Elk and Cameron County Conservation District, the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and the Headwaters Council. The workshop is scheduled for April 2015.

District staff attended the 102-105-NPDES Annual Training, presented by DEP and PACD.

Natural Gas Development

2014 brought an increase in gas well development to Cameron County. The following is a summary of gas well development from DEP's Oil & Gas Management's website. In 2014, no conventional (shallow) wells were permitted or drilled in the county. Fifty -four unconventional (Marcellus) wells were permitted, one of which was identified as vertical. The remaining fifty-three were identified as horizontal. All of the permits were

issued for wells located in Shippen Township.

Twenty-six unconventional wells were drilled in 2014, all were located in Shippen Township. A total of forty-six wells were inspected by DEP, with a total of 183 inspections completed. Only one violations was noted and no inspections lead to DEP enforcement actions. All wells inspected were located in Shippen Township.

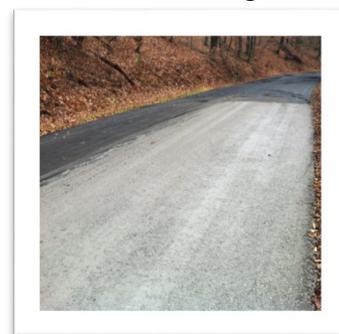
Dirt and Gravel & Low Volume Road Program

In March 2014, the Cameron and Potter County Conservation District hosted an informational dinner to educate local boroughs, townships, Game Commission and Penn DOT officials about the new Transportation Bill. The gathering was held at the Sinnemahoning Wildlife Center, located right at the Cameron/Potter line. Cameron Conservation District Manager, Jan Hampton (Hampton) stated "I am absolutely thrilled that we had representatives from every borough and every township in Cameron County." Also in attendance were Cameron County Commissioners Phil Jones and Jim Thomas and Bill Crisp, PA Fish & Boat WCO, a member of the Dirt & Gravel Roads Quality Assurance Board (QAB). Hampton started the evening with a Paul Harvey poem about dirt roads. Dirt & Gravel/Low Volume Roads Center (DGR/LVR) Technician, Dave Creamer (Creamer) was the evening's featured speaker. Creamer began by sharing that the new bill has thirteen more words and two commas than the previous one, regarding the DGR/LVR program. The main difference is that low volume roads, roads with less than 500 vehicles a day, are now eligible for funding. For the past sixteen years only dirt & gravel roads were eligible, now paved roads may also qualify for funding. It is important to note that this is a program is connected to the Clean Streams Law and is a pollution prevention program, not a road repair program. Meaning, the site must have a negative effect on the stream. Creamer was on hand to answer questions and take feedback to the DGR/LVR Center. The DGR/LVR Advisory Committee's are working diligently on guidelines for the low volume roads. The various officials left full and more informed on this new opportunity.

Hampton, represented the Cameron County Conservation District, by attending several DGR/LVR Outreach & Education Committee meetings around the state. The Committee reviewed the regional Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance (ESM) 2014 meetings and set a new direction for 2015,

including the Center's managing staff and growth. Changes are being made to the ESM trainings to include instruction on low volume roads projects. There will be detailed Administrative training held in early winter 2015, along with webinars and possible refresher courses. The DGR/LVR Center will be looking for Demonstration Projects and One-Day Certification Credits Courses. Some of the upcoming workshops in 2015 include a LVR Conference (mid July) and Annual Workshop (late September). Webinar subjects include: Program Update, Traffic Count, QAB Issues, Ranking Criteria and New Program Forms. Other possible training topics: DSA Clearinghouse, Stream Crossing Policy, Program Accounting, Permitting, GIS Update, Bidding and an Administrative Manual Walkthrough.

Locally the District worked with Shippen Township on a Driving Surface Aggregate (DSA) application on Sizer Run Road. 1,934' of Geotextile fabric was placed on the road surface, after it was reshaped and crowned.



Sizer Run DSA Placement

Limestone DSA was placed with a paver for \$46.00 a ton, at 6" compacted with a vibratory roller to 4." Total cost of the project was \$25,130.92, with \$5000 In-Kind from Shippen Twp. Total value of project is \$29,130.92

A Quality Assurance Board meeting was held in November. Bill Crisp, Paul Lyon, Todd Deluccia, Kate Morgan and Jan Hampton were in attendance. Hampton covered the new Transportation Bill, Funding for Districts, Low Volume Roads Allocations, Total DGR & LVR 2014-2015 allocations, draft LVR Evaluation Forms, Draft Potential Policy for replacement of stream crossing structures and high-lights of the DGR/LVR webinar. More direction will be forthcoming from the State Conservation Commission and the DGR/LVR Center in 2015.

Bucktail Watershed Association

The Bucktail Watershed Association (BWA) is a concerned group of citizens united to promote wise watershed stewardship for property and stream protection in the Driftwood Branch and First Fork of the Sinnemahoning Creek watershed.

The Bucktail Watershed Association's **goals** are:

- To promote flood and erosion control projects
- To maintain and/or improve stream habitat
- To control invasive plants
- To promote public awareness and outreach
- To promote recreation and tourism that is in harmony with the goals of the BWA.

Accomplishments: BWA volunteers have placed watershed education signs and maps at state parks and the Woodland Elementary School, planted streamside forest buffers and stream restoration projects and organized streamside garbage cleanups. BWA has also treated invasive plants along miles of stream banks

Current Projects: BWA is working with the Sinnemahoning Invasive Plant Management Area (SIPMA) to control invasive species in the Sinnemahoning Creek Watershed. Targets plants include mile-a-minute vine, Japanese knotweed, and buckthorn. BWA is the fiscal manager for the SIPMA.

Future Endeavors: The BWA is working to start a volunteer water quality monitoring network, and will continue to work on habitat improvement projects, address stream bank erosion problems, plant trees in stream corridors to create shade and lower stream water temperatures, continue invasive plant control activities through SIPMA, and increase membership.

2014 Recap:

Winter— BWA submitted grants to the Sinnemahoning Stakeholders Committee for Japanese knotweed and mile-a-minute vine control. These grants were awarded in February, for the Summer and Fall 2014 spraying season. BWA also successfully submitted a grant to the Dominion/ Western PA Conservancy Mini-Grant Program for funding to cover insurance for

SIPMA Coordinator's pesticide applicators license. In March, BWA participated in the Fourth Annual Driftwood Branch Streamside Cleanup. This event is held the weekend prior to the Cameron County Canoe Classic Race, and is a successful

partnership with fellow community groups. *Summer*— BWA Board members continued to participate in community events by manning an educational booth at the Weekend in the Wilds in July. Informational flyers and membership signups were distributed, while the BWA held their Sixth Annual Crayfish Race.

Fall— The Third Annual Driftwoodstock, an event celebrating the watershed, was held in September at the Bucktail Rod & Gun Club. Live music, educational tables and a wonderful dinner were highlights of this event. The BWA was awarded their second US Forest Service Grants for continued weed work and project management through SIPMA. Through SIPMA, a watershed approach has been taken for invasive species management in the Sinnemahoning Creek Watershed, which includes \$20,000 in grant funding for 2014, \$5,000 in corporate donations, 42 gross miles of Japanese knotweed spraying, 300 gross acres of mile-a-minute vine control and 180 cooperating landowners. BWA is proud to fill this vital need in watershed management and restoration.

Four Mile Run



2010



2013

Sinnemahoning Invasive Species Management Area

The Sinnemahoning Invasive Plant Management Area (SIPMA) is a cooperative weed management area. It is a formal group of partners from state and local agencies, private business, county conservation district and non-profits, all working together to control invasive species and share information and resources. SIPMA is funded primarily through grants, with the Bucktail Watershed Association (BWA) serving as the fiscal agent. The SIPMA Coordinator salary is currently funded by a US Forest Service grant.

The program is overseen by a Steering Committee, which meets quarterly. The Committee is comprised of representatives from the Cameron, Elk and Potter County Conservation Districts, and representatives from the Elk State Forest and Sinnemahoning State Park.

Capacity Building: An important component of SIPMA Coordinator's work is to write grants to continue invasive species control and maintain funding for the coordinator position. In partnership with SIPMA's fiscal agent, BWA, grants were submitted to the Sinnemahoning Stakeholders Committee, Western PA Conservancy, US Forest Service, National Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (FBC). All grants were awarded except for the NFWF and FBC applications.

To formalize SIPMA, most partners have signed a Memorandum of Understanding, a non-binding agreement that states support for SIPMA and each organization's invasive species control actions.

Outreach and Education: A goal of the SIPMA is to create a database of invasive species in the watershed. This project is a collaboration between SIPMA, the Cameron County Conservation District and Cameron County. The end result is a website where the

general public and SIPMA members (with different access levels) can see map locations of weeds and a detailed site and treatment history. In 2014 SIPMA participated in several planning meetings with District staff and a GIS/database expert with the North Central Regional Planning Commission. The database is web based and can be found at <http://maps.ncentral.com/sipma>. Weed data is currently being entered.

In January, SIPMA Coordinator, Tanya Meyer, worked with the SIPMA Steering Committee to develop the 2014 Annual Operating Plan. Meyer also presented on wild land and agricultural weeds at the Elk County Conservation District's Agricultural Producers' Meeting.

In February, the Winter SIPMA meeting was held at the Elk State Forest Office in Emporium, with pesticide credits offered. Meyer presented at the Society of American Foresters meeting in Williamsport on the creation and organization of a cooperative weed management area.

In April, SIPMA prepared an interpretive sign on invasive species for the Gary Dubler Memorial Nature Trail at the Woodland Elementary School. SIPMA partnered with Sinnemahoning State Park Environmental Education Specialist Kim Lott for a workshop on "Identifying and Controlling Invasive Bushes and Vines." (SIPMA, continued on page 12)



Tree of heave, Before

Dying

Dead and Removed

(SIPMA, continued from page 11)

Pesticide credits were offered and 36 people attended.

In May, Meyer presented information on



Mile-a-minute treatment.

the identification of roadside weeds at PennDOT's Foreman Meeting in Coudersport. Meyer and Lott also hosted a second workshop on invasive bushes and vines. This was followed up by a radio interview for Charlie Burchfield's "Gateway Outdoors" on invasive plants.

In July SIPMA partnered with the BWA to provide an educational booth at the Weekend in the Wilds. SIPMA also participated in the Cameron County Youth Day, at the Bucktail Rod and Gun Club, providing a display on invasive species.

In August, SIPMA participated in the Elk Festival, with an invasive species identification table. Meyer and Lott, partnered again at Sinnemahoning Park for a pesticide credit workshop on "How to Control Knotweed" for 25 participants.

In October, SIPMA provided educational materials at the Sizerville and Sinnemahoning State Park fall festivals. The Fall SIPMA meeting was hosted at Sinn SP.

In November, SIPMA provided an invasive species information table at the North Central Forest Landowners Association meeting in Port Allegheny. Meyer assisted Lott with a registered technician training on mist blower used for mile-a-minute treatment.

Project Work: 2014 was a very productive year for weed control work in the watershed with work starting in March and continuing through October. Pre-emergent herbicide was applied on mile-a-minute (MaM) vine on properties west of Emporium Borough and in Moatville, north of Sterling Run, totaling over 300 gross acres.

May through September both MaM

locations were monitored and follow-up herbicide treatments was applied. Plants were also hand pulled and in some cases burned.

Tree of heaven was treated in Clear Creek and the Driftwood Borough in July. Trees were then removed in November, so they did not become hazard trees.

In August, Japanese barberry was treated with herbicide on approximately five acres of state and private land near the confluence of Portage Creek and the Driftwood Branch of the Sinnemahoning Creek. During this time spot treatment of tree of heaven in Driftwood Borough, Japanese knotweed in the First Fork, phragmites in the East Fork and an Asiatic bittersweet cut stump experiment on Four Mile Run was completed.

Japanese knotweed work was completed on 43 gross miles of streambank from August through October. Japanese knotweed treatment was started at the top of the Driftwood Branch watershed, near the Elk County line along State Route 120 and continued downstream to Square Timber Run. Portage Creek, Four Mile Run, Cowley Run, Cooks Run, Clear Creek, May Hollow, Tannery Run and West Creek were also treated. In Potter County fifteen miles of streambank were treated along Freeman Run, Nelson Run and the First Fork. Miscellaneous upland sites were treated around Emporium and the Cameron County landfill. In total 180 landowners cooperated to have their property sprayed in Cameron and Potter Counties.

The spraying season concluded with the herbicide treatment of glossy buckthorn in Elk County along State Route 120, to prevent the spread into Cameron County.



Japanese knotweed treatment.

Cooperating Agencies and Partners

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