



2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Cameron County Conservation District

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Emporium, PA 15834

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District Board

Mark Johnson—Chairman
Paul Lyon—Vice Chairman
Phil Jones—Commissioner
Steve VanEerden—Treasurer
Kirk Bainey—Secretary
Dennis Migilicio—Public Director
LouAnn Reed—Public Director

Associate Directors

Dr. Joseph Blackburn
Shawn Mason
Steve Zoschg
Scott Lyon
Jan Hampton

Staff

Todd Deluccia—District Manager
Kate Morgan—Assistant District Manager
Jennifer Dixon—Administrative Assistant

From the Chairman

Greetings,

2016 brought many changes for the Cameron County Conservation District. With the retirement of our long-standing manager, Jan Hampton, an important void needed filled. With the unanimous consent of our local board, county, and state government a major board/staff realignment was implemented.

Veteran staffers, Todd Deluccia and Kate Morgan became our District Manager and Assistant District Manager, respectively. Jenn Dixon was hired to become our Administrative Assistant. Our board asked each staffer to assume many roles and functions that are explained in greater detail within this report. We asked all three staffers to multitask, learn and share each other's jobs, and to continue their pragmatic approach to Cameron County's environmental and conservation concerns. We set our goals high. We "piled it on". We crossed our fingers.

After a year it is wonderfully apparent that our newly created staff are blending together and cohesively meeting and solving all of the challenges and objectives that were placed before them. New programs and ideas are being developed. New accounting and financial systems have been implemented. Many important environmental projects are being carried out. Public outreach and education, especially youth programs, are top priority. Board members are working closely with the staff and county officials; all in the name of conservation. Read through this Annual Report to see what I mean.

The future looks bright for environmental conservation in Cameron County. I'm talking about the air, the land, the water, and all plants and animals. Many challenges are in front of us but I can think of three staffers, seven board members, and four associate members who are totally committed and passionate about our homeland. I guess you could say that we're just crazy about this place!

Sincerely,

Mark Johnson, Chairman



District Chairman
Mark Johnson

District Welcomes & Thanks

The District would like to welcome Administrative Assistant Jennifer Dixon. Jennifer's role with the District is to assist District Staff with any office and field duties they may have. A native of Cameron County, Jennifer attended DuBois Business College, where she earned an Associates Degree in Business Management/Computer Applications. Prior to joining the District, Jennifer worked in the Industrial Field as a Staff Accountant/Purchasing Manager. When she is not working, Jennifer enjoys spend her free time with family and friends.



The District would like to give Thanks and send Well Wishes to District Board Member, Denny Migilicio as he is starting his new journey in retirement from the District Board. Denny, a native of Cameron County joined the District Board as a Public Director in 2014. Although he has many years dedicated in Conservation Work, Denny has spent his life helping to keep our lands and waters clean. Thank You Denny, for your dedication and service.



District staff and partners at the Wild About Nature Field Day

2016 Project Tour

In November 2016 the District invited the community on a personal guided tour of projects through Cameron County that have been constructed with the District over the past several years. A group of over 20 guests had the opportunity to get up close to projects such as; streambank stabilization, fish habitat enhancement, and acid mine reclamation. District Manager, Todd Deluccia guided the tour where, he explained in detail what went into each project. It was a well attended tour, we look forward to next years tour.



Streambank Stabilization—Mason Farm



Beginning stage of the Acid Mine Facility



Tom Turkey even showed up for the Project Tour.



2016 Project Tour

Conservation Education

Community conservation education is one of the many things the District works hard at continuing through the years. Working with the local school district and youth organizations in Cameron County helps the District to connect to the younger generation.

In January, District Manager Todd Deluccia, assisted Sinnemahoning State Park's, Jess Deluccia with an after school program on 'Mammals and how they adapt to harsh winters.' After a brief discussion the students were encouraged to create a piece of art using mammal tracks and paint. It was a great program with many different masterpieces created.

Working with local youth organizations such as the Cameron County Outdoor Youth Activities (CCOYA), is another way the District works with the youth of today. In the spring, the District helped with several activities at the Andrews Farm, where students from Cameron County School District, had the chance to get hands on. The second grade students spent a day learning about bees, deer and enjoying a scavenger hunt. Associate Director, Jan Hampton along with Assistant District Manager, Kate Morgan were on hand to hold a presentation on non-point pollution, where the students had the chance to work with the Enviroscape. Another program saw the life skills high school students working with District Manager, Todd Deluccia, where he held a presentation on the brook trout. After the presentation the students got a chance to test their skills with a some fishing at the pond located at the Andrews Farm.

The District takes pride in working close with the Cameron County School District. Wanting to do more for the school, the District was approached by Woodland Elementary Enrichment Teacher, Brock Wennin to see what could be done to incorporate recycling into the school. Mr. Wennin wants to encourage the Enrichment Students to recycle by showing what materials can be made into after weights are calculated. Since the County of Cameron currently does not offer construction/copy based paper drop off at their recycling location, the District reached out



Recycling in Cameron County Schools

to Elk County Recycling Center to help. With a drop off location set, the District staff turned to the Commissioners of Cameron County along with the District Board to set up a plan for travel costs to get materials to Elk County. The Commissioners have agreed to the District staff using the county truck for pick up and drop offs as well as supplying the gas throughout the project. The District Board has agreed to a budget amount, so that bins can be purchased and supplied to the school to hold materials. The project has taken off and now sees the Cameron County High School students participating in the program under the direction of German Honors Teacher, Kristina Las.

Over the summer the District continues to work with the youth with such programs as the Black Forest Conservation School. This is a weeklong conservation school open to children ages thirteen to fifteen, where they spend a week in surrounding counties learning the different ways and means of conservation. During their time in Cameron County, Todd helped with a day of bird banding, fish electroshocking in Salt Run, bees, and tours of the Emporium Water Company and Mid-Cameron Authority sewage treatment plants were given.

Todd also held a presentation on the recovery of Driftwood branch and Portage creek after the 2006 train derailment.

The week long Cameron County Fair gave the District an opportunity to spread the word on conservation. A booth was set up for adults to gather information about the district, along with a dragonfly craft for kids. The District also participated in the Fair's Conservation Night for the community, where they partnered with other agencies

to help educate not only our youth, but our adult generation as well.



Assistant District Manager, Kate Morgan (Pictured on the Left) helps create a fish craft on Conservation Night at the Cameron County Fair



District Manager, Todd Deluccia building composters bins for the Districts Composting Workshop

Educating the community is not only for our youth, the District offers an adult based education as well. One of the ways the staff can reach out to continue conservation education is by offering workshops. This past year with the help of PACD Mini Grants, the District was able to hold several workshops on rain barrels, composting and a backyard conservation workshop. The workshops were a big success, participants got the chance to take home items such as rain barrels, composters, and soil sample test kits. Throughout the workshops attendees were introduced to speakers such as District Chairman Mark Johnson, when he spoke about composting. Johnson showed how to turn everyday garbage into the black gold of the gardening world. Sinnemahoning State Park Environmental Education Specialist, Kim Lott held a program on non-point pollution, and how this effects where to put a rain barrel at home.

Community groups and clubs also have reached out to the District looking to continue their conservation knowledge. At the start of the fishing season, the Emporium Men's Club reached out to Todd, where he held a program on Muskie in PA. When the spring season was upon us, Todd held a presentation at the Emporium Senior Center, where he talked about the Recovery of the Portage Train Derailment. This was the largest attended presentation held on record at the Senior Center. Kate also held a program on bird feeders at the Emporium Senior Center. With their bird feeders ready, the Emporium Senior Center wanted to enhance their Bird watching skills, District Chairman and Bird enthusiast Mark Johnson, presented a program on the Birds of Cameron County.



Emporium Senior Center Bird Feeder program

The Wild Envirothon

The 2016 Wild Envirothon showed a record setting 21 teams competing from both McKean and Cameron County School Districts. This years competition took place at the Keating Sportsmen's Club in Smethport, PA where students were challenged with five subject areas of the "ecosystem" including; Aquatics, Forestry, Soils, Wildlife and the 2016 Current Event: Urban Forestry. Winning teams from each school got the chance to participate in the state competition held at Susquehanna University, and Camp Mount Luther, PA. Although Cameron County fought hard, they came up short and did not continue to that National Level. In all it was a very successful year, and as always the District looks forward to continuing our Wild Envirothon learning experience.



Students get a chance to check out some Salamanders.



Aquatics learning.



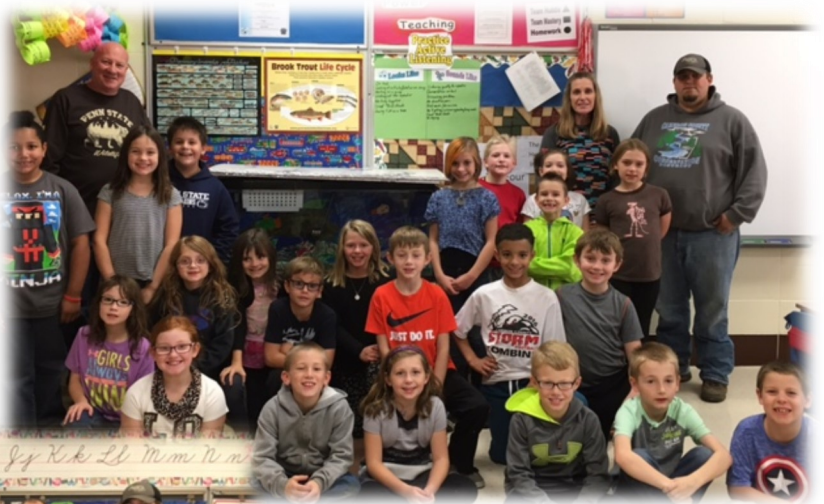
2016 Cameron County Wild Envirothon Team

Trout in the Classroom

The 3rd grade students at the Woodland Elementary School, get the opportunity each year to help participate in the 'Trout in the Classroom' program. Each year students in Mr. Porkalob and Mrs. Wilsons classes help raise trout from eggs to fingerling stage. Here students will monitor the trout's stages of life through assessment of the tanks water quality, until they are ready to be released into a state-approved stream near the school.

Throughout the time the students are caring for the trout, the District works to help the students gain an understanding on the history and biology of the trout in PA. In November District Manager, Todd Deluccia and Administrative Assistant, Jenn Dixon presented a program to the students on the biology of the brook trout. Here the students learned the anatomy of the trout along with information on spawning. After a short video, the students got a chance to make their own paper brook trout craft. In December the District once again presented a program on how past resource extraction practices effected the brook trout, after a short video and discussion, the students once again got to create a craft, this time a Christmas ornament with a brook trout inside.

Mrs. Wilson and her 3rd grade class, pose for a picture with District Manager Todd Deluccia and CCOYAs Don Bickford for Trout in the Classroom.



District Manager Todd Deluccia, CCOYAs Don Bickford along with Mr. Porkalob and his 3rd grade class with their Trout in the Classroom.

Wild About Nature Field Day



District Manager, Todd Deluccia welcomes the students in 4th, 5th and 6th grade classes from Cameron County School District.

The Recycling Relay gave the students a chance to compete against each other by sorting recyclable material into the correct bins.



At the beginning of the new school year, the District held the Wild About Nature Field Day, where students in 4th, 5th and 6th grade at Cameron County School District had a chance to spend the day learning about the environment from District Staff and partners. This year students had the opportunity to learn about macro-invertebrates, salamanders and recycling from the District Staff. Also on hand to help were DCNR Forestry's, Diana Ball and Don Weis, who presented a program to the students on tree identification. Students also got the opportunity to learn about survival fire building, with Nelson Haas and Vince Hornung of Mountaineer Search and Rescue, invasive species, with Sinnemahoning State Park's, Jess Deluccia, and Penn State Extension's, Natalie Aeilio also presented a program on food webs. It was a chilly and day, but fun was had by all.

Sterling Run Restoration

Work continued in the Sterling Run drainage in 2016 to remediate issue caused by past mining practices. In 2013, a grant was received from DEP Growing Greener in the amount of \$678,333 to complete the construction of two passive treatment systems in Finley Run and Portable Run. In addition to this another nearly \$18,000 came from the District through Act 13 funds to complete construction on these two sites.

The FIN32/33 site is the largest contributor of Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) to Finley Run. Water quality is very poor, with average pH around 3.4 with high levels of acidity and metals such as aluminum, iron, and manganese. This system consists of three vertical flow wetlands which strip the oxygen from the water and bring up the pH, an oxidation and precipitation basin where oxygen is reincorporated back into the water allowing the metals to drop out, and a surface flow wetland which serves as a final polish to the water quality. After going through the system water quality is improved upon immensely. Latest water analysis showed a pH of 7.3 with net alkaline conditions and low metals.

The PORT14 site is one of two major contributors of AMD to Portable Run. Pre treatment water quality here is an average pH of 4.2, high acidity, but not very many metals. Water was treated in a similar fashion here by in a smaller scale. One vertical flow wetland was installed along with one surface flow wetland. Because of the lower levels of metal in the water it did not require an oxidation precipitation basin. Most recent analysis here showed vast improvement as well, with pH at 7.4 and again net alkaline conditions.

One inspection of the FIN32/33 site gave District staff a great surprise one day. Roughly one mile below the system at the outlet of a road culvert two brook trout were spotted. This section of stream probably has not had trout, or really any aquatic life for that matter in 50 years. This is why the District does this work. It was such a great feeling that day to see that.

With the recent completion of the FIN32/33 and PORT14 sites and previous construction of the MAYH49 and Landfill passive system, the Sterling Run watershed is well on the path of recovery. There is still a lot of work to be completed particularly in Finley Run. In 2016 the Conservation District received funding from the PA Fish and Boat Commission for the construction of the FIN63 system which is the upper most pollution to Finley Run. The District is hopeful that this will restore trout populations downstream approximately one mile. With a little more effort, the entire watershed, could be restored, which has been a goal of the Conservation District for many years.



Sterling Run Acid Mine Treatment Facility

Streambank Stabilization and Fish Habitat

2016 was another strong year for the Conservation District doing streambank stabilization and fish habitat enhancement. Six projects were completed in Sterling Run, Driftwood Branch, East Cowley Run, and Portage Creek. A combination of devices and techniques were used including multi log deflectors, single log deflectors, modified mudsill cribwall, crossvanes and rip rap.

In 2016 the Conservation District received a grant for three sites in the Sterling Run area. Two sites were in Sterling Run itself and the other was in the Driftwood Branch. The Benedict Stabilization was a 500 feet long and 8 feet high severely eroded streambank along Sterling Run. A combination of 20 single and multi log deflectors were used at this site. The purpose of this structure is to provide a break in the water and physically turn the water away from the bank. This in turn builds up the existing streambank allowing vegetation to grow, further stabilizing the site. The Conner site, also in Sterling Run, was a 300 foot long and 8 feet high bank that was eroding dangerously close to the home septic system. Four sections of modified mudsill cribwall were installed and ten single log deflectors. The purpose of a modified mudsill is to stabilize the bank with stone and logs in a way that creates an artificial cutbank which creates overhead cover providing excellent habitat for fish communities. The Mason Stabilization was the big project including in this grant. This was a 350 feet long and 10 feet high bank that was producing tons of sedimentation into the Driftwood Branch of Sinnemahoning



District Manager, Todd Deluccia explains what work went into the Connors site project.



Portage Creek crossvane, located upstream of the mouth of Salt Run

Creek. A large instream gravel bar has formed and has caused the stream to shift. A twelve section modified mudsill cribwall was installed. Because of the high velocities associated with this river system it required a large quantity of stone, 660 tons. At this site historically was a stream crossing that the Mason Farm and an adjacent camp owner used to access the other side of the stream. We reinstalled a stabilized stream crossing as well. This grant was funded by Headwaters RC&D through the Sinnemahoning Creek Watershed Program for \$47,885. The District has been working off of a grant funded by Headwaters RC&D for the past two years titled the Portage Pool Habitat Initiative.

Because of a lack of pool habitat in lower Portage Creek the District has been installing large log crossvanes. One was installed this year upstream of the mouth of Salt Run.

They created grade control in unstable streambeds and create large scour holes that also provide overhead cover from the logs. The structure provides excellent habitat, and was installed for \$6,450.

The District constructed another site at Sizerville State Park in East Cowley Run. The Bottomlands Trail crosses the stream on the North end of the park. The footbridge for that trail had a cribwall for abutments and those structures had eroded over the years. The bridge was tore out and installed new modified muddsill cribwalls on both sides of the stream for new abutments (three sections on one side and two on the other). Sizerville State Park then installed a new foot bridge. This project was funded by DCNR for \$4,500.

The final project of the season was the Shippen Levee Stabilization. A 500 feet section of the levee along Sinnemahoning Portage Creek had eroded away to where two local businesses and the sewage and water lines were threatened. This site was stabilized using 900 tons of R8 rip rap. This project was a partnership between the District, Cameron County Commissioners, Mid-Cameron Authority, Emporium Water Company, Shippen Township, and Emporium Borough. Funding was provided by the District, Commissioners, Shippen Township and Mid- Cameron Authority in the amount of \$27,000 and the Emporium Water Company and Emporium Borough installed the stone to complete this project.

In all for 2016 almost \$85,835 and 2,000 feet of streambank was stabilized while providing high quality habitat for the aquatic communities of these watersheds. 2017 is sure to be a busy year again with projects already slated for Wycoff Run, North Creek, Salt Run, Driftwood Branch Sinnemahoning Creek, Brooks Run, First Fork of Sinnemahoning Creek, and Sinnemahoning Portage Creek.

HEADWATERS RC&D: Sinnemahoning Stakeholders Committee

Settlement monies in the amount of \$3.175 million from the June 30th 2006 Norfolk Southern train derailment that caused a serious fish kill in Big Fill Run, Sinnemahoning Portage Creek, and the Driftwood Branch of Sinnemahoning Creek are administered by the Headwaters RC&D Sinnemahoning Stakeholders Committee. This is a nine member committee consisting of one representative from each of the following organizations; Cameron County Conservation District, McKean County Conservation District, Cameron County Commissioners, McKean County Commissioners, Department of Environmental Protection, PA Fish and Boat Commission, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and two public seats.

2016 marked the 8th round for the Sinnemahoning Watershed Grant Program. Eight projects were funded totaling \$139,936. This funding will be used for projects in the Sinnemahoning Creek Watershed. Things such as water monitoring, invasive plant control, fish habitat enhancement, streambank stabilization, AMD assessment, and riparian buffer improvement were funded this year.

Since the inception of the program in 2009 \$1,176,150 in funding over eight years and that money has helped leverage approximately an additional five million dollars. Because of the nature of the program and how the endowment was setup, this money will be available in perpetuity and works solely off of interest earned. This money will for a very long time improve the already great Sinnemahoning Creek watershed.



Dirt & Gravel and Low Volume Road Program

This program continues to be a great improvement to dirt and paved low volume roads (less than 500 cars a day) of Cameron County. In 2016 the Quality Assurance Board, which consist of one member from the Conservation District, one from PA Fish and Boat Commission, and one from Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), met to review potential projects presented by local municipalities. Four dirt and gravel projects in Shippen and Lumber Townships and one low volume project in Emporium Borough, were funded.

The Upper Sizer Run project in Shippen Township is located on Sizer Run Road. This project is the installation of 3,200 feet of underdrain to collect roadside springs, and the replacement of cross pipes and installation of additional cross pipes along this steep roadway. This project was funded for \$15,158. The second project located on the lower part of Sizer Run Road in Shippen Township is a severely entrenched were part of the dirt road doesn't allow storm water to get off of the roadway. In some areas the stream is actually higher than the road surface. This project included the installation of additional and replacement of old road cross pipes. To remedy the entrenchment 4,000 tons of 2RC were brought in to raise the road profile. This project was funded for \$58,220.

A third project took place in Shippen Township on Fourmile Road. This site will be the installation of additional and replacement of old cross pipes, stabilization of several failing banks along the roadway with rip rap, and 2,100 feet of underdrain. This project was funded for \$13,660.

The fourth and final dirt road project was funded in Lumber Township on Hunts Run Road. This project will be the installation of additional and replacement of old cross pipes, French mattresses to allow springs and wetland flow through the road profile and the placement of DSA along 1,800 feet of roadway. This project was funded for \$57,220.

The District received and awarded one application for a low volume road to the Emporium Borough. The 7th St extension receives a lot of overland flow from the mountain above. This water is entering the roadway and causing issues. In addition, it is getting into the storm drains overwhelming them. This project will build a retaining wall using concrete block and install a French drain behind that wall to collect the water coming off the hillside. That water will then, instead of going to the smaller storm drain on 7th Street, will go West and connect to the larger PennDot storm water system on Woodland Avenue. This project was funded for \$25,680.

The District continues to work with all municipalities throughout Cameron County and several projects are on the docket for future funding. This program, is a great asset and has improved water quality and many roadways in the area over the years.

NATURAL GAS DEVELOPMENT

In 2016, there was a continued decrease of gas well development in Cameron County. The following is a summary of gas well development from DEP's Oil & gas Management's website. In 2016, no conventional (shallow) wells were permitted or drilled in the county. Nineteen unconventional (deep) wells were permitted, all were identified as horizontal wells. All of the permits were issued for wells located in Shippen Township.

Only one well was drilled in 2016, located in Shippen Township. A total of 175 DEP inspections were completed with, no violations found on the 66 total wells inspected.

Erosion and Sediment Control and Waterways & Wetlands Management

There was an increase in the number of Erosion and Sediment Control Plan reviews and 105 General Permits issued in 2016. There were no NPDES or ESCGP-2 permits issued, through there were a few open projects from past years. The District saw its first dam repair project. Work at George B. Stevenson Dam, was completed on the downstream side and a dredging project was started in a reservoir, both projects should be wrapped up in 2017.

One ESCGP-2 pipeline repair project continued in 2016 and should be completed in 2017.

Educational opportunities continued under the partnership with Cameron, Elk, McKean, Potter, Tioga and Warren County Conservation District's. The partnership provided several workshops throughout the region. The annual SFI Timber Harvesting Workshop was held in Potter County. Assistant District Manager, Kate Morgan gave a presentation on Best Management Practice Installation and Maintenance with Potter's Glenn Dunn. Programming is already being planned for 2017, building off of 2016 successes.

Chapter 102: Erosion And Sediment Control

Outreach Events	10
Event Participants	330
Technical Assistance	44
News Releases	58
Incomplete Plans	3
Complete Plans	34
Initial Technical Reviews	19
Follow Up Reviews	10
Project Acres	3084
Disturbed Acres	68
Complaints	19
Project Sites Inspected	33
Total Inspections	83
E&S Fees Collected	\$2,125.00

Chapter 105: Dam Safety & Waterways Mgt

Outreach Events	10
Events Participants	330
Technical Assistance	44
News Releases	38
Incomplete Applications	5
GP-1	5
GP-3	6
GP-7	3
GP-8	4
Complaints	19
Project Sites Inspected	28
Total Inspections	103
Non-compliance (Referred)	1
Permit Fees Collected	\$ 3,925.00

NRCS Program Review for Cameron County

Conservation Practices implemented through USDA NCS programs in 2016:

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP):

1. Wildlife escape structures for water troughs—7
2. Wildlife friendly hay harvesting methods—33.3 acres
3. Reduction of pesticide drift on cropland—102.1 acres
4. Forested Riparian Buffer—Created snags/den trees and control invasive species—3 acres

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP):

1. Forest Stand Improvement –1.7 acres

Agricultural Conservation Review

2016 brought many changes to the District's, agricultural program. Due to contractual changes in the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP), the District decided to forgo CBP funding and not renew the District's contract. After much discussion the District, chose to continue providing guidance and education programs for the local agricultural community and not take on a regulatory/ inspection focus that would be required under the CBP's changes starting in mid-2016.

This change actually rejuvenated the program to expand into new areas. In late 2016 the District started the application process to fund several agricultural best management practice projects in the county. With technical and design assistance from PACD and NRCS, Assistant District Manager, Kate Morgan, initiated a Rain Gutter BMP Improvement Program. Two farms were chosen and an application for funding will be submitted for the installation of 465 feet rain gutters and 415 feet proper drainage outlets.

The District has partnered with the Headwater's RC&D Council, to apply for a regional Growing Greener Grant that would cover projects in Cameron, Clearfield, Elk and McKean Counties. The District submitted for two projects, first for construction of a roofed manure stacking pad and second for barnyard stabilization and animal walkway improvements.

The final project will be a streambank fencing project on a beef cattle operation. The project proposes to fence 2500 feet of streambank fencing to exclude livestock from the stream. The project also includes the installation of approximately 50 in-stream streambank stabilization and fish habitat enhancement structures.

All of the proposed projects are located within special protection watersheds. If funding requests are successful, projects could start in 2017.

In addition to the on the ground projects, the District hosted three agricultural workshops. The 13th Annual Agricultural Producers' Meeting was held in February with great success. Participants were provided soil sample test kits and pesticide credits for free. The 2016 Backyard

Conservation Workshop was held in April for hobby and small scale farmers. In August, the District hosted the 1st Annual Pasture Walk and Picnic at the Little Red Barn Farm.

2016 brought many changes to the District, but staff strived to serve the local farming community through educational programming and technical assistance. 2017 should show the continued support and growth of these new BMP construction programs and the expansion of educational opportunities.



Robin Kuleck from Little Red Barn Farm, explains to the group what details go into running an Alpaca Farm.

Bucktail Watershed Association

The Bucktail Watershed Association 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 Watersheds. 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 harmony with the goals of the BWA.

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

Current Projects: BWA is working to control invasive plant species such as mile a minute vine, Japanese knotweed, and buckthorn along the Driftwood Branch and First Fork of the Sinnemahoning Creek Watershed.

Future goals: Work on more habitat improvement projects, address stream bank erosion problems, plant trees in stream corridors to shade and lower stream water temperatures, continue invasive plant control activities, and increase memberships.

Activities Recap for 2016:

In February 2016, the BWA received funding from the Sinnemahoning Stakeholders Committee (train wreck/chemical spill settlement funds) for invasive plant control work for 2016, and received funding from the Dominion/Western PA Conservancy mini-grant program to cover the cost of our insurance for the pesticide applicator permit and water quality monitoring equipment to re-start a volunteer water quality monitoring program. The 2015/2016 winter member newsletter was released to all BWA members. In March, the BWA held the annual Driftwood Branch stream cleanup, prior to the annual canoe / kayak race, in partnership with other local groups.

In early spring, pre-emergent herbicide was applied to mile a minute vine on the Gerg, Weir, and Burkhouse properties west of Emporium, and two sites on the properties of Tzanakis, Flynn, Fapore, Card and Grimone along the Driftwood Branch above Sterling Run (total: 300 gross acres). Follow up treatment from May-September, spraying and hand pulling. In April, the BWA received a Conservation Stewardship Organization Award from the PA Wilds.

In July, the BWA staffed a booth at the Weekend in the Wilds and handed out memberships and information fliers. The BWA also tabled for the Sinnemahoning and Sizerville State Park Fall Festivals in October.

From September to October, BWA did Japanese knotweed work: touching up and/or treating 42 gross miles of stream banks. Knotweed control efforts included 180 cooperating landowners in Potter and Cameron Counties. Knotweed work was done starting at the top of the Driftwood Branch, from Indian Camp almost to Sterling Run. BWA also treated sites along the Portage Branch, Four Mile Run, Cowley Run, Cook's Run, Clear Creek, May Hollow, Tannery Run and West Creek, about 27 miles of stream bank. In Potter County, BWA treated knotweed along Freeman and Nelson Run, and the First Fork for about 15 miles of stream. We also treated miscellaneous upland sites around Emporium.

At the end of October, the BWA hired their new employee, Nikki Ryan, as the Project Coordinator. She will be learning and taking over all of Tanya Meyer's responsibilities.

The BWA continues to be the financial manager for the Sinnemahoning Invasive Plant Management Area, a Cooperative Weed Management Area that covers the Sinnemahoning Creek Watershed.



Sinnemahoning Invasive Plant Management

The Sinnemahoning Invasive Plant Management Area is a Cooperative Weed Management Area. It is a formal group of partners from state and local agencies, private business, Conservation Districts, and non-profits all working together to control invasive plants and share information and resources. The project coordinator is currently funded by federal, state, and local grants. The program is overseen by a Steering Committee, which meet three times per year. The Steering Committee is formed by directors and employees from the Elk, Potter, and Cameron County Conservation Districts as well as the DCNR Elk State Forest and Sinnemahoning State Park.



Project Work

Direct SIPMA funding treated Japanese knotweed in Potter County; an isolated population of phragmites, a highly invasive grass, on the East Fork in Cameron County; as well as isolated populations of Tree of Heaven along the Driftwood. SIPMA partners worked on controlling Japanese Knotweed (43 gross miles of stream bank), Japanese Barberry (5 acres), Mile-A-Minute vine (300 gross acres) and 400 acres of Buckthorn. The Buckthorn was treated in Elk County and Cameron County in State Game Lands 14.

A goal of the SIPMA is to create a database of invasive plants in the watershed. The SIPMA Coordinator has an up to date spreadsheet, and information from that sheet is being entered into the iMapInvasives Program, a national partnership for mapping invasive species. In PA, it is managed by the Pennsylvania Heritage Program and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

Outreach and Education

SIPMA held full meetings in February, June, and December. The SIPMA tabled at three local outdoor themed events: Weekend in the Wilds, Sizerville and Sinnemahoning State Park Fall Festivals. The coordinator and some SIPMA members participated in advanced training for iMapInvasives. One member newsletter was released in the winter of 2015/2016.

Capacity Building

In October of 2016, a new Project Coordinator, Nikki Ryan, was hired. She will be learning and taking over all of Tanya Meyer's responsibilities.

The coordinator wrote grants to the DEP Growing Greener for continued coordinator support and Japanese Knotweed work, Sinnemahoning Stakeholders Committee for continued invasive plant treatment, and a mini-grant was submitted to the Western PA Conservancy for herbicide applicator insurance. As of now, we received funding from the 2016 Growing Greener and the Sinnemahoning Stakeholders Committee grants. The Bucktail Watershed Association (BWA), an important SIPMA partner and financial manager of the organization, submits and manages these grants.

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

2016 Activities Recap:

- February SIPMA meeting.
- April: received a Conservation Stewardship Organization Award from the PA Wilds (BWA).
- June SIPMA meeting.
- July: Weekend in the Wilds—shared space at BWA booth.
- August: treated tree of heaven sites in Driftwood.
- September weed work: treat knotweed in First Fork; Oriental Bittersweet demonstration project on HWY 872. No Phragmite work done this year.
- October: outreach by tabling at both Sizerville and Sinnemahoning State parks fall events, Hired a new project coordinator along with a SIPMA meeting.
- November: coordinator and SIPMA partners participated in an advanced training for iMapInvasives
- December: submitted Dominion/Western Pennsylvania Conservancy 2017 watershed mini grant

Cooperating Agencies

Bucktail Watershed Association

Steve VanEerden, Chair
P.O. Box 123
Emporium, PA 15834
bucktailwatershed@yahoo.com

Cameron County Commissioners

Lori Reed, Phil Jones, Jim Thomas
20 East 5th St.
Emporium, PA 15834
814-486-2315

Cameron County Outdoor Youth Activities

Don Bickford
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Emporium, PA 15834
814-486-2315

DCNR Bureau of Forestry

Toby Herzing
258 Sizerville Road
Emporium, PA 15834
814-486-3353

DEP

Patti Havens
208 West Third St., Suite 101
Williamsport, PA 17701
570-327-3636

Headwaters RC&D Council

Todd Deluccia, Chairman
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DuBois, PA 15801
814-503-8653

PA Fish & Boat Commission

Bill Crisp
450 Robinson Lane
Pleasant Gap, PA 16823
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PA Game Commission

Colleen Shannon—Land Manager
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Jersey Shore, PA 17740
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Penn State Cooperative Extension

Don Tanner
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SIPMA

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USDA, Farm Agency

Dave Stratton
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Coudersport, PA 16915
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USDA, NRCS

Lou Ann Swope
478 Jeffers St.
DuBois, PA 15801
814-375-2125 x 113

50th Anniversary Celebration

On June 16, 2016 the Cameron County Conservation District celebrated 50 years of conservation. In the middle of June, the District held a picnic style celebration at the Andrews Farm, to commemorate this achievement. The celebration saw over 150 people gather together to celebrate with entertainment from Bird Rehabilitator Mark Baker, where he conducted a program on birds of prey. Here guest got the chance to get up close to birds such as owls, turkey tultures and hawks. In the afternoon, guests were introduced to Folk Singer/Songwriter Van Wagner, as he educated us on Pennsylvania history through his love of music. Guests were also treated to different crafts, scavenger hunts, along with air rifle and bow stations. Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl even stopped by to wish the District many more years of conservation. The day ended with a short presentation on the history and current practices the District offers. District Manager, Todd Deluccia along with District Chairmen Mark Johnson, presented Vice-Chairmen Paul Lyon, with a plaque for over 40 years of dedicated service to the Conservation District. It was a fun and educational day for the community to enjoy.



Mark Baker presents his Birds of Prey program to the crowd.



Folk Singer/Songwriter Van Wagner entertains guests with his Folk Singing.



District Manager, Todd Deluccia and District Chairman, Mark Johnson, present an award to Paul Lyon, for his dedicated service to the District for over 40 years.



1966 First District Board Members L-R: Bill Bierly, Hugh Lyon, John Browdy, Charles McWilliams and John Mason