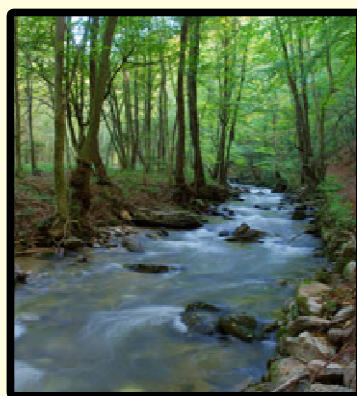


Pennsylvania Association of Resource Conservation & Development Councils



2009

Mission Statement: Support the Commonwealth's Resource Conservation and Development Councils by developing and strengthening partnerships at the state and national levels.

A Message from the President

As President of the Pennsylvania Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils, it is my pleasure to introduce the annual report of our State Association and the nine RC&D councils. RC&D is a truly unique program, giving local people the ability to determine their needs and find solutions.

As you look over the reports from the nine councils it will show the diversity of the many projects and activities that they are accomplishing. Many of these projects come to fruition through the partnerships with other organizations which supports our vision statement of nurturing cooperation to improve the quality of life and strengthen our ability to be responsible for the environment.

We in RC&D are very thankful for the support of the Federal Legislators and the Nation and State organizations that provide many of the resources for the councils to carry out their plans of work. Equally important are the many volunteers that give of their time, energy, resources and skills to successfully complete our many projects and serve as council members. Let's continue to work together so that RC&D will make positive difference in our communities.



Jack M. Preston, President

State Program Manager's Report



The year 2009 has been another growing year for the Pennsylvania RC&D Councils. Thanks to the efforts of dedicated Council members, Council staff, and Coordinators the list of accomplishments throughout Pennsylvania is impressive. Most obvious is that Councils are listening to local community needs and responding with innovative projects that are focused on issues that include, but not limited to community development, energy, local food, conservation and agriculture. Many of these projects are innovative and cutting edge. Excellent Area Plans and Annual Plans are the foundation for these accomplishments.

Accountability continues to be the focus from the leadership of USDA NRCS and the National Association. The NRCS Rapid Assessment was conducted in early 2010 to reflect on 2009 accountability and PA did well. The National Association is focusing on the Circle of Diamonds and PA Councils are in an excellent position to apply for and be accepted into this prestigious group of Councils throughout the country. Sound financial practices are an integral part of obtaining this accountability and PA Councils continue to implement procedures to ensure sound financial records.

State Conservationist Craig Derickson was very supportive of the RC&D program. With the close of the 2009 calendar year, Craig left PA to serve in Washington. Following Craig is an equally supportive State Conservationist in Denise Coleman. We have been fortunate to have them both in the leadership role.

Thank you to all Council members, staff and Coordinators for your many volunteer hours and dedication to RC&D. Your accomplishments shown throughout this annual report demonstrates the enormous value of your contributions.

Gary P. Smith, State RC&D Program Manager

Consortium for Scientific Assistance to Watersheds (C-SAW)

The Consortium for Scientific Assistance to Watersheds (C-SAW) is a successful, capacity-building, model program that provides watershed and other conservation groups the necessary assistance to effectively address local water-quality concerns across the state. C-SAW is guided and administered by Pocono Northeast RC&D with the assistance of the other PA RC&Ds and a partnership of service providers. C-SAW's multi-disciplinary team offers three levels of technical assistance, each customized to meet the group's specific, and changing needs: (1) watershed-specific (short-term) technical assistance; (2) mentoring (long-term) assistance; and (3) quality assurance/quality control assistance.



During FY-2009 the project partners provided technical assistance to a total of: **59 organizations, 564 consultations, hosted 96 workshops and trainings, with over 2,450 individuals received assistance, which resulted in improved/restored 0.75 miles of streams** as a direct result of C-SAW assistance being provided

Weed Control/Wildlife Habitat Technical Assistance - 2008/2009

Through the Weed Control/Wildlife Habitat Technical Assistance project, RC&D Councils worked closely with the landowners enrolled in CREP, farm operators, and the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency to provide technical assistance to landowners to help them address resource concerns. The technical assistance provided varied from addressing noxious and invasive weeds within a planting to emphasizing the beneficial plants that improve wildlife habitat. Controlling noxious weeds is a requirement of CREP participants; however, some people have difficulty recognizing these weeds in their early and middle growth stages before the plants become fully established and more difficult to control. While noxious weed control is important in and of itself, it is a critical component for attaining the ultimate goal of creating and maintaining high quality wildlife habitat on land enrolled in CREP. Wildlife habitat is a major component of the program and is something that is stressed through the RC&D's efforts is to educate landowners that certain plants like forbs found in a planting provide good diversity which directly relates to better habitat. Project accomplishments for Fiscal year 2009 include: **39 project partners participating, 3 workshops with 500 people attending, 6 field days with 345 people participating, 2 demonstration plots totaling 6 acres, 6 meetings, 14 presentations, 635 field visits with landowners providing assistance to over 15,440 acres.**

Pennsylvania Fuels for Schools & Beyond Program - 2008/2009

The Pennsylvania Fuels for Schools & Beyond program is a statewide biomass energy-use initiative promoting local renewable resources to provide reliable energy for Pennsylvania schools and businesses. The program will provide many opportunities for the expansion of the forest and agricultural resources and industry within Pennsylvania which will include the utilization of low grade wood, wood waste, dedicated energy crops, and agricultural products. The objectives of the program are to provide education and outreach, technical assistance, and financial assistance to the program and end-users for implementing biomass heating systems. The program was started by Pocono Northeast RC&D and is currently administered by the Council. Several other RC&D Councils have been participating with the program since its inception and during FY-2009 all RC&D Councils identified a level of participation with the program statewide. Through the efforts of the RC&D Councils and their partners the following accomplishments were achieved in FY-2009: **18 workshops, tours, or presentations given to over 470 people; 4 publications produced and distributed to 13,500 people/organizations, and financial assistance provided for 4 biomass heating systems.**

Capital Area RC&D

Vision Statement – Healthy Communities in Harmony with the Natural Environment

Lebanon Farmer to Farmer Network Project

The effort to clean up the Chesapeake Bay has evolved into an ever-growing list of technical resources, cost-share programs, and outreach strategies. Many farmers use these resources, but many others, for a wide range of reasons, do not. The reasons are unique to each person and each situation—even farmers with an interest in conservation may ultimately fail to act.

In 2007, a group of foundations called the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network (CBFN) contacted the Capital RC&D to collaborate on a project that facilitated the adoption of no-till practices by farmers through a mentoring relationship with peers. Together with Penn State Extension, NRCS and the Conservation District in Lebanon County, the RC&D project goal was to build a “farmer-to-farmer” program addressing the gaps between the assistance available and farmers’ willingness to use that assistance.

A group of no-till farmers, termed the “No-till Sluggers,” were paired with transitioning no-till farmers providing for a source of advice and exchange. Twenty-one beginning no-till farmers drew on the experience of eleven no-till advisors during the course of the three-year project, which ended in 2009. Together, they generated an additional 3,784 no-till acres in the county, which is a reflection on the dialogue and technology transfer that took place.



South Mountain Partnership

South Mountain is a geographic area encompassing parts of Adams, Cumberland, Franklin and York counties in the Capital RC&D region, and is host to globally significant natural, cultural and recreational resources that contribute to the quality of life in the region. The partners in the South Mountain Conservation Landscape Initiative (CLI) have a wide array of expertise, representing federal, state and local governments, non-profit organizations and educational institutions.

The South Mountain Partnership provides an opportunity to work together to ensure that the key resources identified are sustained for today’s communities and future generations. Initial Goals defined through the partnership include: Engagement with Land Planning, Promoting Local Agriculture, Conservation of Natural

Resources, Development of Business and Tourism, Growing Recreational Opportunities, and Protecting Cultural Heritage. All of the above goals align with the Capital RC&D Mission, so fit in nicely with present project activities. The RC&D Coordinator attends the planning meetings and serves on committees to assist in moving this important regional effort forward.

Buy Fresh Bike Local



On July 11th, sixty-two cyclists rode through the countryside to raise awareness of the wide variety of food produced in the surrounding area. Sponsored by Capital RC&D in conjunction with the South Central PA Buy Fresh Buy Local campaign, the event enabled participants to see and taste products found within a bike ride of their homes. Each rider was provided with a map outlining routes for three distinct tours, including agricultural highlights for the area.

There were two 25-mile loops and one 10-mile loop. This ride offered the opportunity to explore farm stands, farmers markets and preserved farms in Cumberland County. The day concluded with samples of fresh, locally produced food at the Dickinson College Farm in Boiling Springs. One rider later posted "...I had a great time. Good ride, well planned and carried out. Great food, thanks very much to all of you who worked so hard to pull this off."

The 2009 Buy Fresh Bike Local event was a success thanks to the wonderful volunteers and farmers donating time and product. Supporting organizations included South Central PA Buy Fresh Buy Local, Slow Food Harrisburg, Central Pennsylvania Conservancy, Dickinson College Farm and Cumberland County Farmland Preservation Program.

Other 2009 Council Projects

- Claremont Community Gardens
- Grass Roots: Prescribed Grazing for the 21st Century
- PA No-Till Alliance Support

*Counties Served: Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin,
Franklin, Lancaster Lebanon, York*



Capital RC&D Area Council Inc.

*401 East Louther Street, Suite 307,
Carlisle, PA 17013 ·*

Phone: (717) 241-4361 · Fax: (717) 240-0548 ·

Website: www.capitalrcd.org

The Capital RC&D is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

Community Partnerships RC&D conducted its annual week-long “Show Me the Money” workshop training participants from throughout Pennsylvania on obtaining and writing grants. Participant satisfaction was high and several excellent proposals were formulated during the class. Based on the continued success of this course, annual workshops are conducted.



“Show Me the Money” Grant Workshop



Pennsylvania Canal Celebration
Juniata County

Community Partnerships RC&D organized and conducted the First Pennsylvania Canal Celebration. This event emphasized conservation and cultural resources. Over 400 people attended the event, which included an interpretive nature hike; the dairy princess; workshops on composting, rain barrel use, natural design, wildlife, and others. Vendors represented community and sustainable interests: Village Acres (organic community sustainable agriculture farm); Alexander’s Honey; Emma’s Food For Life, Inc. (specializing in the freshest food made from local ingredients), and church food stands. The Lewistown Sentinel featured color front-page coverage of the event.

Sustainable agriculture and other asset-based businesses were highlighted through the Folk Arts program. Community Partnerships RC&D continues to build a folk arts roster, which identifies traditional bearers in the region and links artists to resources in the Juniata, Mifflin, Northumberland, Perry, Snyder, and Union Counties. Among other activities Community Partnerships RC&D produced mini-documentaries on local honey producer Sam Alexander and internationally renowned hand-made Autoharp craftsman George Orthey.



Sam Alexander - Alexander’s Honey



Embassy Theater
Lewistown, PA

As a Partner in the Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts (PPA) program, Community Partnerships RC&D was able to support over 30 community projects and programs in Juniata, Mifflin, Perry, Snyder, and Union Counties. This program allowed Community Partnerships RC&D to leverage approximately \$60,000 of state funds to stimulate over \$1.5 Million in local revenue. Projects that were funded include: the Lewisburg Arts Festival, the Mifflin-Juniata Arts Festival, The Festival of Ice in both Lewisburg and Lewistown, Community Days in Mifflintown, the Christkindl Market in Mifflinburg, music in park series, and many more.

Community Partnerships RC&D, 23 North Main Street, Lewistown, PA 17044
Phone: (717) 248-4901 * Fax (717) 513-1031 * cpartnerships@cpartnerships.com
cpartnerships.com

Endless Mountains RC&D

Endless Mountains RC&D Council's Capacity Development

Endless Mountains RC&D Council has gone through a lot of changes over the last 7 years. The Council has evolved from functioning as two organizations, formerly a Council and Trust, to one entity, Endless Mountains Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc. The Council spent the last few years cleaning house by updating all governing documents, creating a board member handbook and an employee manual, restructuring the board, all the while developing new project ideas. In May 2009, the Council approved a new Area Plan which completed a 1.5 year process resulting in a plan which will guide the organization through to 2014 in the critical issue areas of Agriculture, Energy, Watersheds and Council Capacity/Sustainability. In September 2009 the Council kicked off a Business Planning effort which will provide additional support for all the initiatives the Council included in the Area Plan. The Communications Committee has been busy at work giving the Council a makeover with a new logo and website.



www.endlessmountainsrcd.org

The Council hopes to continue these efforts in 2010 by developing two flagship projects that would result in a continuous income stream moving closer to that financial stability goal, as well as, provide both marketing and fundraising training for Council members that will directly lead to a completed Business Plan. Looking back over the last 7 years and assessing where the Council has come from, a number of tremendous accomplishments have been achieved and deserving of being highlighted in this Annual Report.

Green Career Day

In September, the Council funded and helped to plan/host the Green Career Day with the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Bureau of Forestry. This natural resource and environmental career day was open to 8th grade students in Bradford, Sullivan, Tioga and Wyoming Counties. Nearly 150 students participated representing 17 school districts. Students were able to selected 3 sessions from 22 different topic areas. They were introduced to natural resource/environmental professionals that showed them what a "Day in the Life" of their profession was like



through hands on activities. There were 22 teacher chaperons, 30 presenters, 10 volunteers, and 10 FFA student volunteers who assist with the activities for the day. The career areas students were able to choose from included:

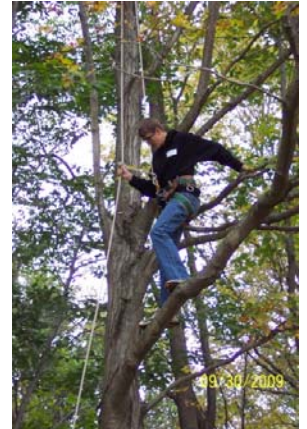
Naturalist
Greenhouse
Arboriculture
Fisheries
Horticulture
Turf Management
Plant Health
Hydrologist

Geology
Floriculture
Forest Roads and Maintenance
Wildlife Biologist
Surveyor
Forestry
Forest Rangers
Wood Science

Energy
Farm Management
Wildlife
Wildfire
Suppression/Prevention
GIS/GPS
Landscaping



Green Career Day has been held for each of the last 3 years, totaling more than 400 students participating in the event. Schools are reimbursed for expenses related to substitute teachers and bus transportation to enable them to participate in the program.



Current Projects EMRCD is Working On:

- **Weed Control Wildlife Habitat DVD-Tools You Need to Grow a Successful Conservation planting- Weed Management for Land Owners**
 - **Rotational Grazing Systems/Conversion to Grassland Implementation Grant for Northeast Pennsylvania**
 - **Pine Creek Oral Histories and Education Project**
 - **Proactive to Flooding Education Project**
 - **Woodland Resource Adventure Camp**
 - **PA Fuels for Schools and Beyond**
 - **CSP Outreach**

"The Endless Mountains Resource Conservation and Development Council will lead a diverse group of stakeholders in the sound conservation and stewardship of the region's natural resources. The Council will promote the rural quality of life and its economic stability through organizational efforts, education of communities, technical expertise, and sponsorship of projects."



Counties Served: Bradford,
Lycoming, Sullivan, Susquehanna,
Tioga and Wyoming



Endless Mountains RC&D Council

RR#5, Box 5030-D, Towanda, PA 18848-9354 * Phone: 570-265-5288 ext. 5

www.endlessmountainsrcd.org

Headwaters RC&D

Northwest Grazing Conference

The interest in grazing is stronger than ever as farmers look for ways to lower input costs and meet the demands for milk products. The 2009 conference in partnership with USDA-NRCS, PSU Agricultural Extension, local conservation districts and Headwaters RC&D was held in DuBois with a record attendance of over 250 people.



The keynote speaker was Kit Pharo, of Cheyenne Wells, Colorado, a nationally-known cattleman and expert on profitable grazing and beef

production. Kit spoke at length about the benefits of matching animal size and needs to what a particular farmer's land can provide with minimal or no inputs. Other sessions included discussion on; Pasture/Hay/Crop Risk Management, Utilizing Pasture With a TMR, Production vs. Profit– Which Will You Choose?, Three Keys to Profitability, and Cost Share Program Updates. Thanks to all who assisted in planning this annual conference and the success of all agencies partnering together, along with experienced and influential speakers the 2009 conference was a huge success bringing in more attendees than the previous year.

Sinnemahoning Stakeholders Committee (SSC)

The Sinnemahoning Stakeholders Committee (SSC) was formed through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental

Protection (DEP) and Headwaters Resource Conservation and Development Council RC&D (RC&D). The SSC is responsible for the management and distribution of funds derived from a civil settlement between the DEP and Norfolk Southern Railway as result of a sodium hydroxide spill that took place on June 30, 2006 on Big Fill Run off Gardeau road in Norwich Township, McKean County.

Two grant rounds have been completed where awards totaling \$235,936 have been distributed for 17 different projects. The money that has been awarded was also used to leverage over two million dollars. The types of projects are fish habitat enhancement, invasive species management, environmental education, volunteer monitoring, Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) treatment, AMD assessment, stream bank stabilization, and illegal dump cleanup.

Headwaters RC&D Strategic Planning

A monumental and very motivational two day Strategic Planning Session was held for Headwaters Council and Trust members November 17-18 at H.R. Stackhouse School, owned by Fish and Boat Commission bordering scenic Spring Creek in Bellefonte, Centre County. Georgia Abbey from Leadership Centre County was the facilitator for the fast paced, energetic, and invigorating two day session. The success of the strategic planning brought the council and new and clear Mission as well as Goals and Action Initiatives that include; Council Sustainability, Public Outreach, and Board Development. Additional elements the Council will explore in 2010 include development of an Executive Director Position, Defining the Roles of Headwaters RC&D and Headwaters Charitable Trust, and developing methods to identify and prioritize high impact projects. The Council will continue to revisit the strategic plan to keep it fresh and up to date.

The Headwaters RC&D Council promotes quality of life and economic sustainability by restoring, protecting, and enhancing natural and cultural resources in north central Pennsylvania. We do this by providing technical assistance, implementing resource conservation projects, fostering volunteer efforts, and developing financial partnerships.

Biomass Energy Workshop



The Central PA Biomass Energy Workshop was held on July 21, 2009 at Penn State University, State College, PA. Over 66 participants from as far as North

Carolina attended the workshop to learn the latest about biomass energy and how it can be grown and utilized in Pennsylvania. Headwaters RC&D partnered with Penn State Extension, USDA-NRCS, and Biomass Connections to plan and put this informative workshop together. The sessions for the workshop included; What is Biomass Energy and Why Does it Make Sense?, Warm Season Grass Establishment in Central PA, Potential of Mineland for Biomass Energy Production, Biomass Benefits for Wildlife, Financial Resources for Local Producers, Industrial Utilization of Co-firing Biomass with Other Fuels, and Cellulosic Ethanol Production. The workshop ended with a tour of Biomass energy projects at Penn State featuring a mobile pellet unit for switchgrass. Headwaters and its partners will continue to work toward the promotion of sustainable biomass energy crop production through a wide variety of projects PA

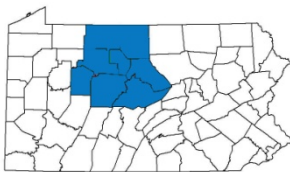
Fuels for Schools and Beyond

Headwaters RC&D has embraced the opportunity to promote the use of local renewable resources to provide reliable energy for Pennsylvania schools and businesses. Headwaters RC&D Coordinator attended working group meetings, a public workshop in Kersey, and a public meeting in Kane where 32 attendees participated in the evening informational meeting that concluded with a tour of the Kane Biomass Boiler system led by John Rook, facilities manager of the Kane Area School District. Accompanied by a Fuels for Schools and

Beyond Representative a visit and meeting was conducted with the Penns Valley Area School District officials (Centre County) to collect preliminary data about the school's facilities to develop a preliminary feasibility report. Because this project is also being embraced by other RC&D councils within the state there is great opportunity to network with the other councils on this project and to learn from their success stories. Headwaters will continue to offer educational opportunities and technical assistance to reduce the dependence on fossil fuels and replace them with renewable energy sources such as wood residue and agriculture energy crops.

Weed Wildlife Conservation

Headwaters RC&D has entered into an agreement with USDA-NRCS to carry out a program designed to promote the awareness of the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and the Weed Control/ Wildlife Habitat Program. One aspect of the CSP program will be to hold public meetings and to target forest landowners to educate them on CSP as well as forest stewardship and a matrix of other programs. The Weed and Wildlife Habitat Program will help assist producers better understand weed control methods and wildlife habitat management under NRCS programs. Data for this program has been entered in an access database and will enable Headwaters RC&D to better understand the benefits of the program and serve as a tool to develop a strategy in providing technical assistance to CREP and non-CREP participants under this agreement. Headwaters' Agriculture Committee has also established a goal of forming a Ad hoc Weed Control/ Wildlife Habitat Committee and will continue to work on this project in 2010. Project partners for both programs include; DCNR-Bureau of Forestry, Penn State Cooperative Extension, NRCS, PA Game Commission, Farm Service Agency, Conservation Districts, and PA Tree Farm Program.



Serving: Centre, Clinton, Potter, McKean, Cameron, Elk, Clearfield and Jefferson Counties

Headwaters RC&D Council

478 Jeffers Street
DuBois, PA 15801

814-375-1372 ext 4

www.headwaterspa.org



Penn Soil RC&D

Allegheny GeoTrail

Penn Soil RC&D is partnering with the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry, and Tourism to develop and implement The Allegheny GeoTrail Project, an innovative new concept to increase tourism benefits in a ten county area of north western and north central Pennsylvania. The project utilizes the growing interest in a relatively new outdoor sport for people of all ages called *Geocaching* to provide increased tourism benefits to ten counties which comprise the Allegheny National Forest and its gateway communities. The project is funded by a \$234,200 Economic Development grant from the U.S. Forest Service.

Within the north western and north central part of Pennsylvania, you will find more than two million acres of public lands set aside for natural resource



management and the public's enjoyment. The ten county project area (Cameron, Clarion, Crawford, Elk, Forest, Jefferson, McKean, Potter, Venango, and Warren counties) includes the Allegheny National Forest, a portion of the PA Wilds Region, and it also encompasses several State Heritage Areas, and the Oil Region National Heritage Area. Teeming with wildlife, historical attractions, and beautiful scenic views, the area offers unlimited recreational and educational opportunities.



Geocaching is an entertaining outdoor adventure game for Global positioning System (GPS) users in which the participants seek out hidden geocaches by navigating to certain GPS coordinates provided by the person who hid the cache. The coordinates are obtained from a website on the internet and down loaded into a GPS unit. Participating in geocaching is a good way to take advantage of the features and capabilities of a GPS unit, but it is also a great way for someone to navigate their way to find

noteworthy attractions and hidden areas that might not be readily found by those casually passing through.

Geocaching combines the love of the outdoors, hiking, sightseeing, wildlife watching, and nature study with the



innovative electronic gadgetry of a GPS to result in a high tech treasure hunt enjoyed by young and old alike. More and more people are spending their free time, weekends, and vacations geocaching. The Allegheny GeoTrail is actually a network of roads that will carry visitors across the ten county region in pursuit of

special hidden geocaches which contain a unique self-inking stamp that participants will use to validate their Allegheny GeoTrail Passports.

Project volunteers in each county have placed between 10-20 Allegheny GeoTrail caches for participants to seek which will bring visitors into close proximity of tourism destinations and special attractions of each county.



Participants must find a minimum of six of the GeoTrail caches to get their passports validated and are rewarded with a specially minted Allegheny GeoTrail commemorative coin specific to each county. These coins tend to be highly sought after collector items by geocachers.

In the three years this project has been active, we have registered over 60,000 individually recorded internet logs of a geocacher finding one of our special geocaches. This influx of tourism has resulted in more than 1.7 million dollars of economic benefits being pumped into the regional economy. This project has created a new form of destination marketing copied by numerous other tourism promotion agencies in other areas. POINTS benefits generated by this project include:

- Recreational Sites Created-174**
- Visitor Days Increased -60,000**
- People Benefited from New Technology-1,409,401**
- Citizens Served-1,409,401**
- Publications Distributed-154,328**
- Educational Programs Conducted-7**
- Attendance at Educational Events-3150**
- Businesses Expanded-2**
- Jobs Created-5**

VALUE ADDED DAIRY PROJECT

Penn Soil RC&D has been very active in promoting value added opportunities to improve economic opportunities for dairy farmers. The council has



partnered with several other organizations including the PA Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA), the Penn State Women in Agriculture Network (WAGN), Northeast SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program, and the Munnell Run Farm Foundation to co-sponsor our fifth basic cheese making event, a three day class in Mercer County.

This three-day class was designed for novice cheese makers and those considering starting a farmstead cheese business. Melanie Dietrich-Cochran taught participants about the milk quality, ingredients used in cheese making, processes for making a variety of cheeses, techniques and requirements for aging cheese, and how to establish a business as a farmstead or artisan cheese maker.



Fifteen people attended the course to learn about basic milk and cheese chemistry, the art of aging cheese (affinage), and how to design and operate cheese making business. This was a "hands-on" class, which

gave participants the chance to actually make cheeses.

Tionesta Valley Snowmobile Trail Maintenance Project-Penn Soil RC&D received a \$15,000 DCNR grant to purchase a Mahindra four wheel drive trail maintenance



tractor worth \$18,750 to be used by the volunteer group in maintaining over 300 miles of public trails in the Allegheny National Forest. Penn Soil RC&D and the Tionesta Valley Snowmobile Club (TVSC)

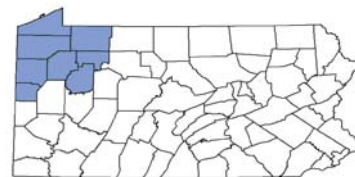
each contributed 10% of the purchase price to provide the local match requirement for the DCNR grant. TVSC

provides the volunteer manpower and maintains the tractor to carry out the trail maintenance of public trails, vital to the tourism sector.

The mission of Penn Soil RC&D is to provide the local leadership necessary to develop and implement a plan that will improve the economy, environmental and social well-being of the people through accelerated planning and development of the natural resources in the project area consisting of Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango and Warren Counties."

Council Goals

- * Protect the quality and quantity of our water resources
- * Improve the overall condition of our local communities
- * Revitalize community and recreational facility needs
- * Control erosion and sedimentation
- * Installing Best Management Practices to reduce pollution
- * Developing and implementing new and expanded projects for forest based resources that improve economic Benefits



Counties Served:

*Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest,
Lawrence, Mercer, Venango & Warren*

**For Information Contact:
Penn Soil RC&D Council**
265 Holiday Inn Road, Suite 3
Clarion, PA 16214
Phone: 814-226-8160 ext. 5
Fax: 814-226-4521
Website: www.pennsoilrcd.org

Penn's Corner RC&D

Penn's Corner RC&D continues to advocate for conservation and work towards building strong communities by fostering regional partnerships, securing technical and financial resources and delivering services and programs to the nine county area making up Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Penn's Corner 2009 Partnerships and Projects

2009 Grasslands Evaluation Contest— For Healthier, More Productive Farms

Cambria County 4-H team members Ben Bard, Robert Veneskey, Annie Cekada and Mark Mastrine took first place in the 2009 Grasslands Evaluation Contest held at Penn State University on May 5. Earning a \$500 college scholarship each, the team's cumulative score was 878 points out of a possible 1200.

At 768 points, the Conococheague FFA club comprised of Jacob Blake, Tyler Funk, Garrison Plessinger, and Alex Fahnstock from Mercersburg, Franklin County secured second place in the competition, each winning a \$250 college scholarship.

As the highest scoring individual, Ben Bard of Portage, Pennsylvania earned an additional \$500 college scholarship.

Thirteen teams from school FFA chapters and 4-H groups across the Commonwealth used soil surveys, aerial photos, maps, and other tools to assess the condition of land plots designed to mimic a typical pasture used for livestock grazing. Using a predetermined set of landowner's goals, each competitor demonstrated their knowledge of grassland management in four categories: grassland condition, soil interpretation, wildlife habitat and plant identification. Understanding these conditions allows a landowner to identify the best management decisions that will maximize profits while sustaining the land.

A well-managed grazing system means healthy soil and clean water and air for people, wildlife and fish, as well as, lowered costs, improved herd health and reduced labor on the farm.



The knowledge students learn as a result of preparing for the contest will serve them well whether they plan to be farmers or wildlife habitat managers.

Penn's Corner sponsors the contest annually and has awarded more than \$15,000 in scholarships to students to attend college. Natural Resources Conservation Service provided technical assistance and Penn State University contributed technical assistance and the facilities to hold the contest. Contributors to the Youth Scholarship Fund this year included county conservation districts, SW Chapter Project Grass and the Pennsylvania Livestock Association.

Both the Cambria 4-H team, coached by Virgil Wilford and Lou Kopczyk, and Conococheague, coached by Herb Hoffeditz, are eligible to compete in the Mid-America Grassland Evaluation Contest in Missouri June 9-10.

Southern Laurel Highlands Plant Management Partnership

The **Southern Laurel Highlands Plant Management Partnership** sponsors Project Weed Whack, a series of workdays coupled with fun activities aimed at educating volunteers and the public how to identify and properly destroy the invasive species so that native plants can thrive. The Partnership worked with Invasive Plant Control, Inc. and, using a strategic chemical treatment plan for Japanese Stiltgrass at Bear Run Nature Reserve, Fallingwater, Fort Necessity, and Friendship Hill, successfully brought invasive populations under control.

This project is a result of a Forest Service grant as well as state DEP funding.



2009 No Tillage Conference

The combined efforts of NRCS, Pennsylvania State University's Department of Crop and Soil Science and Cooperative Extension, Fayette & Westmoreland Conservation Districts, the Penn's Corner RC&D, and the PA No-Till Association proved again that **collaboration is the key to success**. Conference sessions included "Say YES! to No-Till" by keynote speaker Franke Dijkstra a pioneer no-till farmer from Ponta Grossa, Brazil. Steve Groff of Cedar Meadow Farm in Lancaster and Dr. Sjoerd Duiker added their expertise to the mix.

Aimed at farmers who have been doing no till or are thinking about starting, this conference gave attendees the opportunity to learn firsthand the benefits and challenges of adopting a no till system for their farm. Attendees learned how they can use no-till techniques to increase productivity and protect their biggest investment: the soil on the farm.

Attendees heard thought provoking ideas from organizations and agencies that can help with technical and in some cases, financial assistance to achieve a successful no till operation. The opportunity to ask questions about new techniques, equipment modification, and best practices to overcome the challenges of introducing new approaches allowed attendees to look back on this meaningful experience with

Penn's Corner is a not for profit organization that sometimes initiates projects, but for the most part, assists other organizations in conservation and community development projects.

The focus of Penn's Corner is on the entire SW PA region, but local projects are initiated and accomplished as well. Successful projects depend on committed partners, and Penn's Corner's role is to help bring together the ideas, partners, and resources. In 2008, Penn's Corner adopted a five year Area Plan that addresses the following issues:

1. Agricultural Best Management Practices implementation AND Education (including horse farms)
2. Forest management, including invasive species control
3. Wastewater/septic system
4. Abandoned mine drainage
5. Energy conservation and education
6. Stormwater best management practices and education
7. Watershed plan design, development and implementation
8. Watershed protection
9. Renewable energy/biofuel development
10. Wildlife protection/habitat improvement
11. Community Development /Rural quality of life improvement

Counties Served: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Washington and Westmoreland

***Penn's Corner RC&D Area, 214 Donohoe Road, Greensburg, PA 15601
Phone: 724-853-5555 x116 * Fax: 724-832-9721***

Pocono Northeast RC&D

Northeast PA Energy Solutions Expo

Over 600 people visited the first Northeast PA Energy Solutions Expo held on June 13 & 14 at the Luzerne County Fairgrounds in Dallas Township. The Pocono Northeast Resource Conservation & Development Council and its partners hosted this educational forum which offered homeowners, landowners, and businesses the opportunity to learn and experience new and innovative ideas in the areas of energy conservation and alternative & renewable practices, technology, and opportunities.



Those attending interacted with the over sixty (60) exhibitors about technologies that could be used to lessen their energy consumption. By reducing their energy consumption it would ultimately reduce overall energy costs thus, saving them money. There were also numerous exhibitors with renewable and alternative energy products that one could install to provide energy to offset conventional energy usage and costs whether for thermal energy or electrical energy demands. Exhibits and displays provided information on ground source heating applications, biomass combustion appliances, solar panels and other equipment, solar water heating, wind turbines, building envelope products and information, energy audits, energy saving windows and other fixtures, water quality testing and purification equipment, and many other exhibits on a wide variety of topics.

Educational sessions were also conducted for the public throughout the duration of the Expo. These sessions provided an in depth presentation on topics allowing people to learn and ask questions from the experts, thus allowing a greater opportunity for delivery of information and interaction in a different setting other than visiting and talking with exhibitors at their booths. The sessions were very well attended, with participants commenting they were a great tool in the transfer of information. Educational session included: home energy conservation covering building envelope, insulation, and energy audits; geothermal/ground source energy systems, wind energy, solar photovoltaics, native grasses for energy, farm energy, hydrogen fuel cells, resettling PA communities, PA's changing energy climate, PA Fuels for Schools & Beyond program, and financing opportunities for homeowners.



A Kids Conservation Corner was available, where children participated in activities related to energy and conservation. Activities included constructing and decorating rain barrels, making a greenhouse and windmill, making pine cone birdfeeders, soil painting, making chalk from abandoned mine drainage material, and flower pounding. The busiest activity was constructing and decorating rain barrels. Rain barrels used to collect rainwater that drains off your house, shed, or other building, shows the importance of water recycling, conservation, and reuse of our natural resources. Water collected in the barrels is most commonly used for watering plants or a garden, but has other uses, including filling a swimming pool. Children and adults alike were standing in line to make the rain barrels and the supplies were quickly exhausted, with people asking and interested for more.

The Pocono Northeast Resource Conservation & Development Council is a community resource providing expertise in resource management and development throughout a ten county area of Northeastern Pennsylvania. The Council is committed to the preservation and protection of natural resources within a framework of economic growth.

Assistance with Stormwater Management Planning

The Council and its communities have identified stormwater management as an issue within the Pocono Northeast Area. Stormwater is a major problem for many local individuals, communities, municipalities, and organizations. Development has been occurring at an exponential rate within the region, and as a result large amounts of stormwater



runoff have overstressed our watersheds and caused major flooding in numerous counties within the RC&D Council over several of the last 4-6 years. This project resulted in hosting two multi-county workshops directed toward legislators, municipal officials, and County Planning

Commissions to educate and inform about ways to address stormwater and stormwater management, as well as provide them with a multitude of local, state, and federal resources that they were able to keep for reference and future use. There was participation from over **155 local leaders** and officials at the multi-county workshops representing **over 30 municipalities** within the RC&D Council area.

Weed Management & Wildlife Habitat - 2009

Through the Weed Control/Wildlife Habitat Technical Assistance project, the Pocono Northeast RC&D Council worked with landowners enrolled in USDA's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) by providing information and resources on how to address noxious and invasive weeds on their property while emphasizing beneficial wildlife habitat. Landowners within the program and project partners have identified the need for the technical assistance. Many landowners do not have the technical expertise to positively identify weeds of concern, nor do they understand the control measures required to address the plants for adequate control. Consideration needs to be given that all plants or weeds are not detrimental and provide diversity for wildlife habitat. Therefore the RC&D and its partners are working to provide this education and information which resulted in the following accomplishments: **3 field days** with **225 people attending**, establishing a **two (2) acre demonstration plot** for educational purposes, printing two documents totaling distribution of **17,450 copies**, and directing one-on-one interaction and assistance to **85 landowners** servicing **4,308 acres**.

Current Projects we are working on:

- ❖ *Pennsylvania Fuels for Schools...and Beyond Program*
- ❖ *NEPA Energy Solutions Expo*
- ❖ *No-till Initiative & Conference*
- ❖ *Northeast PA Grazing Conference*



Serving Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Montour, Northumberland, Pike, Schuylkill & Wayne Counties



1300 Old Plank Road, Mayfield, PA 18433 * Phone: 570-282-8732 ext. 4 * Fax: 570-281-5379

www.pnercd.org

www.pnesolutions.org

Southeastern PA RC&D

Mission– To promote conservation and enhancement of natural and community resources

Eastern Delaware County Collaborative Stormwater Project

Chair Karen L. Holm is leading Council efforts to assist over **ten (10) urban municipalities** in Eastern Delaware County in their efforts to jointly address stormwater management requirements. By working together the municipalities are seeking ways to reduce their individual costs while still meeting state law requirements. The project is being funded by a **\$273,180** EPA Agreement. In late November 2009, The William Penn Foundation awarded additional funding of **\$198,000** to continue work on the project.



Growing Green Roofs Workshop

Director Lynda Farrell organized a Council sponsored workshop and tour of Dansko, a LEED certified building in Chester County. Engineers, architects, municipal officials, and others learned about green building design and creating green roofs. Speakers included Peter Kjellerup, Dansko; Joe DiNorscia, Skyland USA; Scott Kelly, Re:Vision Architecture; Lorna Rosenberg, EPA Green Building Program Manager

2009-2013 Strategic Plan Developed and Approved

Under the leadership of Director Catherine Rapose, the Strategic Planning Committee led Council efforts to develop and adopt a new strategic plan to guide the Council's efforts for the years 2009-2013. **Over 435 individuals, businesses, organizations, and agencies provided suggestions and comments.** The plan focuses on four (4) main issues: Green Technology, Economic Development, Water Management, and Council Capacity Building. It supports the USDA-NRCS's Productive Lands Healthy Environment Strategic Plan.

Under 21 Business/Entrepreneur Seminar

Director Art Lukoff led Council efforts to offer workshops for high school students in Lehigh County to learn about starting a business and/or being an entrepreneur. Frank Embon, SCORE volunteer, taught the students about marketing, and accurate recordkeeping. Mike McCreary, a young entrepreneur in his 20s, spoke to the students about his experiences as a business owner. Over **200 students benefited** from the project and approximately **20% of the students were socially and/or economically disadvantaged individuals.**



Council Donation

In 2009 the Council **donated** horse-drawn no-till planting equipment valued at approximately **\$8,000** to the Chester County Conservation District for use by Amish farmers to plant their farm crops. This will help protect farm fields and the watershed from soil erosion

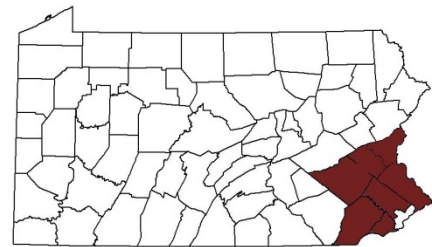
Other 2009 Council Projects

Regional Geocache Trail

Farm Bioenergy

Radnor Valley Country Club Stream Restoration

Counties Served: Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Montgomery, and Northampton



Southeastern PA Resource Conservation and Development Council

1000 East Walnut Street, Suite 704, Perkasie, PA 18944-5463

Phone: 215-453-9527 Ext. 5 Fax: 877-265-1846

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Southern Alleghenies RC&D

Water Resource Initiative Stonycreek Conemaugh River Improvement Project

This project was revised from an earlier area-wide measure that expanded in scope beyond the original proposal. The Stonycreek/Conemaugh River Watershed Management Plan, which was one of the newly-formed RC&D Council's first projects, was originally approved in 1991. Following the creation of the Stonycreek Conemaugh River Improvement Project, a regional watershed advisory committee, and completion of a 3-year watershed study by the US Geological Survey, project sponsors re-assessed the scope of the original project. They decided to expand the scope of work to include planning and construction of the first passive treatment systems for abandoned mine drainage ever funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, which became known as the Oven Run Watershed Restoration Plan. Successful completion of this early watershed restoration work lead to renewed interest in public acquisition three privately-owned water reservoirs for public recreation and future municipal water supplies.

With assistance from the Southern Alleghenies RC&D Council, the Southern Alleghenies Conservancy and a host of other organizations in Cambria and Somerset Counties were able to convince the two counties to form a joint authority which was able to purchase over 5,000 acres of land, 1,200 surface acres of water in 3 reservoirs that are now opened for public use. This acquisition has also stimulated tremendous growth in water based recreation as a result of the watershed restoration work that was done in the region. Funding for the various components of this multi-faceted project was mainly provided by state and federal grants.



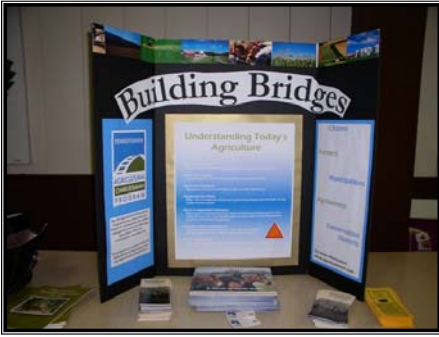
The Cambria Somerset Authority was established in 2000 to own and operate the former Manufacturers Water Company which was acquired from Bethlehem Steel Corporation as part of the joint purchase. In addition to supplying water to 13 existing industrial customers, the Authority, in partnership with the Somerset County Commissioners recently completed a 15 mile water line that will supply up to 2 million gallons of potable water to 7 local communities in Somerset County. The CSA also established a long-term relationship with a local organization, Summers Best Two Weeks, to operate a summer youth camp and a public recreation area that was opened in 2007 at Quemahoning Reservoir.

Project accomplishments:

- 65,000 citizens/ customers served*
- 1,200 acres of water bodies improved*
- An estimated 429 seasonal jobs have been created since 2005*
- 4,000 students participated in outdoor educational events since 2006*
- Establishment of one of the few joint county authorities in Pennsylvania*
- 5,000 acres of aquatic or wildlife habitat protected or improved on non-federal land*

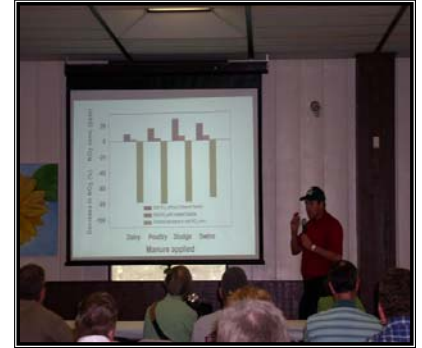
Southern Alleghenies RC&D Council Mission Statement: "To improve the quality of life and preserve the heritage of Pennsylvania's citizens and future generations by: conserving land containing significant natural, cultural, and recreational resources; restoring and enhancing resources; and assisting public and private organizations with conservation projects."

Cover Crop Workshop 2009



The Blair County Conservation District, in partnership with Pennsylvania No Till Alliance, PSU Cooperative Extension, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Southern Alleghenies RC&D Council organized and presented a one-day workshop at the Memorial Park in Martinsburg, PA on August 6, 2009. The purpose of the workshop was to encourage the use of cover cropping and no-till as conservation practices that improve farm productivity, economics, and environmental quality by reducing nutrient loss and production costs while improving soil quality.

Speakers included Dr. Doug Beagle, Virginia Ishler, Tom Ford, and Dr. Sjoerd Duiker from Penn State University, Jim Hoorman from Ohio State University, Ken Staver from the University of Maryland and Joel Meyers from the Pennsylvania No-Till Alliance. A pre-conference dinner meeting for municipal officials was hosted by State Senator, John Eichelberger the evening of August 5, 2009 to present an overview of the water quality benefits of cover cropping and the potential for nutrient credit trading. The municipal officials that attended this meeting were treated to a good meal and an interesting discussion of current trends and future opportunities.



Funding for this workshop was provided by the Capital RC&D Council, Pennsylvania Agricultural Ombudsman Program, Blair County Conservation District and the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds. The workshop was well attended by agency representatives, farmers, conservationists, industry sponsors and the news media. Based on the results of survey questionnaires collected from workshop participants, a project proposal for a new Cover Crop Workshop 2010 project was developed by the workshop sponsors and presented to the RC&D Council for approval on April 30, 2010. The next Regional Cover Crop workshop is currently being planned for early December of 2010.

Project accomplishments:

- Pre-paid soil test kits were distributed to all attendees*
- 67 participants attended and received workshop materials*
- Agency participants received conservation certification training credits*
- A reference book entitled "Managing Cover Crops Profitably" was provided to all attendees*



The Southern Alleghenies RC&D Council

Serving the following Counties:
Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon, and
Somerset



2009 PA Resource Conservation & Development Councils' Accomplishments

2009 Totals

Projects Approved

Projects Completed

Active Projects

170

204

212

RC&D Project Benefits

Information and Education

Workshops, Tours, Seminars Held	155
Research and Legislative Education Events	7
Community Events Held	60
Trainings Sessions Held	295
Participants	18,606
School Curriculum and Programs Created	5
Information Media Produced	18,005
Information Media Distributed	234,428
Watershed or Area-wide Conservation Plans Developed (number)	190
Watershed or Area-wide Conservation Plans Developed (acres)	2,143,243
Study/Plans Completed	23

Natural Resource

Land Treated	30,114
Greenhouse Gas Reduced	14
Soil Saved	26,734
Nutrients Reduced	3
Invasive Species Managed (acres)	11,537
Fish and Wildlife Habitat Protected/Improved/Created	10,459
Threatened and Endangered Species Protected/Recovered	765
Wildlife Population Increase	52
Hunting and Fishing Days Increased	180
Water Bodies Created/Improved (units)	27
Water Bodies Created/Improved (acres)	1,281
River and Streams Improved	174
Surface Water Conserved	25,000
Drinking Water Improved	65,169,760
Drinking Water Conserved	7,500
Ground Water Conserved/Improved/Recharged	24,814
Animal Agriculture Operations Assisted	214
Drainage Systems or Structures Constructed/Rehabilitated	4
Shoreline Protected	950
Alternative Energy Systems- Solar, Biomass, & Waste Utilization (units)	14
Alternative Energy Systems (power)	2,000,000,000

Community Development

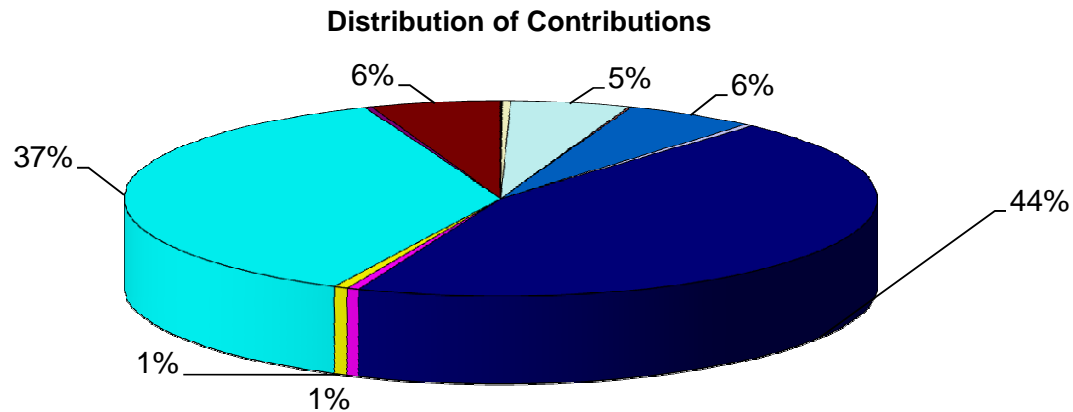
Businesses Created/Expanded/Retained	739
Businesses Financed (units)	2,029
Businesses Financed (monetary)	\$876,837.00
Ag-Agritourism	2
Ag- Crops	1
Ag-Farm to Market	5
Ag- Certified Organic	1
Ag-Recreation	1
Jobs Created/Retained-Farm	230
Seasonal Jobs Created-Farm	34
Jobs Created/Retained-Non Farm	91
Seasonal Jobs Created-Non Farm	112
Cooperatives/Associations Formed	3
Businesses Benefitting from New Technology	55
People Benefitting from New Technology	265
Recreation Area Established/Improved/Retained (area)	150
Recreation Area Established/Improved/Retained (length)	634,200
Recreation Facilities Created/Improved/Retained (units)	176
Tourism Area Established/Improved/Retained	15
Visitor Days Increased	12,480
Cultural/Heritage Identified/Preserved (units)	4
Cultural/Heritage Identified/Preserved (area)	3
Public Facilities Improved/Repaired/Constructed	13
Service Provided/Improved- Community	117
Service Provided/Improved-Grant Administration	47
Service Provided-Rural Fire Protections	46
Service Provided-Healthcare	2
Solid Waste Collection Started/Improved	1
Non Traditional Wastewater Systems Constructed	51
Citizens Served	241,934
Citizens Served Underserved or Underrepresented	8,318
Citizens Served: Socially or Economically Disadvantaged	79,181

2009 PA Resource Conservation & Development Councils' Accomplishments

RC&D Contributions by Source

USDA-Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service	\$4,000
USDA-Farm Service Agency	\$2,000
USDA-Forest Service	\$33,501
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service	\$468,500
USDA- Other	\$1,000
Department of Defense	\$10,000
Department of Interior	\$519,918
Tribal Government	\$33,047
State Government	\$4,095,125
Local Government	\$47,008
Soil and Water Conservation Districts	\$55,685
Non Government Organizations	\$3,394,696
Earth Team	\$27,656
Other	<u>\$511,036</u>
TOTAL	\$9,203,172

PA RC&D's have leveraged more than \$8 for every \$1 of RC&D Program Funds



- | | |
|---|---|
| ■ USDA-Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service | ■ USDA-Farm Service Agency |
| □ USDA-Forest Service | □ USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service |
| ■ USDA- Other | ■ Department of Defense |
| ■ Department of Interior | □ Tribal Government |
| ■ State Government | ■ Local Government |
| ■ Soil and Water Conservation Districts | ■ Non Government Organizations |
| ■ Earth Team | ■ Other |

Pennsylvania Resource Conservation & Development Councils



Capital RC&D
401 East Louther Street
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Carlisle, PA 17013
570-265-5288 Ext. 5
www.capitalrcd.org

Community Partnerships RC&D
23 North Main Street
Lewistown, PA 17044
717-241-4361
www.cpartnerships.com

Endless Mountains RC&D
RR#5, Box 5030D
Towanda, PA 18848-9354
717-248-4901
www.endlessmountainsrcd.org

Headwaters RC&D
478 Jeffers Street
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814-375-1372 Ext. 4
www.headwaterspa.org

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Greensburg, PA 15601-9217
724-853-5555 Ext. 116

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