



ANNUAL REPORT 2013





YEAR IN REVIEW

The past year was one of noteworthy accomplishments. We are very enthusiastic about the completion of two multi-year grants that involved natural streambank restoration. The District's efforts with agricultural education and installation of Best Management Practices have experienced further implementation. Our educational effort for all audiences has again seen a significant increase. With Pennsylvania's new transportation legislation we will see nearly a seven-fold increase in funding for environmentally sound practices on dirt and gravel and low volume roads. The future holds new challenges and opportunities to protect our most valuable assets – our soil and water.

Sincerely,

Earl J. Brown
District Manager

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

- Constructed the water pumping system for our community garden. The system is powered by our stored renewable energy (solar/wind/battery/inverter) and uses rainwater collected from the pavilion roof and stored under the pavilion floor. The pumping system was funded by PACD.
- Created a new trail within Headwaters Park featuring a 30' boardwalk
- Hosted the 2nd annual Pumpkin Walk , organized by the Erie County Master Gardeners, for over 2,500 visitors

2013 TREE SEEDLING SALE GIVES STUDENTS ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

On April 26, 2013 the Erie County Conservation District helped conduct the 32nd annual seedling sale with Headwaters Natural Resource Center to benefit educational programs. The money from this sale is used to support scholarships for the winning team to attend the Conservation Leadership School held at Penn State University each summer. The proceeds of the sale also help support the high school team that attends the state Envirothon competition.

- Approximately 300 orders were filled
- Over 17,000 seedlings were sold



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The District education program continues to grow each year, extending its outreach to all ages.

- Hosted the PA Farm Bureau Mobile Ag Lab – 300+ students
- Engaged 6 middle schools in ongoing county-wide stream studies of their neighborhood streams
- Hosted the high school county Envirothon – 130+ high school students
- Hosted the middle school Envirothon – 75+ middle school students
- Participated in TREC Youth Training Days for students
- Worked with the Glenwood and Eastside YMCAs for summer programming – 350+ campers
- Worked with the Erie County Master Gardeners to host the 2013 PumpkinWalk – 2,500+ visitors
- Participated in the Tall Ships Erie School Day – 2,300+ students
- Scheduled regular school programming throughout the year

3,728

ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL STUDENTS

531

MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL/
COLLEGE STUDENTS


68

SCOUTS

6,812

TOTAL NUMBER OF
PEOPLE INVOLVED
IN EDUCATION
OUTREACH 2013






Unstable streambank = erosion



Streambank stabilization



Stream crossing

THE CHAPTER 105 – WATERWAY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The District's duties under the Chapter 105 delegation agreement include education and assistance related to the rules and regulations associated with the PA Code. Additional duties include the review and acknowledgment of Chapter 105 General Permits (GPs), associated with minor encroachments such as stream crossings and streambank stabilization, as well as the inspection of permitted sites and complaint investigation.

- Processed 60+ Chapter 105 General Permits
- Investigated 30+ complaints
- Inspected 20+ permitted sites
- Provided 400+ individuals with education and/or assistance through structured training events or individual meetings

DIRT AND GRAVEL ROADS PROJECTS

- Two 2013 projects were approved: Smedley Road in Waterford Township (project extended into 2014) and King Road in Wayne Township
- The Wayne Township project utilized geo fabric and driving surface aggregate to stabilize the road base. A diversion was used to turn away stormwater from adjacent property.
- 2014 projects will include Calkins Road and Storey Road in Greenfield Township
- In 2013, PA passed a new Transportation Bill. In response, the State Conservation Commission is developing a policy to administer a dramatic increase in funding for Dirt and Gravel and Low Volume roads.

CASCADE CREEK RESTORATION PROJECT

In cooperation with the City of Erie, PA Sea Grant, the SONS of Lake Erie, and Environment Erie, the District completed the final phase of natural streambank restoration along Cascade Creek, within Frontier Park. Initial restoration efforts started in 2006, under Phase I of the project to stabilize severely eroded banks within the park (below).

The complete project consisted of implementing natural streambank stabilization techniques along the nearly 2000 linear feet of stream within the park. The final phase began where the Main and West branches of the stream joined, (photos below) and continued downstream for 1,100 feet.

Some of the techniques included the installation of rock toe protection along the edge of streambank, brush matting to establish an extensive vegetated streambank root system, and various structures within the stream channel manage high flow. Riparian plantings provide shading and filter stormwater. These techniques are designed to improve water quality of the stream.



Erosion prior to stabilization



Stabilized streambank



Eroded, unprotected streambank



Supported and protected streambank



Severe erosion



Remediated, graded streambank



Severe erosion



Erosion and sedimentation
from stormwater runoff

EROSION AND SEDIMENTATION CONTROL AND NPDES PROGRAMS

The District continues to administer the Chapter 102 program, related to erosion and sedimentation (E&S) control, including the National Pollution Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) permitting program, under its delegation agreement with the Department of Environmental Protection.

The program involves providing education and routine assistance to municipalities, property owners, and consultants, as well as reviewing plans and issuance of appropriate permits.

- Approved 104 Erosion and Sedimentation plans
- Processed 26 NPDES permits
- Performed over 180 inspections of earth disturbance sites





AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

The District has three agriculture programs at this time. They are the Nutrient Management Program (NMP), Manure Management Program, and the Agricultural Conservation Technical Assistance Program (ACT). These programs provide assistance to farmers and landowners and help meet the goals of the agriculture program at the District. Our Ag specialist is Bethany Fritz; she is available to assist farmers and landowners with their concerns. She also hosts several workshops and meetings throughout the year.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION

The District is still involved with the Farmland Preservation program in Erie County. The program provides funds for the purchase of conservation easements from owners of quality farmland. This will allow more farmland to stay in agricultural use for perpetuity.

- 55 farms and approximately 6890 acres are preserved in Erie County.
- Several farms are in the process of being preserved in 2014

GROWING GREENER GRANT

The District has an Ag BMP Cost Share grant to assist landowners with installing BMPs' on their farms.

- Two projects were completed in 2013
- A large project is being designed and planned for 2014

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2013

John Hallenburg, Jr. – Chairman
Ronald Chapman – Vice Chairman
George Peters – Treasurer
Bob Buhl – Farm Director
Tom McLure – Farm Director
Sue Moyer – Public Director
LeRoy Gross – Associate Director
Barry Grossman – County Executive
Edward T. DiMattio – County Council Liason
John Green – DEP Representative

CONSERVATION DISTRICT STAFF 2013

Earl J. Brown – District Manager
Gene Clemente – Technical Resources Manager
Joseph Hudson – Watershed Specialist
Bethany Fritz – Agriculture Specialist
Brian Zeppenfeld – Coastal Zone Specialist
Juliet Jones – Administrative Assistant
Kristen Currier – Environmental Educator

