



# Washington County Conservation District Newsletter

PUBLISHED BY THE WASHINGTON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
JANUARY 2015 VOLUME 45 ISSUE 1

## WASHINGTON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT 2014 FARMER OF THE YEAR

*The* Washington County Conservation District has awarded the Conservation Farmer of the Year Award to an operation that practices conservation stewardship and is active in the 4-H. The 2014



Conservation Farmer of the Year award goes to CJ Livestock which is owned and operated by Carol and Jack Kirschner. The farm is located in Amwell Township and consists of a total of 320 acres.

Left to rgt. Tom Ulrich, Comm. Larry Maggi, Bob Kirschner, Jack & Carol Kirschner, Bill Iams (Board Chairman)

The Kirschner's raise Limousine Maine Anjou cross cattle on a rotational grazing system and grass hay.

Jack and Carol have 8 children and 21 grandchildren which are involved in showing 4-H market animals. Jack and Carol currently have been

involved with 4-H for total of 76 years.

The Kirschner's have been cooperators with the district and NRCS since April 2000. They also have worked with Pheasants Forever / California University of Pennsylvania Partners for Fish and Wildlife. Conservation practices that they have implemented include 9600 feet of stream bank fencing, 4 animal crossings, pressurized watering system, 5 gravity spring developments and a wetland. They installed an animal heavy use area to feed in the winter months. Recently they installed a dry manure stacking pad to allow for 6 months of storage in the winter months. An animal access trail was installed to reduce erosion and mud when the cattle travel from the barn to the pasture.

# 2014 Watershed Volunteer Award Recipients



L to R: Comm. Larry Maggi, Jennifer Dann, Recipient-Carrilee Hemington, Board Chair. Bill Iams



L to R: Comm. Larry Maggi, Jennifer Dann, Recipient-Judy Campsey, Board Chair. Bill Iams



L to R: Comm. Larry Maggi, Jennifer Dann, Recipient-Jean Bear, Board Chair. Bill Iams

# A Special Thank You for all that you have done



L to R: Comm. Larry Maggi, Jennifer Dann  
Recipient-Joan Jessen, Board Chair. Bill Iams



L to R: Jennifer Dann, Board Chair. Bill Iams,  
Recipient-Donna Riggle, Comm. Larry Maggi



L to R: Jennifer Dann, Beth Kahkonen,  
Recipient-Intern for WCCD Jacob Lis, Dist. Mgr. Gary Stokum

Tom Ulrich



## Your Manure Management Plan Workbook

*Recordkeeping* is an important part in any farming

operation which includes your Manure Management Plan. Winter is a good time to review your management plan to make any changes that might have taken place on your operation. For example your animal numbers might have changed or your actual crop yield did not match what was planned. Also, accurate records, such as crop yields and manure generation, will assist in making future supplemental nutrient application recommendations more accurate. To stay in compliance with the regulations you MUST maintain two types of records.

**First**, the worksheets completed as part of the development of the Manure Management Plan.

**Second**, you must maintain records to demonstrate that the Manure Management Plan has been implemented.

These records must be made available to DEP or the Washington County Conservation District upon request. The Manure Management Plan Workbook contains optional blank reporting forms that you can use to document that you are properly implementing the manure management plan requirements. Farmers can also use their existing recordkeeping system if it includes the same information as in the sample recordkeeping documents.

Last year the WCCD Agriculture staff visited over 100 farms to inform operators about the Manure Management regulations. As we continue to spread the news about the regulations, the Agriculture staff will be putting on multiple technical workshops. Topics covered during the workshops will include the revised Manure Management Manual, Chapter 102 (Erosion and Sediment Control) updates, and using PAOneStop for your Manure Management Plan. Attendees will receive a copy of the updated Manure Management Manual. The workshops will be held on the following dates and times:

**February 25<sup>th</sup> 9:30 to 12 pm    March 24<sup>th</sup> 6:30 to 9 pm    April 15<sup>th</sup> 6:30 to 9 pm**

Please contact Hannah Hoblitzell or Tom Ulrich at the Washington County Conservation District with your name, address and number of people attending. Our telephone number is: **724-206-9446**, or we can be reached by email at: [ehoblitzell@pawccd.org](mailto:ehoblitzell@pawccd.org) for Hannah and [tulrich@pawccd.org](mailto:tulrich@pawccd.org) for Tom.

Financial support for this project is provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection through the Clean Water Fund.

At any time through the year we are available here at the district to work with you one on one to complete a plan. You do not have to wait for a workshop to get a plan, feel free to contact us at any time and we can help you get in compliance. Thanks, Hope to hear from you!

## Hannah Hoblitzell has joined our Ag Division.

I was born and raised in a very small town outside of Charleston, West Virginia. I graduated in May from West Virginia University located in Morgantown, where I still currently live. I

received a B.S. in Animal & Nutritional Sciences with minors in Equine Management and Applied & Environmental Microbiology. I have been working with horses since a very young age, but I have mostly been riding and showing Saddlebreds since the age

of 9. I still own my first horse, who is 20, and have several dogs and cats that I love!

I have always liked being involved in agriculture and have had an interest in environmental concerns, so I am happy to be with the Washington County Conservation District where I can incorporate several of my interests into one job!



# Welcome New Team Members

## Ashley is our new E&S Technician

Hi, My name is Ashley. I am originally from Chester County, PA.

I graduated from The Pennsylvania State University Altoona in 2014 with a Bachelors of Arts Degree in Environmental Studies and an English Minor. During college, I was President and Vice-President of Eco-Action, the campus environmental group and I served on the Penn State Altoona Sustainability Council. Also during college, I interned with the Blair County Conservation District and Altoona Water Authority. My internship purpose was to monitor streams within the City of Altoona to help the City comply with their MS4 Stormwater permitting.

I also volunteered for the Stroud Water Research Center in the Entomology Lab. I also completed two internships with the Redevelopment Authority of the County of Washington (RACW). During my internship with RACW, my responsibility was for outreach and education regarding RACW Brownfield Programs. This summer, I will continue to work in Ohiopyle, PA as a fly fishing guide and instructor.

I am a volunteer for Western Pennsylvania Casting for Recovery (CfR). CfR is a non-profit organization that helps women with breast cancer or who have had breast cancer through peer support, breast cancer education and the therapeutic qualities of fly fishing.



## *A Fish Tail* by Jack Minnick, teacher

If you are a fly fisher, there is nothing more exciting than catching a brook trout. Brook trout have intense coloration, and they can put up a real fight! The Trinity Area School District elementary students are thrilled about brook trout for another reason. For the last several years, all of the elementary school fifth grade students have been raising brook trout. These students observe and care for this native species from egg to fingerling. Pennsylvania Trout in the Classroom (TIC) is an interdisciplinary program for students to learn about coldwater conservation while raising brook trout from eggs to fingerlings. Individual teachers fit this program into their regular curriculum. Each TIC classroom is unique. Some focus on the environment, while others focus on ecology.

TIC is made possible through a unique partnership between Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. The partnership provides curriculum resources, workshops for teachers and Program partners, technical support, brook trout eggs and food, and grant money. The Pennsylvania Department of Education's Department of Environment and Ecology also supports the program through funding and curriculum assistance.

The Trinity East TIC began in November 2011. That year, the school received about 350 eyed brook trout eggs. Students separated the living eggs from the dead, and placed the viable eggs in an egg basket to grow. When the eggs were ready, the eggs were released into the big aquarium. Soon after, all of the elementary schools at Trinity participated in the TIC program.

A goal of this conservation program is to help students understand that coldwater habitats must be protected. Students learn about the conditions that brook trout need to survive. Brook trout are sometimes called the "canaries in the coal mine" of fresh water habitats. When fresh, coldwater habitats become polluted, brook trout numbers decline.

The TIC final event is Release Day. The Trinity Release Day is held every year in May at Mingo Creek Park in Washington County. The fingerlings are transported to the park to be released into the stream. Clearly, this is a big day for the trout. It is also a big day for the students.

TIC is not the only program that teaches students

about clean water conservation. Students also go to the Park to participate in various environmental education stations. Jennifer Dann, the Watershed Specialist from the Washington County Conservation District, set up a macroinvertebrate (aquatic insect) lab near the creek. Students observe, identify, and classify the macroinvertebrates found in Mingo Creek. They analyze the macroinvertebrate species and population to decide if a creek is healthy.

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy staff members demonstrate Electrofishing at another location along Mingo Creek. A variety of fish are captured and students learn about fish identification. Students learn that clean water is important to all organisms, including people.

The students also learn about Geo-caching from the Outdoor Classroom led by Jessica Kester. The students use GPS devices to locate caches found throughout the Park. The staff at Mingo Creek Park set up a Leaf Litter Lab in the woods. Students use various tools to collect and identify the types of organisms living in the leaves on the forest floor.

Trinity Area School District has other programs to introduce students into clean water conservation. The sport of fly fishing (a type of fishing that uses hooks decorated to look like macroinvertebrates and other aquatic organisms) depends on clean water. Clean water means a good habitat for trout, which means good fishing. Trinity Middle School Family Tyes teaches students how to use a fly rod and tie various flies. Rods are given to the students so they can try their luck at fly fishing in Mingo Creek.

Pennsylvania has a network of pristine coldwater streams, where wild brook trout are ready to eat, grow, and thrive. People who fish care about the quality and health of these small "brookie" streams. The Trout in the Classroom program is designed to improve awareness and knowledge about coldwater conservation in these special Pennsylvania waterways.





# Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners Association

## Our Purpose

Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners (SWPWO), a not for profit association, is an organization of individuals interested in sound woodland management practices which encourage the diverse use of forests for timber production, wildlife habitat, watershed protection and recreation and to promote this multiple-use philosophy through education and technical assistance for the benefit of the membership and general public.



## Membership

Membership to the Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners Association is \$10 per year for an individual and \$15 per year for a household. To join, please send name, mailing address, e-mail address (if available), and phone number to:

SWPWO  
2506 Hollywood Dr  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

## Executive Committee

### Officers

Gay Thistle (2011) - President  
John Burnham (2014) - Vice President  
Dave Cressey (2012) - Secretary  
Earl Novendstern (2014) - Treasurer

### Board of Directors

Raul Chiesa (2012)  
Ryan Egidi (2014)  
Russell Orme (2011)

### Advisors

Russell Gibbs - Service Forester, PA Bureau of Forestry  
Bill Wentzel - PA Bureau of Forestry, Retired  
Arlyn Perkey - US Forest Service, Retired

### Past Presidents

John Burnham  
Bob Daley  
Harold Thistle



## FROM THE WASHINGTON COUNTY WATERSHED ALLIANCE – Winter, 2015

### Washington County Watershed Alliance

**Meetings:** The meetings are held the first Tuesday of the month in January, March, May, July, September, and November. They are held at the Washington County Conservation District office - 2800 North Main Street, Suite 105, Washington, PA 15301. The meetings are open to the public and begin at 7:00 pm.

**WEBSITE:** Please visit us at [www.wcwalliance.org](http://www.wcwalliance.org)

**Outreach and Education:** The Alliance participated in several community events and youth education programs last fall. The Boy Scouts Laurel Highlands Council hosted an activity day at East Finely Park; at our station, scouts tested affects of household and industrial products on water quality. At the Camp AGAPE Fall Festival, we showed participants how land activities affect water systems by using a miniature watershed model. Cub Scouts of the Mighty 1305 of Canonsburg met us at Mingo Creek to test its water quality by sampling the stream for macroinvertebrates.

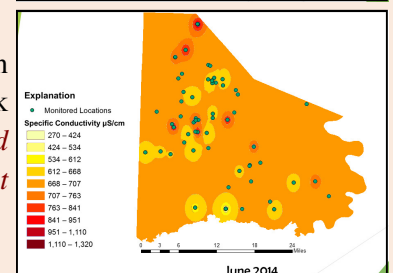
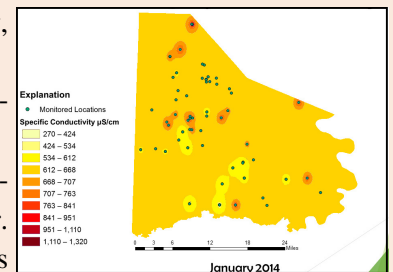
New for 2015, three youth education classes designed by the Alliance have been added to the Washington County Parks and Recreation Community Programs offered at the county parks. Registration is through the Parks and Recreation Dept (724-228-6867). A grant from the Washington County Community Foundation has been awarded to the Alliance to purchase microscopes to be used for the class that will allow children to examine plankton (microscopic plants and animals) from Cross Creek Lake.

**Stream Monitoring Project:** The Alliance continues, for the fifth consecutive year, to monitor water quality of the streams of the county with our in-stream data logger project. We just received a PA-DEP Growing Greener award to support the continuation and expansion of this project for the next 3 years. Currently, there are 20 locations where data is being collected. Funding from the grant will allow us to add 5 new locations, including 3 watersheds not being monitored previously. Stream quality results are now available on our website– check it out!

**Groundwater Monitoring Project:** Residents with private wells and springs continue to monitor their water quality with the CATTFish device for a second year. Through a collaborative effort with faculty and students from California University's Dept. of Earth Sciences, the first year of data collected has been summarized and represented visually. These maps represent general water quality of the county in January and June 2014. The lighter the color, the less impurities in the water. Check out our website for the complete year. *If you have private well or spring water and are interested in monitoring your water, please contact Beth Kahkonen at [bethk@pawccd.org](mailto:bethk@pawccd.org) or 724-503-4785*

### Raccoon Creek Watershed Association

**Watershed Conservation Plan:** After 2 1/2 years of research, outreach and public meetings, the 20D Raccoon Creek Region Conservation Plan draft has been completed. In late December, the draft was submitted to DCNR in Harrisburg for review and comment. Once DCNR's comments are satisfied, the 20D Plan will be finalized and available for public use. In the spring of 2015, Independence Conservancy will host an open house at Raccoon Creek State Park's Recreation Hall where printed copies of the Plan can be viewed, as well as the dozens of maps created specially for the Raccoon Creek Region. Many thanks to all who served on the Plan's steering committee, those who hosted meetings, who guest-authored articles on various topics, and to those who shared their vision for the future of the Region. The draft of the 20D Plan is available at [www.independenceconservancy.org/news-projects/20d-plan-draft](http://www.independenceconservancy.org/news-projects/20d-plan-draft).





**Land Camp:** Teens! Come out to Land Camp and learn how life depends on land! This five-day, five-night camp at Raccoon Creek State Park has lots of fun adventures in store. Explore how all of life is connected - and how you fit into the picture. What happens when you flick on the light switch? Where is "away" when you throw something there? What happens after you flush? How could you manage without a smartphone? Canoeing, archery, swimming, hiking, astronomy, teamwork, discovery and adventure await at Independence Conservancy's Land Camp, July 5 through 10, 2015. Camper tuition \$185 includes rustic cabin lodging, all meals, snacks, field trips, activities and souvenirs. Tuition assistance is available. Opportunities for older teen counselors to share your love of the outdoors with younger teens. For more information, please call Al Moran, Camp Director, at 412-889-5688.

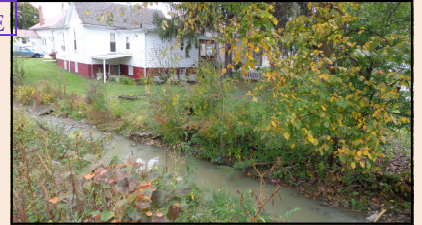
### **Chartiers Creek Watershed Association**

*www.upperchartierscreek.org; email: chartierscreekwa@pawccd.org; facebook.com/upperchartierscreek*

**Meetings:** - The ChCWA meets at 7:00 pm on the second Wednesday of each month at the WCCD Office- 2800 N. Main St., Room 105, Washington, PA.

**Restoration Projects:** The Association, in cooperation with the City of Washington and the Western PA Conservancy completed the Catfish Creek stream bank restoration project. The project involved installation of root wads and the placement of large rock to stabilize the bank. The Association would like to thank the City of Washington for their time and effort in the installation and Greg Schaetzle of the Western PA Conservancy for help with design and imple-

**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



**Wetlands Walk:** The 2015 Wetlands Walk will be held in April. Please check the website for updates.

**Stream Monitoring:** The ChCWA will be planning their stream monitoring for March. If you would like to participate please see the ChCWA website.

**Save Canonsburg Lake:** The Canonsburg Lake Restoration and Improvement Committee received \$300,000 in funding from two sources including a large grant from the Richard King Mellon Foundation. Construction of the weir at the lake will begin this year!

### **Buffalo Creek Watershed Association**

*www.buffalocreekwatershed.org; email: buffalocreekwa@gmail*

**Upcoming Meetings:** The BCWA meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm at the Buffalo Twp Municipal Bldg.

**Annual Report:** The BCWA has completed its 2014 Annual Report summarizing all projects and efforts during the year. In 2014 the BCWA had 581 volunteers hours spent on projects, education and outreach, and water monitoring. Some notable projects completed in 2014 include a streambank restoration project on Dutch Fork Creek, roadside cleanup along Lake Road, tree plantings along Dutch Fork Creek and stream monitoring throughout the watershed.

### **Ten Mile Creek Watershed Association**

**Upcoming Meetings:** The meetings of the TMCWA are held on the first Monday of the month in January, April, July, and October, 9:00 am at the Log Cabin Fence Company meeting room. Next meeting will be held on Monday April 6, 2015

### **Upper Wheeling Creek Watershed Association**

*www.upperwheelingcreek.org*

**Upcoming Meetings:** The UWCWA meetings are held on the first Wednesday of January, April, July, and October, 10:00 am at the East Finley Township Building. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday April 1st at 10:00 am.

**Website:** The UWCWA now has its own website—[www.upperwheelingcreek.org](http://www.upperwheelingcreek.org)—check us out to learn about upcoming events and to learn more about our Watershed Warrior program!



**Farm Service  
Agency**



**2800 North Main Street, Suite 1  
Washington, PA 15301  
Phone: 724-222-3060 Ext. 2  
Fax: 855-847-3602**

## **Coverage Selection for New 2014 Farm Bill Safety Net Programs Began Nov. 17**

**Producers have Until March 31, 2015, to Choose the Program Best for their Operation**

Farm owners and producers are reminded that the opportunity to choose between the new 2014 Farm Bill established programs, Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC), began Nov. 17, 2014, and continues through March 31, 2015. The new programs, designed to help producers better manage risk, usher in one of the most significant reforms to U.S. farm programs in decades.

USDA helped create online tools to assist in the decision process, allowing farm owners and producers to enter information about their operation and see projections that show what ARC and/or PLC will mean for them under possible future scenarios. Farm owners and producers can access the online resources, available at [www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc), from the convenience of their home computer or mobile device at any time.

Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (which includes short grain rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat. Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity.

### **Dates associated with ARC and PLC that farm owners and producers need to know:**

**Now through Feb. 27, 2015:** Farm owners may visit their local Farm Service Agency office to update yield history and/or reallocate base acres.

**Nov. 17, 2014 to March 31, 2015:** Producers make a one-time election between ARC and PLC for the 2014 through 2018 crop years.

**Mid-April 2015 through summer 2015:** Producers sign contracts for 2014 and 2015 crop years.

**October 2015:** Payments issued for 2014 crop year, if needed.

To learn more about which safety net options are most appropriate for specific farming operations, farmers can use new Web tools at [www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc), which can be accessed from the convenience of a home computer or a mobile device at any time. To learn more about upcoming educational meetings, farmers can contact their local Farm Service Agency county office at <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.

**There will be an informational sessions held on February 17, 2014**  
**9:00 AM at the Washington County Conservation District Conference Room**  
**12:30 PM at the Hoss's in Belle Vernon**  
**7:00 PM at the Westmoreland County Service Center**

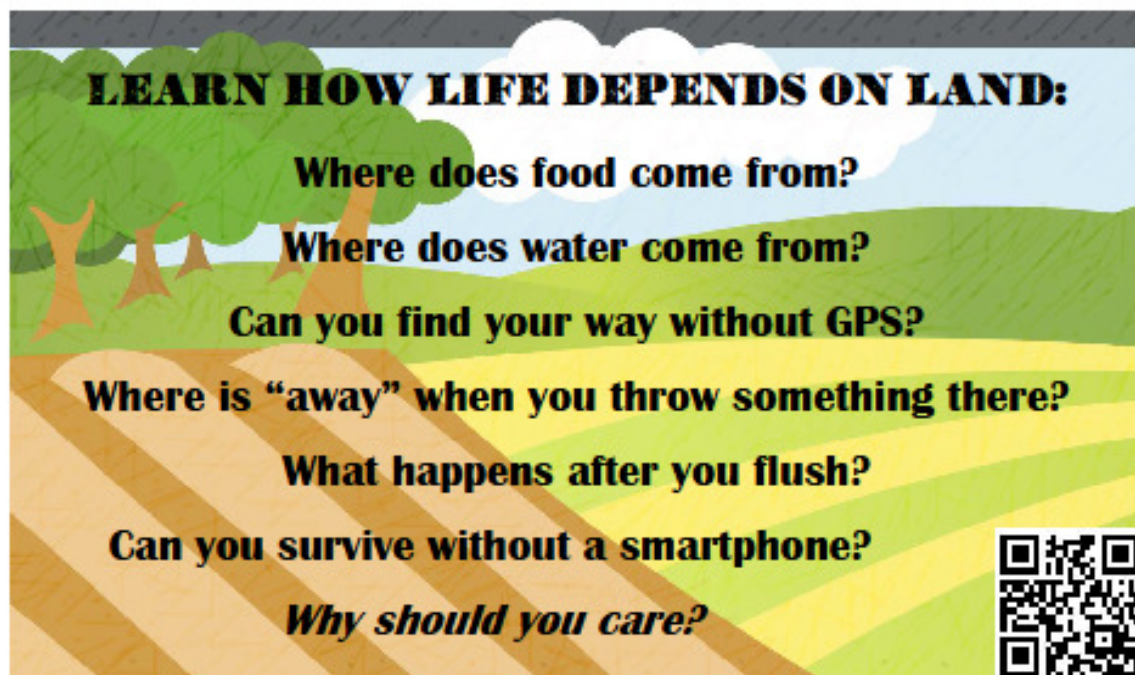
Visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) or the local FSA office for information about FSA and the 2014 Farm Bill programs.



**JULY 5 - 10, 2015**

**A five-day, five-night camp at Raccoon Creek State Park  
Boys & Girls from 12 to 16 years of age  
Sponsored by Independence Conservancy**

**Archery – Paddling – Swimming – Pioneer Skills**



**Camper tuition: \$185**

**Includes rustic cabin lodging, meals, snacks, field trips, souvenirs**

**Adult supervision & older youth counselors**

**Tuition assistance available**

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**More information: please call Al Moran, Camp Director at 412-889-5688**

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# ConserveLand Update

Pennsylvania Land Trust Association

## **Cindy Dunn, Department of Conservation & Natural Resources**

Cindy Dunn is currently president and chief executive officer of PennFuture. Previously, Dunn served as deputy secretary of conservation and technical service for the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). In that capacity, she led DCNR's Conservation Landscape program and oversaw the community conservation partnerships grant program, which provides \$30-\$60 million annually for conservation and recreation throughout the Commonwealth. Dunn served in various roles at DCNR including leading the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation as well as the Office of Communications, Education and Partnerships. Prior to joining DCNR, Dunn served as the executive director of Audubon Pennsylvania from 1997-2003, and was the Pennsylvania program director for the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay for 10 years. Dunn was also the director of community relations during the Ridge administration when the agency was formed. Dunn holds a master's degree in biology from Shippensburg University. She and her husband, Craig, reside in Cumberland County.



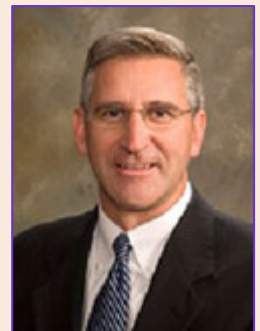
## **John Quigley, Department of Environmental Protection**

John H. Quigley is currently the principal of John H Quigley LLC. From 2009 to 2011, Quigley served as secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). Prior to his appointment as secretary, Quigley worked for DCNR in several capacities, including overseeing strategic initiatives and operations, and as chief of staff. Quigley has had a diverse career in the nonprofit, public, and private sectors, including eight years as the mayor of the City of Hazleton, government relations manager with Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future, and management positions with industry-leading companies. He is a graduate of Bloomsburg University with a degree in economics, and holds a Master of Public Administration degree from Lehigh University.



## **Russell Redding, Department of Agriculture**

Russell C. Redding has served as the dean of the School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences at Delaware Valley College (DeVal) since 2011. In his role, he provided academic oversight for programs including plant science environmental science, landscape architecture, dairy science, animal science, equine science, agribusiness and food science. Prior to joining DeVal, Redding served as Pennsylvania's secretary of agriculture from 2009 to 2011, where he led the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture in all aspects of program implementation, administration, policy development, advocacy, and federal farm policy development. Redding spent a total of 16 years at the Department of Agriculture. Previously, Redding served as agricultural policy advisor and executive assistant to U.S. Senator Harris Wofford. Redding currently serves as Chair of the USDA Advisory Committee on Biotechnology and 21st Century Agriculture. He has a B.S. in agriculture education and a M.S. in agriculture and extension education from Penn State University. Redding resides in Adams County with his wife, Nina, and sons, Garrison and Elliot.



## Soil Health



### The Next Frontier of Conservation

The time is right to talk about soil health for two very important reasons:

1. The world's population continues to grow, but our soil resources do not. We must ensure that our soil resources are stable and sustainable to feed future generations.
2. The land best suited to produce food and other crops continues to be lost to development. Healthier soil has the potential to help our remaining farmers achieve a higher level of profitability and sustainability. What does soil health mean to Pennsylvania?



### What does soil health mean to Pennsylvania?

1. Soil health can change the land. Improving soil health over a period of 5 to 20 years can dramatically change soil function, productivity, and water quality downstream. Leading farmers in Pennsylvania have already proven this to themselves and to many of us by implementing soil health management systems.
2. Soil health can change people. Soil health concepts can truly change people's attitudes about the land. The idea of not just maintaining the land, but improving it to achieve higher levels of productivity with less reliance on outside inputs is refreshing and energizing to many farmers.

### What are the first steps to healthier soil?

Core functions of soil include:

- > Supplying plant roots with water, air, and nutrients with minimum of inputs
- > Absorbing even the most intense rainfall with minimum of runoff
- > Breaking down and recycling "wastes" such as plant residues and manures
- > Functioning on the highest level possible with minimum inputs

Following these Core Principles of Soil Health Management will start you on the path to better soil health!



1. Keep the soil covered
2. Minimize soil disturbance
3. Maximize living roots
4. Energize with diversity

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION

Pennsylvania leads the nation in permanently preserving 502,757 acres on 4,732 farms for future agriculture production. Washington County is one of 57 counties participating in this program and has helped to preserve 5,028 acres on 31 farms.

## **What is an agricultural conservation easement?**

An agricultural conservation easement is a legal restriction on land development that limits future uses of land to agricultural purposes.



## **Why would a landowner want to sell an agricultural conservation easement?**

Selling a conservation easement can permanently protect a family's farmland from being lost to future non-agricultural development. Landowners can receive cash for some of the equity tied up in their land and still retain ownership of their land. Conservation easements can be used as estate planning tools to help landowners successfully pass farms on to the next generation.

## **Eligibility Requirements**

The Washington County Agricultural Land Preservation Board has established minimum eligibility requirements for participation in the farmland preservation program. Farmland tracts must:

Be located in an agricultural security area consisting of 500 acres or more.

Be contiguous acreage of at least 50 acres in size unless the tract is at least 10 acres in size and is either used for a crop unique to the area or is contiguous to a property previously preserved with an agricultural conservation easement.

Contain at least 50% of the soils which are available for agricultural production and are of Land Capability Classes I through IV, as defined by the Soil Surveys published by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Contain the greater of 50% or 10 acres of harvested cropland, pasture or grazing land.

## **Application Information**

Landowners interested in completing an application to sell an agricultural conservation easement should contact the Washington County Planning Commission office by phone, e-mail, or by regular mail. The deadline for new applications is **December 31, 2015**.

Caroline Sinchar

Washington County Planning Commission

100 West Beau Street, Ste. 701, Washington, PA 15301

724-228-6811

[sinchar@co.washington.pa.us](mailto:sinchar@co.washington.pa.us)

# Just For Kids!

# Owls

Owls are nocturnal raptors. Most owls prey on small mammals and insects—with larger owls sometimes hunting larger prey. They have outstanding sight and hearing that allows them to hunt at night. Owls are found on every continent except Antarctica.

### Hearing -

Did you know that an owl can hear a mouse stepping on a twig from 75 feet away?

### Flight -

An important adaptation for owls is silent flight. Where other birds have stiff feathers that make a whooshing sound when they fly, owl feathers have soft edges that allow the birds to fly silently. This is important for owls, as they can swoop down on prey without being heard.

### Barn Owl



www.pittsburghzoo.org

### Sight -

Animals that are active at night usually have large eyes that let them make use of any available light. With owls, the eyes are so big in comparison to the head that there is little room for eye muscles, meaning owls can't move their eyes. Instead, owls must move their entire head to follow the movement of prey.

kids.sandiegozoo.org



Great Horned Owl

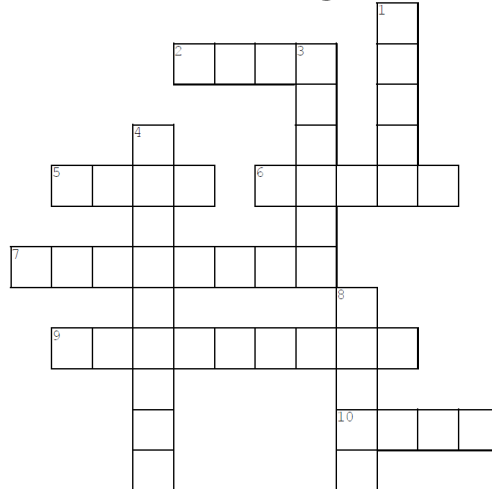


www.aviary.org/Project-OwlNet

Northern Saw-whet Owl  
These owls are featured on Pennsylvania License Plates!



### Owls Owls Everywhere



Created on TheTeachersCorner.net Crossword Maker

### Across

2. Where eggs are laid
5. Sound most owls make
6. Owl prey
7. Owls are covered in these
9. This type of owl lives on the ground
10. Some owls are \_\_\_\_\_

### Down

1. Some owls have ear \_\_\_\_\_
3. What owls use to grasp prey
4. When most owls hunt for prey
8. This owl lives in the Arctic

You can find seven different species of Owls in Western PA:

- ◆ Eastern Screech Owl
- ◆ Barred Owl
- ◆ Barn Owl
- ◆ Long-eared Owl
- ◆ Short-eared Owl
- ◆ Northern Saw-whet Owl
- ◆ Great Horned Owl

1) Tufts, 2) nest, 3) talons, 4) nocturnal, 5) hoot, 6) mouse, 7) feathers, 8) snowy, 9) burrowing, 10) wise

**Washington County Conservation District**  
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Website: www.pawccd.org

**Board of Directors**

William Iams

Jan Tomsic

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