

**WASHINGTON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021**

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DIRECTORS

Bill Iams, Chairman, Farmer Director
Bob Lusk, Vice Chairman, Farmer Director
Richard Mowl, Secretary / Treasurer, Farmer Director
Larry Maggi, County Commissioner Director
Jose' Taracido, Public Director
John Hunter, Farmer Director
Jan Marchezak-Tomsic, Public Director

DIRECTOR EMERITIS

Eugene Painter
William Slosky

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

Georgianna Griffith
Kathy Hixenbaugh
Keith Small
Jessica Ullom
Tom Sierzega
Dr. Jason Kilgore

DISTRICT STAFF

Todd Thornburg, District Manager
John Hewitt, Agricultural Administrator
Matt Golden, Erosion and Sedimentation Technician
Lyndsey Knicely, Erosion and Sedimentation Technician
Hayden Heinrich, Erosion and Sedimentation Technician
Jordan Whitmer, Erosion and Sedimentation Technician
Jenna Theis, Erosion and Sedimentation Technician
Emily Wise, Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Technician
Jennifer Dann, Watershed Specialist
Tom Ulrich, Agricultural Technician
Clarice Munk, Secretary
Intern: Haley Miller

LOCATION OF DISTRICT OFFICE

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WASHINGTON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

PROGRAMS:

The Washington County Conservation District continues to manage and offer the following programs to serve Washington County citizens:

Erosion and Sedimentation Control Program, Chapter 102 of the Pennsylvania Clean Streams Law

National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permits for Stormwater discharges from construction sites.

Chapter 105 General Stream Encroachment and Obstruction Permits

Nutrient Management Program

Manure Management Planning

Agricultural Conservation Technician Program

Farmland Preservation Level 1 Program Delegation

Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Program for municipalities

No-till seeder rental for farm operations

Abandoned Mine Reclamation programs

Environmental Education Programs that include:

School Programs

County Envirothon Competition

Watershed Support Programs including the Washington County Watershed Alliance

The "TOMORROW" conservation newsletter and District Website.

DIRECTORS:

The Conservation District Board of Directors experienced significant changes in 2021 while continuing to provide oversight of the staff and operations of the Washington County Conservation District. Richard Mowl board member for 24 years passed away. His remaining term was filled by Don Logue as farmer director. The Board also had the passing of Robert Lusk, board member for 18 years. His place on the board was filled by his son, Mike Lusk for the remainder of his term.

All Conservation Districts in Pennsylvania are governed by Act 167, the Conservation District Law. Act 167 requires that all Conservation Districts have a minimum of a seven-member board, with one County

Commissioner representative, four Farmer Directors, and two Public Directors. The Pennsylvania State Conservation Commission oversees all Conservation Districts in Pennsylvania including director appointments to ensure that they adhere to Act 167.

DISTRICT STAFF:

We experienced several staff position changes in 2021. WCCD continues to maintain solid employment from employees that remain the backbone of the organization. The District's Agricultural Administrator and Assistant Manager, John Hewitt retired at the end of 2021 with 25 years' experience. The District's Erosion and Sedimentation Control Technicians are Matt Golden with 13 years of experience, Lyndsey Burton (5 years), Hayden Heinrich left the district in February after 1.5 years. The District Watershed Specialist is Jennifer Dann with 11 years of experience. WCCD's Agricultural Technician, Tom Ulrich, has been with us for 8 years. Tom continues his duties as the Agricultural Conservation Technician and Nutrient Management Technician while also assisting the Chapter 102 program. The district's Dirt & Gravel Road, and Low Volume Road (DGLVR) Technician is now Jordan Whitmer who was hired in June of 2021. Clarice Munk, our District Secretary for the past 21 years, remains with the district.

The District also provides support and office storage space for the Washington County Watershed Alliance. Presently the Alliance has no active employees.

During 2021, the District employed a single intern from West Liberty University (WV). Her name is Haley Miller. Haley came to us with a wealth of knowledge from her degree and an exceptional work ethic. She helped each program during her summer with the District.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2021 the WCCD was able to return to full-time office work with some COVID-19 protocols in place. During the last two years the WCCD staff show adaptability, flexibility, and perseverance to continue to provide their services to citizens of Washington County.

With the change in working conditions, WCCD continued to improve on their Information Technology using computer software programs and purchasing laptops for each employee to use for remote work operations. The WCCD was able to host hybrid meetings for all monthly board meetings, allowing people who needed to stay home to still be updated on WCCD activities.

Overall, the WCCD conducted six (6) volunteer nutrient management plans (NMP) and two (2) concentrated animal operations (CAO) covering 900 acres, one (1) conservation plan, ten (10) best management practices (BMPs) on farms including Growing Greener Grant work, and the No-Till seeder was used on 628 acres of farmland by 22 farmers. For the Chapter 102 program, the staff conducted 220 erosion and sedimentation control inspections performed 63 plan reviews and 66 follow-up reviews. For Chapter 105 they processed 63 permits and handled 38 complaints. Furthermore, the Dirt and Gravel Roads and Low Volume Roads program currently has twelve (12) contracts and six (6) projects completed in 2021 for Washington County.

WCCD held an online Envirothon with help from the PA Envirothon office. Eight (8) teams participated with Avella capturing the top spot. Additionally, a couple of staff participated in the Earth Day clean-up efforts, collecting 24 bags of trash off Old Hickory Ridge Road (a ¼ mile stretch in front of our office building). The WCCD also partnered with Range Resources to collect a dumpster worth of illegally disposed of trash and 300 tires from along the Panhandle trail. This work won the WCCD the inaugural Trash Champion Trophy from Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD).

The WCCD did participate in the 2021 Washington County Fair which saw high turnout in a return from the COVID pandemic. Other reach events included an Engineering workshop in conjunction with Allegheny and Butler County Conservation Districts and several zoom presentations.

WCCD VISION: Assisting the community to conserve and improve the natural resources through promotion and innovation

WCCD MISSION STATEMENT: Washington County Conservation District coordinates and implements state-wide and local programs to conserve soil health and water quality for the community through three (3) key components: outreach, education, and technical assistance

Outreach: The district conducts outreach through information technology and social media, participation in key events in the county and state, and interactions with legislators

Education: The district conducts education through Envirothon competition, school visits, municipality training, information briefings, and events such as Field Days and Crop Days.

Technical Assistance: The district provides technical assistance based on delegated responsibilities from DEP, PDA, and SCC. These responsibilities include review of permit applications, inspections of best management practices (BMPs), complaint site inspections, and outreach and education for each program responsibility.

AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS:

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM: Nutrient Management funding provides approximately 25% of one full time position. In addition to the Nutrient Management funding provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) for conservation districts, the PDA also made funding available in 1999 for the hiring of Agriculture Conservation Technicians (ACT). This funding consists of approximately 25% of one full time position, as well. The purpose of these funds is to provide technical time to promote the Pennsylvania State regulations requiring Manure Management plans for all agricultural animal operations and where the animal numbers warrant to promote the Nutrient Management regulations. We continue to employ staff that are Nutrient Management certified and qualified as Agricultural Conservation Technicians, to provide service to Washington County agricultural operations.

During 2021 our agriculture division completed the following agricultural work:

Nutrient Management Plans:

Total Number of farm acres in Washington County (as of December 2021) planned under Nutrient Management Act (NMA): Acres = 900

Number of Concentrated Animal Operations in Washington County: 2

Number of Volunteer Nutrient Management Plans: 6

Number of people reached through outreach efforts in 2021 that the District participated in and/or helped sponsor:

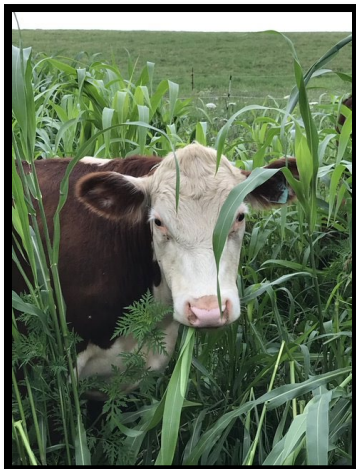
Through news articles: 3 articles with a readership of approximately 3,000
The staff also participated in public events such as the Washington County Fair.
The staff presented information about Manure Management regulations at events.
The staff conducted 1 on 1 training for Manure Management and Agriculture E&S manuals.
There were 14 farm visits made during 2021.

CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE: In 2021, the Agricultural Technician was able to write 1 conservation plan. Our technician also assisted 3 farmers in laying out contour strips. The technician also designed two stream crossings.

AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION TECHNICIAN (ACT): In 2021, we continued to receive funding under the ACT program to assist with the cost of providing technical assistance to area farmers. These duties, along with those of the Nutrient Management Program and Manure Management, are all part of our agricultural division.

SOUTHWEST PROJECT GRASS (SWPG): SWPG is a cooperative effort by local Farmers, County Conservation Districts, and other Industry Partners with assistance from the United States Department of Agricultural Agencies to improve pasture and rotational grazing systems in Southwest PA. Technical assistance for SWPG is provided by our Ag Staff, NRCS and other cooperating agencies. Our Agricultural Technician serves on the executive committee for the organization. Continued support and promotion of rotational grazing systems is planned.

SOUTHWEST PA SOIL HEALTH CONFERENCE: The event supports the district outreach effort by promoting no-till techniques and improving soil health. The event is held yearly at Saint Vincent College. The district assists in this event by having our Agricultural Staff serve on the conference committee.



NO-TILL SEEDER: The District's No-Till Seeder program has been a very successful program since we purchased our first seeder in 1993. The John Deere 1590 ten-foot-wide no-till seeder has been holding up well with little maintenance required. During 2021, the seeder was used on 628 acres of farmland by 22 farmers.

Cattle grazing Sorghum Sudan grass planted with No-Till Drill

GROWING GREENER GRANT PROGRAM: Since 2015, the district has been applying for Growing Greener Grants. The District has been focusing on installation of stream bank fencing, stream crossings and improving grazing systems. By implementing these best management practices (BMPs), soils and excess nutrients are kept out of the stream, thereby improving the health of the water downstream of these

farms. The district received funds through the grant since 2015. The 3 grants that were awarded for projects in the Raccoon Creek watershed have been completed.

In 2021, the district continues to work on the approved 2019 grant which is in the Ten Mile watershed. Streambank fencing was started in 2021 and will be completed after the stream habitat restoration is completed in 2022. The project has taken slightly long to implement due to obtaining the proper permits through DEP. The district will continue to grow this program by submitting additional grants in the coming years.

EROSION AND SEDIMENTATION CONTROL PROGRAM:

Our Districts largest program is the Erosion and Sedimentation Control Program. The program is delegated to conservation districts by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the State Conservation Commission. The Erosion and Sedimentation Control Program is established under Chapter 102 of the Clean Streams Law of Pennsylvania. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) through the State Conservation Commission (SCC) provides funds to conservation districts to administer the program. Districts are also able to retain the permit fees for all the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits. We are also permitted to charge a plan review fee for the review of the erosion and sediment control plans required under Chapter 102.

E&S review fees and permit fees are used solely to fund the implementation of the Chapter 102 program. The Erosion and Sedimentation Program staff are funded by a combination of funding from the DEP, permit fees, and plan review fees.



Staff turnover continues to be an ongoing theme for the E&S program. The District currently has three full time E&S technicians dedicated to E&S review and inspection and one technician who splits their time with another program.

Sedimentation caused by accelerated erosion has always been and continues to be the largest source of pollution by volume. We all contribute to this source of pollution through earth moving activities; residential, commercial, and industrial development, coal mining, oil and gas drilling, driveways, dirt and gravel roads, poor farming practices, and roadway construction.

The following work was accomplished by the Erosion and Sedimentation Control Technicians during 2021.

Inspections.....**220 inspections, 118 of these were routine inspections**
Plan reviews.....**63 initial reviews and 66 follow-up reviews**
Acres involved.....**3117 total acres with 1937.5 acres disturbed**
Complaints.....**22 investigated**
General NPDES permits authorized (non-special protection watersheds)**61 new/amendment/renewal**
Individual NPDES permits processed.....**13 new/amendment/renewal**
ESCGP permits for Oil and Gas Transmission Lines.....**6 permits were processed**

The Chapter 102 program took in **\$45,100 in NPDES permit filing fees** and **\$244,290 in E&S review fees**. The District also forwarded **\$91,120 in NPDES disturbed acreage fees** on to the Department for earth disturbances associated with NPDES permit applications.

Technical assistance was provided to over **1,000 individuals or organizations** over the course of 2021. Three (3) newsletters were also sent. Various district staff again participated in a joint educational workshop with Allegheny CCD, Butler CCD, and Beaver CCD. Staff also manned the district's display at the Washington County Fair.



Chapter 105 Program:

Since 1995, our District has accepted limited responsibilities for Chapter 105 of the Pennsylvania Clean Streams Law. Chapter 105 deals with stream and wetland encroachments and obstructions. In 2013, our district accepted full delegation for Chapter 105 general permits one through nine. The DEP allows delegated districts to keep the permit fees associated with this delegation agreement. During 2021, our district collected a total of \$7,700.00 in review fees and \$21,325.00 in permit fees for a **total of \$29,025 in Chapter 105 fees received for the year**. This amounted to \$15,275.00 less compared to 2020. During 2021, a total of 62 Chapter 105 General Permits were received.



The total number of permits included:

# of GP applications	# of GP Acknowledged	Type of General Permit
1	0	GP 1 Fish Habitat Enhancement Structure
3	3	GP 2 Small Dock and Boat Launching Ramps
2	2	GP 3s Bank Rehabilitation/Protection
10	9	GP 4s Intake and Outfall Structure
31	34	GP 5's Utility Line Stream Crossings
0	0	GP 6 Agricultural Crossings and Ramps
6	7	GP 7s Minor Road Crossings
9	8	GP 8s Temporary Road Crossings
0	0	GP9s Agricultural Activities

PADEP Chapter 105 Related Impacts

Our office handled 38 complaints associated with Chapter 105 related activities in 2021.

The Chapter 105 regulations were instituted by the Pennsylvania State Legislature to prevent damage to the environment through illegal activities such as filling in the floodway or poorly constructed stream crossings.



DIRT, GRAVEL, and LOW VOLUME ROADS PROGRAM:

In 1997, Washington County Conservation District (WCCD) became involved with the statewide Dirt and Gravel Road Maintenance Program. Since then, the District has been working with the municipalities of the County to reduce sediment pollution into our waterways. To date, 77 projects have been completed on dirt and gravel roads and 34 projects have been completed on paved low volume roads (less than 500 cars per day).

In 2021, WCCD completed six (6) dirt and gravel roads projects, and three (3) low volume roads projects. Seven (7) of these projects that were completed were contracts that were amended and rolled over from the 2020 cycle. The COVID Pandemic is still causing issues on timelines from inflated costs and supply chain issues. There are six (6) projects from the 2021 cycle that are still under contract and are scheduled to begin this spring.

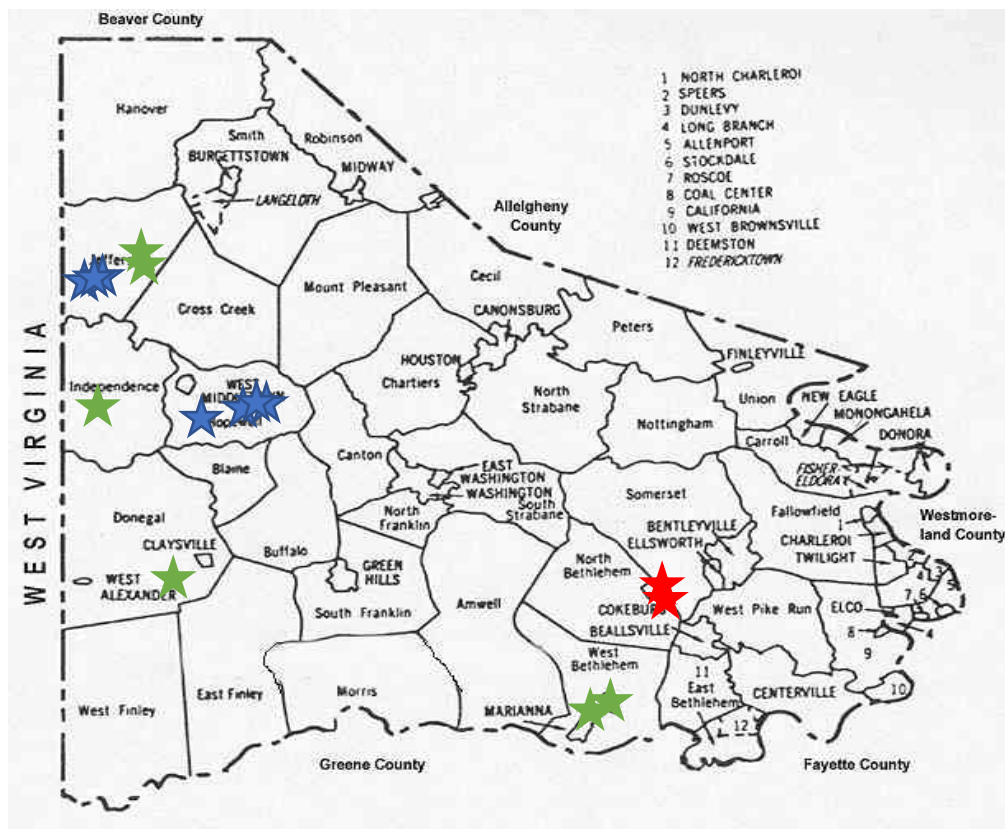
Our allocation for the 2021-2022 fiscal year will total \$581,522, with \$374,284 allotted for the Dirt and Gravel Roads and \$207,238 for Low Volume Roads. WCCD has signed contracts with five (5) municipalities totaling six (6) total projects for the 2022 cycle. These projects will be in West Bethlehem Township, Deemston Borough, Jefferson Township, Beallsville Borough, and Donegal Township.



Cokeburg Hill Before: Large quantities of water run alongside the roadway in ditch causing erosion and sediment to be discharged into Pigeon Creek.



Cokeburg Hill After: Under drains and inlets were to reduce the volume of stormwater that can cause erosion in the ditch. Riprap was also added to reduce the velocity of the water and prevent future erosion. This system performed flawlessly and managed the 5 inches of rain we received on from Hurricane Ida in September of 2021.



DG: Dirt and Gravel Roads LV: Low Volume Roads

- ★ Completed 2020 Projects
 - McCready Road, Jefferson Township. 3 Project Sites (DG)
 - East Crossroads, Hopewell Township. 3 Project sites (2 DG, 1 LV)
 - Possum Hollow Road, Hopewell Township (DG)
- ★ 2021 Completed Projects
 - Cokeburg Hill, Cokeburg Borough (LV)
 - Cokeburg Hill, North Bethlehem Township (LV)
- ★ 2021 in Progress Projects
 - 3rd Street, Mariana Borough (LV)
 - 6th Street, Mariana Borough (LV)
 - Bertha Road Culvert #1, Jefferson Township (DG)
 - Bertha Road Culvert #2, Jefferson Township (DG)
 - Wilhelm Road, Donegal Township (DG)
 - Indian Camp Run Road Slide Repair, Independence Township (DG)

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION:

DISPLAY OPPORTUNITIES: There was a decrease in the number of outreach events due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The WCCD was able to set up a display at the 2021 Washington County Fair.

WASHINGTON COUNTY ENVIROTHON: With the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions that the Envirothon for 2021 was held as a virtual event. Washington County had eight (8) teams who participated in the online challenge. The WCCD purchased prizes for the top team, including back packs and hiking gear to help them learn more as they get outside.

Top Teams:

- 1st Place - Avella
2nd Place - Canon-McMillan Gold
3rd Place - California Burgundy

Participating Schools:

Avella
California
Canon-McMillan
Ringgold
Washington



Avella Winning Team with their prizes and school trophy. Student participants from left to right: Paige Fino, Noah Devenney, Alton Chase, David Fox, and Natasha Close.

PROGRAMS AND PRESENTATIONS: Staff members continually work to promote environmental education by instructing at various programs for schools, municipalities, civic groups, and scout organizations. There was significant reduction in outreach opportunities given the COVID-19 pandemic, the opportunities presented in 2021 included:

- Presentations for PA Master Naturalist Program on Watersheds and Wetlands
- A Zoom lecture on Rural Water and Water Quality Issues to Dr. Kilgore's EVS-100 Water Resources class
- Annual Erosion and Sedimentation Training for Engineers and Contractors – held online in coordination with Allegheny County and Butler County Conservation Districts.

WCCD PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH:

“TOMORROW” NEWSLETTER: Our District newsletter is in the 49th year of publication, and the mailing list exceeds 1,800. The District’s Associate Directors and staff, cooperating agencies, and other sources provide all the articles for the newsletter. Our Secretary assembles the newsletter. The Alliance’s “*Watershed Connections*” continues to be an integral part of our newsletter, which helps cut costs and provide additional support for the Alliance. It also demonstrates the working relationship between our District the Watershed Alliance and the Watershed Associations within Washington County.

WEBSITE: The District website, www.pawccd.org, was created in 2008. The site contains information, resources, and downloadable forms for public use, as well as an online version of the “Tomorrow” newsletter and links to partnering organizations. Statistics show that the website has proven worthwhile and is being used by the public. Throughout 2021, the site received 4,761 visits to the website. Of those visits 83.3% were new visitors to the site. The average visitor to the website clicked on 4 pages and stayed for more than 1.5 minutes browsing the site. This is a good retention rate for viewers. The most popular pages for people to view on the website were the home page, the contacts page, and the agriculture page.

AG DAYS: The 2021 Ag Days event was cancelled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

COUNTY FAIR: The 2021 Washington County Agricultural Fair was held August 14th through the 21st. The WCCD set up a display with agricultural information and highlighted rain barrels as a way for residents to reduce their stormwater flow off their property. Advertisement of the 2022 Rain Barrel workshop was also done.

WATER RESOURCES:

The District continues to support the Washington County Watershed Alliance and its individual watershed association members through the assistance of the Watershed Specialist (the Watershed Specialist position is cost-shared by funding from the DEP). Alliance member associations are the Buffalo Creek Watershed Association, the Chartiers Creek Watershed Association, the Cross Creek Watershed Association, the Independence Conservancy (Raccoon Creek), the Ten Mile Creek Watershed Association, and the Upper Wheeling Creek Watershed Association. A summary of the various watershed activities is provided below.

WASHINGTON COUNTY WATERSHED ALLIANCE

The Washington County Watershed Alliance serves the local member watershed associations by acting as the fiscal agent for grants and assisting them with projects throughout the county. The Alliance is also active as an organization with its own county-wide water-monitoring projects and educational programs.

Our District plays a major role in the operation of the Alliance. In 2021, our District held active membership in the Alliance with our Watershed Specialist as the Treasurer and advising coordinator for the member associations. The District provided office space and storage and offered task support from the District Summer Intern.

The Alliance held its ninth Annual Membership Meeting was held by Zoom on March 2, 2021, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership – The WCWA has worked with the Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership to obtain free tree seedling to plant in Washington County. The aim is to plant 10 million trees in Pennsylvania by the year 2025. Through this partnership the WCWA was able to plant 110 trees in the fall of 2021.



In 2021 the WCWA teamed up with Joe Walker Elementary School and West Liberty University to provide a large quantity of native pollinator seeds to the students. The students were able to reseed their pollinator garden with new species and add to the ones already growing.

During 2021 the WCWA signed on to be the Coordinating Partner for the Pennsylvania Master Naturalist Program in Washington County. This means that the WCWA will be responsible for pulling together the event in the county, including selecting instructors, meeting locations, field trip sites, and advertising for students. The first program for this partnership will run in the spring of 2022.

On August 27th Board and Members of the WCWA traveled to the Rocky Bend Nature Preserve owned by the Independence Conservancy in Potter township, Beaver County. At the site we saw the areas slated for streambank restoration and learned techniques for eradicating Japanese knotweed, including the specialized equipment used by the Conservancy to help with invasive species eradication.



The Alliance also continued to publish their “*Watershed Connections*” newsletter, which is part of our District’s “Tomorrow” newsletter.

In addition to the Alliance Twitter feed (@thewcwalliance) with 234 followers and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/WashingtonCWA) with 414 followers, the Alliance also has an Instagram account (wcwalliance) to reach more community residents in Washington County with information and upcoming events. The Instagram had 221 followers at the end of 2021. The WCWA saw a large increase in Facebook followers once it started using the advertising function of the online platform.

BUFFALO CREEK WATERSHED:

The BCWA officially adopted the Claysville on/off ramps of I-70. The group will now do clean-ups in the spring and fall each year. They held their first clean-up of the ramps on October 23, 2021.



The BCWA held a clean-up of Lake Road on April 17, 2021. Twenty-three (23) bags of trash were collected by the volunteers.

The BCWA is also working with the Center for Coalfield Justice to bring awareness to future undermining near Dutch Fork Lake. Road signs have been put up in the area and the Center for Coalfield Justice has more information on its website.



CHARTIERS CREEK WATERSHED:

The Upper Chartiers Creek Watershed Association (UCCWA) voted to change its name in 2021. This would allow distinction between the Lower Chartiers Creek Watershed Association and the group that serves the upper portion (Washington county) of the watershed.

In 2021, the UCCWA completed its 21st year of stream monitoring. Monitoring was completed in the Spring and Fall using Covid protocols for all volunteers. Chemical monitoring and macroinvertebrate collections were completed at four (4) sites within the watershed.



On October 16th the UCCWA hosted their Annual Wetlands Walk lead by Dr. Jason Kilgore of Washington & Jefferson College. This walk was attended by thirteen (13) individuals interested in wetlands and conservation. Dr. Kilgore highlighted wetland soils, plants, and water table. Sam Carroll, President of the WCWA reviewed the salt watch protocol that is being used within the watershed to monitor for road salt impacts.

Another outreach event was the “Beyond Fish & Birds” program that was held at Peters Lake Park. UCCWA volunteers presented information on aquatic macroinvertebrates to interested attendees and discussed what these critters can tell us about water quality of our streams.

In coordination with Washington & Jefferson College, the UCCWA hosted a clean up of Catfish Creek in downtown Washington on November 6th. Thirty-five (35) students from W&J participated in the clean up. This has become an annual collaboration between the College and the UCCWA.



CROSS CREEK WATERSHED: The Cross Creek Watershed Association continues to promote their Watershed Assessment, Restoration and Protection Plan and Membership Action Plan. Their representative is also a very active member of the Alliance Board.

INDEPENDENCE CONSERVANCY (RACCOON CREEK WATERSHED):

In 2021 the Independence Conservancy planted ten (10) large caliper trees on a sunny November day at Rocky Bend Nature Preserve on Raccoon Creek in Beaver County. More trees will be planted in 2022.

Chris Imbrogno and Kyle Filicky, natural scientists with Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc., led a winter tree and invasive plant identification walk at Rocky Bend Nature Preserve in November 2021. A dozen hardy folks braved a damp drizzle to learn what trees and shrubs belong along raccoon creek, versus those that don't, and how to tell the difference.

Typical invaders are japanese knotweed, bush honeysuckle, japanese barberry, oriental bittersweet, and tree of heaven. Independence conservancy is working hard to reduce the number of invasives within Rocky Bend Nature Preserve.



Independence Conservancy, with the help of Biomost, Inc. and the Washington County Conservation District, launched long-needed renovation to the Conservancy's JB2 abandoned mine discharge treatment system in Smith Township. Biomost crews are opening a channel between the mine discharge and the main treatment cell. The trench replaces a pipe that needed to be unclogged every year. The JB2 system removes over 175 tons of iron per year from raccoon creek.

TEN MILE CREEK WATERSHED:

The TMCWA has worked during 2021 to develop a small grant program using funds donated to the group in 2020. This program will be open to projects that will improve the water quality and natural habitats of Ten Mile Creek Watershed. Information can be found on their website.

WHEELING CREEK WATERSHED:

The UWCWA did download the data from one datalogger within the watershed during 2021.

ORGANIZATION AND MEMBERSHIP

Our Conservation District continues to hold membership or partnership with the following organizations:

Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD)
National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD)
Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation
Soil Conservation Society of America
South West Project Grass Steering Committee
Pennsylvania Forage and Grassland Council
Washington County Farm Bureau
Pennsylvania Forestry Association
Penn's Corner Resource Conservation and Development Council
Penn's Corner Conservancy Charitable Trust, Inc.
Washington County Watershed Alliance
Washington County Agricultural Awareness Committee

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION:

In 2021 the WCCD was awarded the Leadership Excellence Award to our District Board members for their outstanding commitment to organizational leadership and their dedication to professional development. Upon being honored with this recognition the WCCD also received citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, sponsored by Representative Tim O'Neal and a recognition from the Pennsylvania Senate from Senator Camera Bartolotta.

In 2021 our Lead Erosion & Sedimentation Technician, Matt Golden, was awarded the Conservation District Employee Excellence Award for his work not only in Washington County, but across the state.

Finally in 2021 the WCCD received the inaugural Trash Champion Trophy from the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts. This award was given to the county with the most illegal trash cleaned up by its staff. Partnering with Range Resource, the WCCD was able to remove a 30-yard dumpster and 300 tires from a site along the Panhandle trail.

