



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FAYETTE COUNTY SCHOOLS BENEFIT FROM STORMWATER GRANT

Uniontown, PA – Fayette County’s next generation is learning the importance of protecting local watersheds, thanks to a \$3,000 Laurel Highlands Conservation Landscape Mini Grant.

The grant, which was paired with a previously budgeted \$3,300 for stormwater management community outreach and education, allows the county to offer a two-day, hands-on Watershed Awareness Program to hundreds of students in 21 classrooms countywide.

Fayette County Stormwater Manager Sheila Shea said the program, offered through the Pennsylvania Resources Council, is designed to “inspire and inform” students to become watershed ambassadors and environmental stewards.

“Water is life and nowhere is the wonder and awe-inspiring vitality of water more abundant than in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,” Shea said. “This program will familiarize students with their watershed, watershed basics and human impact on the watershed.”

According to the Pennsylvania Resources Council, local and regional watershed problems addressed in the curriculum include polluted urban runoff, abandoned mine drainage, combined sewer overflow, flooding, impervious surfaces, residential contaminants, transportation, agriculture, construction, storm drains, industry, landfills and conservation.

“Students and their families will be encouraged to work together to improve the health of their local watershed,” Shea said. “I was excited to help educate the students on stormwater and watershed awareness. If we educate early, then they will be (able to) help keep our waters clean of pollution by knowing where runoff goes.”

Pennsylvania Resources Council Environmental Educator Nancy Martin said she thoroughly enjoys working with students in Fayette County schools when hosting the program.

“I’ve learned a lot about watersheds in Fayette County and truly love the countryside,” Martin said. “Thank you all for allowing me to visit your classrooms. Many thanks to Sheila Shea for obtaining the funding for the programs and for helping to organize them.”

In addition to educating students, the mini grant was used to fund four Homeowners’ Guide to Stormwater classes for all interested Fayette County residents. The sessions, offered through the Penn State Cooperative Extension, were held in Wharton, Dunbar, German and Luzerne townships.

Fayette County Commissioner Chairman Vince Vicites said the grant is good news for the county, as it helps fund stormwater efforts, build better programs and inspires future generations.

"The youth will have a better knowledge of the County's effort to comply with stormwater management," Vicites said.

Fayette County Commissioner Angela Zimmerlink said providing education on ways to eliminate and prevent stormwater pollution and raising awareness of how to protect and improve water quality are key.

"Everyone has a role in making Fayette County's streams, creeks, lakes and rivers clean and free of pollutants," Zimmerlink said.

For more information, visit www.prc.org or contact Shea at SShea@fayettepa.org.

To learn more about Fayette County, visit www.FayetteCountyPA.org.

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