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# CONSERVATION COMMENTS

APRIL - JUNE 2026

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## WYOMING COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

6052 SR 6, Tunkhannock, PA 18657

570-836-2589/info@wccdpa.org

MEETINGS, THE SECOND MONDAY OF EACH MONTH, 9:30AM, DISTRICT OFFICE.

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### DISTRICT STAFF:

Doug Deutch - District Manager Ext. 404  
Katie McClain - Admin. Assistant Ext. 406  
Bernie Scalzo - Watershed Specialist Ext. 403  
Dave Taylor - Resource Cons. Specialist Ext. 405  
Chris Faux - Ag. Conservation Prog. Coord. Ext. 407  
Laura Anderson - Enviro. Ed. Coord. Ext. 402

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Neil Tague - Chairman  
Vacant - Vice Chairman  
Butch Sands - Secretary/Treasurer  
Commissioner Tom Henry  
Jill Tague  
Walt Dana  
Ken Harvey  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR:  
Dave McCoy

### EVENTS:

2026 Wyoming County  
Fair  
9/2/26-9/7/26  
Come visit us at the  
Booth!



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### LOCAL RESOURCES:

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Bureau of Forestry: 570-945-7133  
DEP: 570-826-2511  
Game Commission: 570-675-1143  
NRCS: 570-836-2490  
PA Fish & Boat Commission: 570-477-5717

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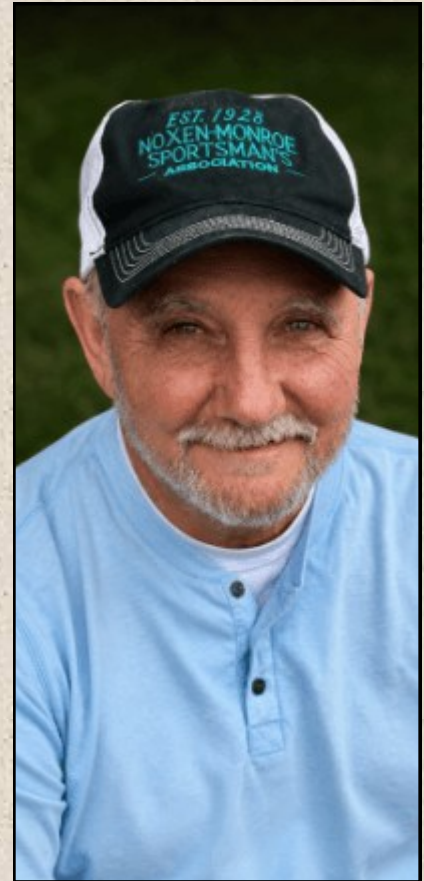
## Saying Goodbye to our Beloved Board Member, Dorne White

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Dorne L. White, age 78 of Harveys Lake, passed away Sunday, June 7th, 2026 at his home, surrounded by his loving family.

Dorne was born in the Harveys Lake area on August 13th, 1947- the son of the late, Charles and Clara Crispell White.

Dorne graduated from Lake-Lehman School District, Class of 1965 where he was active for 13 years in the marching band, also involved in a band during high school called "The Ravens". Dorne participated in wrestling, baseball and student council. After high school, he began working at Whitesel Brothers, then later at General Cigar as a Machinist, before transferring to Proctor & Gamble where he worked as a technician in Wastewater Treatment for 28 years. Following, he was employed with Lake-Lehman SD as a custodian where he retired from employment. He was a patron of the Alderson United Methodist Church where he sang in the choir. Being an active conservationist throughout his life, Dorne was also a member of multiple organizations including the NRA, Wyoming Co. Conservation District, Quality Deer Management Association, Noxen-Monroe Sportsman's Club, South Mountain Land Association, Bowman's Creek Watershed, National Wild Turkey Federation, Ducks Unlimited, Whitetails Unlimited, and the North Branch Land Trust. He was an avid dart player, bowler, and softball player. Dorne enjoyed coaching his daughters' softball teams and later attending his grandchildren's and great grandchildren's sporting events and activities. He was an avid outdoorsman, passionate about hunting and fishing. Dorne also enjoyed playing guitar, gardening, bird watching and the opportunity to share stories, jokes and make memories. Dorne was a great man & will be deeply missed.



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# "The Mighty Susquehanna River"

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An article from ExperincePA titled "Susquehanna River: America's Forgotten Waterway" offers some historical insights into the great river that runs through Wyoming County from top to bottom. Enjoy some excerpts here or explore more online to find out more about the "Mighty Susquehanna".

"The Susquehanna River cuts through the heart of the eastern United States with the quiet persistence of a glacier, carving landscapes and shaping human destiny along its 444-mile journey from upstate New York to the Chesapeake Bay. It is the longest river on the American East Coast, yet it remains largely unknown outside the regions it touches. While the Mississippi and the Hudson have claimed their places in the national consciousness, the Susquehanna flows through history and geography with a kind of modest grandeur, content to let its story be told by those who know it best.



The Susquehanna begins its life as two separate entities. The North Branch rises from Otsego Lake in Cooperstown, New York, the same body of water that inspired James Fenimore Cooper's romantic wilderness tales. The West Branch starts its journey at the confluence of several mountain streams in Cambria County, Pennsylvania. These two waterways travel hundreds of miles through forests, farmland, and small towns before finally joining near Northumberland, Pennsylvania, creating the main stem that continues southward to Maryland.

This bifurcated origin gives the river a peculiar character. Each branch drains a distinct landscape, carrying different sediments, different nutrients, and different stories. The North Branch courses through the glacially-carved valleys of the Endless Mountains, a region of Pennsylvania that earned its name honestly. The West Branch cuts through the Allegheny Plateau, a land of coal seams and hardwood forests that once seemed inexhaustible.

The merger of these branches creates a river of considerable power. At Northumberland, the combined flow forms a waterway that in some places stretches nearly a mile wide, though its depth rarely exceeds a few feet. This shallow, wide character defines much of the Susquehanna's personality and has profoundly influenced how humans have interacted with it throughout history.

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## Continued from "The Mighty Susquehanna River"

European settlers saw in the Susquehanna Valley a landscape of almost limitless potential. The broad floodplains promised agricultural abundance. The surrounding forests offered timber, game, and furs. The river itself presented a natural highway into the interior of the continent.

But the Susquehanna proved a frustrating transportation corridor. Its shallow depths and rocky bottom made navigation treacherous. Spring floods could raise water levels by twenty feet or more, turning the placid river into a roaring torrent. In summer and fall, the water sometimes became so shallow that exposed rocks made boat travel impossible.

Despite these challenges, the river became crucial to the region's development. Lumber mills sprang up along tributaries, sending millions of board feet of white pine and hemlock downstream to growing cities. The logs traveled as rafts, guided by skilled rivermen who navigated the rapids and shallows with intimate knowledge of every bend and boulder.

Agriculture transformed the valley. German and Scots-Irish farmers cleared the forests and planted wheat, corn, and oats in the rich alluvial soil. Small towns emerged at strategic points along the river: Wilkes-Barre, Harrisburg, Sunbury, Havre de Grace. Each served as a collection point for agricultural products and a distribution center for manufactured goods coming upriver.

The early nineteenth century brought canal fever to America, and the Susquehanna Valley caught the infection. Engineers and investors envisioned a water-based transportation network that would link the coalfields of northeastern Pennsylvania to urban markets. The result was an ambitious system of canals that ran alongside the river, using its water to fill locks and maintain water levels.

The Pennsylvania Canal system, completed in segments throughout the 1830s and 1840s, represented an engineering achievement that matched anything in the young nation. Canal boats carried anthracite coal from the Wyoming Valley to Harrisburg and beyond. They returned laden with manufactured goods, salt, and other necessities of industrial life.

The canals brought unprecedented prosperity to valley towns. Harrisburg became a major transportation hub where goods transferred from canal boats to wagons or to the railroad. Lock tenders, boat captains, stable operators, and merchants created a bustling economy along the waterway.

But the canal era proved brief. Railroads offered speed and reliability that water transport could never match. By the 1850s, trains were carrying most of the valley's freight. The canals lingered into the early twentieth century, serving local needs and providing employment for a dwindling number of boatmen, but their glory days had passed.

No understanding of the Susquehanna is complete without recognizing its relationship to the Chesapeake Bay. The river provides roughly half of the freshwater entering the bay, making it the single most important tributary to America's largest estuary. The Susquehanna has emerged as a significant recreational resource in recent decades. Kayakers and canoeists paddle its waters, exploring islands and side channels.

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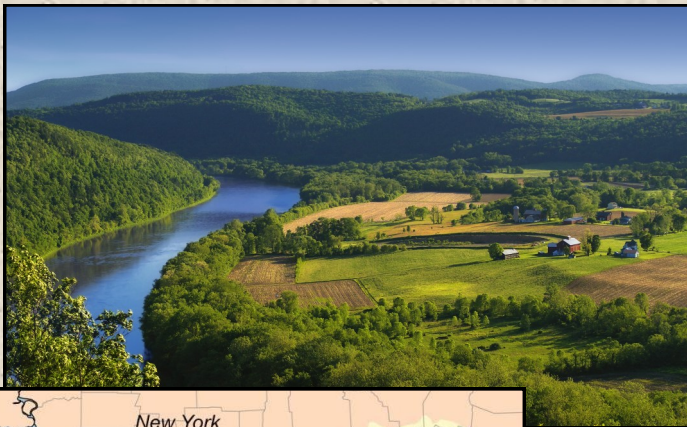
# Continued from "The Mighty Susquehanna River"

Anglers wade its riffles in pursuit of bass and muskellunge. Hikers walk trails along its banks, including portions of the 150-mile Susquehanna River Trail.

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The river towns have begun to recognize the waterway as an asset rather than a liability. Riverfronts once given over to industry and transportation are being reclaimed for parks and trails. Festivals celebrate the river's history and ecology."

So get out and enjoy what the beautiful Susquehanna River has to offer. It's a quiet retreat full of amazing wildlife. You may see the Great Blue Heron that wanders the shorelines or lumbers by in flight. Or you may spot the majestic Bald Eagle, the stoic symbol of these United States of America. Heck, you might even spot a black bear crossing the river on a hot summer day. No matter, you will experience the beauty of Pennsylvania and if you're lucky, the beautiful Endless Mountains of Wyoming County.



## ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR THE DGLVR PROGRAM

The 2026 Dirt, Gravel & Low Volume Roads grants were awarded at our June Board meeting and we had another great turnout for this year's grant round. Again this year our grant applications totaled over one million dollars in requests. We had 18 requests for the dirt & gravel roads side of the program & 8 applications for the low volume roads program.

This year we are able to fund a total of only 5 dirt & gravel roads projects & 3 low volume road projects. We always hope to fund as many projects that we are able to but with the rising costs of the materials, our money is just not going as far as it used to.

### 2026 D&GR RECOMMENDATIONS

MUNICIPALITY	ROAD NAME	GRANT REQUEST	IN-KIND	TOTAL
Nicholson Twp.	Harold Squier Rd.	\$106,682.42	\$56,994.66	\$163,677.08
Northmoreland Twp.	Valley View Rd.	\$46,361.26	\$81,646.98	\$128,008.24
Northmoreland Twp.	Laurel Hill Rd.	\$68,732.73	\$65,299.50	\$134,032.23
Forkston Twp.	Mountain Rd.	\$21,905.00	\$14,705.00	\$36,610.00
Tunkhannock Twp.	Bardwell Rd.	\$58,704.50	\$34,082.66	\$92,787.16

### 2026 LVR RECOMMENDATIONS

MUNICIPALITY	ROAD NAME	GRANT REQUEST	IN-KIND	TOTAL
Tunkhannock Twp.	River St.	\$15,000.00	\$161.68	\$15,161.68
Eaton Twp.	Thurston Hollow Rd.	\$19,136.98	\$15,173.68	\$34,310.66
Noxen Twp.	Butry Rd.	\$20,297.56	\$8,334.00	\$28,631.56

The program has evolved over the time that I have been in this position working with the Center, the townships and the SCC. It is still a valuable, helpful tool that the District provides to the municipalities throughout our county and the state. Hopefully the program can continue to increase the funding & provide the help that is needed.

In the past year I was lucky enough to participate on the DGLVR workgroup that was tasked with rewriting the administrative manual and help set the rules that the program works with. Our efforts with the manual have paid off and we will be fully implementing these changes come July 1st. We are excited about the future of our program again and it restores control of the program back to the Districts where it was originally intended.

# A Year in Beekeeping Part 2

with Dave Taylor

In this quarter's newsletter we are going to look at the spring months of beekeeping and the busy time that it can be. There are plenty of moving parts in this time of year and every year there seems to be new surprises. This is definitely the time of year that you want have a plan but without fail that is not the plan the bees have in mind and they will get their way no matter what.

Spring is the time for increases , are you looking to increase your honey crop, increase the number of nucs that you have available for sale or increase the number of hives you have in your own apiary. Spring is the time that can and will dictate how the rest of your year will go. Small changes that you as a beekeeper do can and will impact the hives and the biggest factor that no one has any control over is Mother Nature and how she will impact our hives.

April is the time of year that beekeepers will be getting their new bees. Down south beekeepers are preparing to ship thousands if not millions of packages of bees to our northern areas. Beekeepers hopefully will have everything ready when the packages arrive and the weather will cooperate and we can install our packages in good weather. A package of bees consists of about 3 pounds of bees and one queen bee in her own separate cage inside the larger cage. It's everything that the colony will need to start a new hive. There are about 1,000 bees per pound so you can roughly guess there are 3,000 bees in every package. The queen that is in that package may not be related at all to any of the workers and that is the reason she is in her own cage. As she is traveling north the worker bees can get used to the new queen's smell and accept her as one of their own.



Package of bees ready for shipment



Beekeepers making packages in the south

April can also be a month of when beekeepers in our area start to split their hives to increase their number of hives and a way to control the population of bees in the parent hive. A split is just what it sounds like. A beekeeper opens an existing hive that is already starting to build up and hatch out plenty of new baby bees in preparation for all the nectar flows to come, he or she then takes frames from that parent hive that has plenty of new eggs, a few frames of capped brood or babies ready to emerge and start working and a couple frames of honey and pollen that the new hive rely on for their food and the new babies food for the first few weeks. These splits can then either be kept at your apiaries to increase your number or these are what can be sold to other beekeepers to increase their number as Nucs once the new queen has developed and she starts laying her own eggs in the new hive.

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# A Year in Beekeeping Continued...

A new queen can be grown from any new egg or a very young larva less than three days old. There is no difference between an egg that is laid as a worker and one that can develop into a queen. The only difference is the food that the baby bee gets as it is developing. All larva are fed a diet of Royal Jelly for the first three days of their lives. Royal Jelly is a very highly nutritious food that is produced by glands on the forehead of worker bees. If that bee is destined to become a worker, after the first three days the food that is fed to that larva is what is then called bee bread and that is a combination of honey or nectar and pollen. If that young larva is lucky enough to become a queen it will be fed a diet of that royal jelly for the full time that larva is developing.

Sometimes you can make more than one new hive from an existing hive depending on how strong and how populous the parent hive is. The beekeeper can decide to try and leave the parent hive fairly strong and plan to hopefully get a substantial honey crop. If that is the plan for the year we need to make sure we add plenty of honey supers to the hive that the bees can spread out and gives them place to store all the nectar that will be flowing in during the next couple of months.



Weather can play a huge factor during this time of year. If everything is perfect there could be a huge honey crop and the bees are happy just bringing in all the nectar. If there weather is cold and wet the bees get cooped up too long and get tired of being crowded in with all their sisters and brothers.

This usually is the beginning of the may swarming season. This can start as early as the end of April but definitely May is the height of the swarming season. A swarm is the natural way that the parent hive reproduces. When the bees feel that they are too crowded and there is not enough room in their hive, the old queen will stop laying new eggs and some of the final eggs that she does lay, the workers will start making into new queens. When the old queen is ready to leave, which is right around the time that the new queens will hatch out, she will fly out of the old hive with about half of the bees that are in the hive at that time. This is called a swarm and the swarm will go out an land on a branch or anywhere that is can spend a day or two looking for another good place to start a new hive.

This can be a very busy time for beekeepers as they go and try to catch their bees that are swarming or by getting calls from people that have swarms around their houses and want to get rid of the bees. This can also be another great way for beekeepers to increase the number of bees at their apiary. This past season was one of the busiest seasons that I have experienced in several years. Condition were just right, being cold and wet to keep the bees cooped up and just wanting to swarm even though I made splits and gave them plenty of honey boxes to expand out into. They just were cooped up too long with the weather that everyone wanted to split and make their own hives.

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# A Year in Beekeeping Continued...



When the calendar finally turns to June and the swarming season winds down beekeepers can almost take a small break to catch their breath and get ready for the first harvest that the bees are hopefully bringing into the hive load after load. Nectar flows are on in the spring, flowers and trees are blooming and hopefully the bees are getting a chance to visit as many as possible.

We are still going to be out there making sure all the splits and the new hives that we just got from one source or another are all doing well. They all have a good laying queen and she is starting to lay new eggs and have new bees all her own. Of course we are not forgetting about our existing hives, we are continually monitoring those hives to make sure those queens are doing well and we are not experiencing too high of a pest load and preventing those bees from bringing in the nectar and making the honey.

As we have been checking our hives we can start to see and feel how heavy our honey boxes are getting and we are starting to get a good idea of how much honey may be coming in to our hives already. Our first crop of honey may be right around the corner and the excitement is starting to grow knowing that you may soon be rewarded for all the hard work that you have put into the bees already this year.



This has been a look into what has been going on in the spring of the year. In the coming newsletters we will be looking into what goes on in the summer and through the fall. And hopefully maybe shortly we can start to enjoy the fruits of all the labor that bees have been putting in.

# 2026 WCCD FISHING DERBY

WCCD has proudly taken over the Fish Derby since the WC Federation of Sportmen's Club disbanded earlier this year. The Fishing Derby was held at the district pond, Sat. 6/6/26. There were around a dozen kids in attendance. Ma & Pa Taylor generously provided a monetary donation, Kandy Taylor made homemade cookies, T-Town Bait & Tackle provided earthworms, Roland Anderson brought his fish measuring board that has been used for the derby for years & Bill Kalinauskas provided fishing prizes. The district provided prizes for the winners & a light lunch of hot dogs, chips & beverages. We also had the Wyoming-Lackawanna Dairy Princess, Mackayla Quick, donated ice cream & handed out to all that attended.



## LARGEST AMERICAN LAKES

U H Q Z F E K A L T L A S T A E R G V L  
 Y K S T R K I I M L A U C Y I L F D C R  
 R D C G V E T Z P F K V J B V H K I P B  
 N A G I H C I M Z B E Z S T C L A I R Q  
 Y R O Z T P N P Y D O I W A Q Y W I I K  
 N X F A H X I S G E F Q U E L P N L K V  
 I K O V H G R A J R T S F S Z A B I O R  
 A D R H D E E K K T H E O N X M C A A Z  
 R S T M R G F A K C E L R O X Y W M R R  
 T Z P L U N C K J N W A A T T C P N O P  
 R A E Y E H P A G R O W H L M D Q A I A  
 A J C E T N N W H N O I C A B L W I R Y  
 H H K D B P I E W R D K E S S I Q O E V  
 C L E G W O C A B B S T B E B D J O P I  
 T H L X E Q H K L K W T J H G H P N U I  
 N U C T M P M C U P Z A O T T S D T S Z  
 O R J G E T L F E H M H U V U J X A W I  
 P O I I L G Y J Y E B A O M V P L R B Q  
 D N R Z X T R K J Q K H H V W C H I P F  
 F E V V V R A A Z R Z O Q C H N U O N O

- BECHAROF
- CHAMPLAIN
- ERIE
- FORT PECK
- GREAT SALT LAKE
- HURON
- ILIAMNA
- LAKE OF THE WOODS
- MICHIGAN
- OAHE
- OKEECHOBEE
- ONTARIO
- PONTCHARTRAIN
- RAINY
- RED
- SAKAKAWEA
- SELAWIK
- ST. CLAIR
- SUPERIOR
- THE SALTON SEA

Lake Superior is the largest lake in the US.



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# HAY HEADACHES

BY: CHRIS FAUX

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Everyone is experiencing the same struggle this year. Hay tonnage is severely lacking. Most producers are saying yields are 50% of normal. The only saving grace producers are talking about is the quality of all the hay produced is phenomenal because of the early weather window we've had. This situation has all the livestock producers asking the same question; "How do I get enough hay for winter?"



The least labor-intensive option that will probably cost the most is buy hay. If this is the option you are going to rely on, be sure to buy early this year. With the shortage of production that is happening, hay suppliers are bound to run out early this year. With high fertilizer prices and fuel prices the cost to buy hay will most likely be up this year. The dry weather we have been experiencing also has allowed many producers to harvest hay early which has made for very good quality hay. This too will drive up the price to buy hay.

The least favorite option for most producers is to lower stock density. Livestock prices are high now and this option could net producers short term gains rather than having expenses. If this is the option a producer chooses, they should do this earlier in the season. This ensures that they beat the rush of everyone selling their animals at the same time.

All the other options producers have make them rely on the weather, which is always a gamble. The first option they have is to do nothing and hope for above average rainfalls with weather windows that allow them a good second and third cutting.

The next option they have is to buy in nitrogen fertilizer to try and produce a good quality second and third cutting with a lot of volume. Buying fertilizer is expensive, but you are in control of making your own hay this way and not reliant on finding someone. This option only works if we have rain but could be a large expenditure with little return on investment if we don't receive rain.

The third weather related option producers have is to plant warm season annual grasses. It's still early enough in the season these can be established and a good harvest can be had. Producers can get these established as late as mid-July and still get good harvests dependent on rainfall. This option still has costs associated with it, but producers could be getting large volumes of high quality forage with it. Some varieties of warm season grasses can yield as much as 10 tons per acre under ideal conditions.



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# PENNSYLVANIA ENACTS QUARANTINE TO PREVENT NEW WORLD SCREWORM

MATT ENRIGHT, LANCASTER FARMER

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New World screwworm has spread from Panama to Texas in less than three years, and it will take hundreds of millions of dollars to stop the potentially catastrophic threat to the U.S. livestock industry from going any farther.

Pennsylvania Ag Secretary Russell Redding signed a quarantine order Tuesday, imposing movement and import restrictions on warm-blooded animals being transported to and through the state. All susceptible animals must be examined and determined free of New World screwworm by an accredited veterinarian before entering the state.

Mid-Atlantic animal health officials doubt the screwworm can establish itself this far north, but they are urging farmers to be alert.

The parasite that feasts on living flesh is endemic in South America but was wiped out in the U.S. in the 1960s. It resurfaced June 3 when USDA confirmed its presence in a 3-week-old calf in Zavala County, Texas.

A week later, three more calves and a goat in Texas, and a dog in New Mexico, were also confirmed to be infected.

Dr. Alex Hamberg, Pennsylvania's state veterinarian, said protecting the beef industry is a top concern because cattle seem to be the larva's preferred food source. But the fly can infect any warm-blooded animal with an open wound or exposed mucus membranes. This includes all livestock, pets and humans.

"It is not just a cattle issue," said Erika Machtinger, a Penn State associate professor of entomology.

The risk to the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast is believed to be low. Even when the screwworm was widespread in the Southern U.S. decades ago, it never made it farther north, Machtinger said.

Screwworms do well in warm climates and would die off in northern winters.

A warming climate could open the window for the screwworm in Pennsylvania, but "it's still too cold for the fly to establish here" year-round, Machtinger said.

The main concern, she said, is that infested animals could be transported north during warm months. Pennsylvania's quarantine aims to prevent that from happening.

Producers should monitor wounds on animals. Foul-smelling discharge, visible cream-colored larvae, irritated behavior, reduced appetite reduced appetite and wounds that don't heal are all symptoms.

Screwworm infestations are treatable when caught early. Machtinger said infected animals need veterinary care.

A key objective for the state is ensuring producers, veterinarians, livestock market employees, domestic animal dealers and haulers adhere to the quarantine and know what to look for so they don't facilitate the disease.

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# SCREWORMS CONTINUED...

"We're aggressively preparing as a precaution, even though there's no evidence New World screwworm is in Pennsylvania today," Hamberg said.

That includes working closely with USDA, the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials, and Texas officials to standardize procedure and establish protocols.

Gene Copenhaver, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association president and a Virginia beef farmer, said he has full confidence in USDA.

"NCBA will continue using every tool in the toolbox to ensure screwworm is eradicated in the U.S. once again," he said.

The most effective weapon in the fight is the release of sterile flies.

Since New World screwworm flies only mate once in their lives, sterile males help control the population. Using sterile flies, the U.S. eradicated screwworms in 1966 and quickly stopped a small outbreak in the Florida Keys in 2017.

"As the USDA brings more capacity to create more of those sterile males, that's going to help us really take the fight back to this fly," Hamberg said.

USDA is building a \$750 million sterile fly production plant in Texas, planned for completion in 2027.

So far, Hamberg said, Texas is doing a good job of locking things down. That includes establishing a 12-mile infestation zone around the first detection and implementing quarantines, movement controls and surveillance.

USDA is also releasing more sterile flies in the region and increasing trapping efforts.

Still, producers and veterinarians need to stay alert.

"Early detection and rapid response remain the best tools we have to prevent spread," Machtinger said.

She recommends producers stay informed and diligent, and report anything suspicious to a veterinarian or state health official.



Photo: Lori Hays

# ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

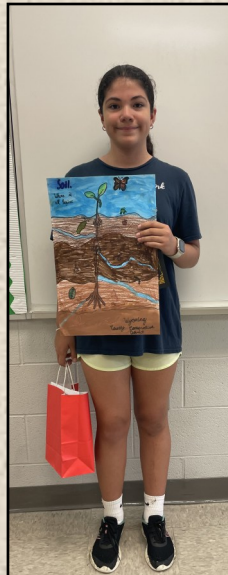
## 9th Grade Field Trip



## Owl Program



2026 Poster Contest  
Theme: "Soil. Where it all Begins"  
3rd through 7th grade  
Tunkhannock Intermediate Center



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# WYOMING COUNTY ENVIROTHON WINNERS

1st, 2nd & 3rd place teams from  
Lackawanna Trail High School



Regional Junior Envirothon includes:  
Lackawanna, Susquehanna &  
Wyoming County Schools  
Lackawanna Trail 7th & 8th Grade Students  
Placed 1st, 2nd and 3rd!



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