



## WARREN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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[www.wcconservation.net](http://www.wcconservation.net)

*Conserving Natural Resources for our Future*

# Conservation Newsletter

This publication includes information about the Conservation District, various programs we oversee, educational opportunities, and gives you a look at some of our projects. **If you are receiving this newsletter and no longer want to receive it please call us to be removed from the mailing list.**

### ***Included in this issue:***

Programs, Self - Guided Activities, Workshops, Bits & Pieces,  
2022 Summer Camp, and Updates

#### Winning Photo from 2021 Contest



#### Self - Guided Activities



### ***Our Mission***

The mission of the Warren County Conservation District is to improve the environmental quality of Warren County by promoting the wise use, enhancement and understanding of natural resources.

### ***Our History***

The Warren County Conservation District dates back to April 12, 1948 and is governed by a board of eight directors. District staff implement programs, conservation projects, and educational events in cooperation with a number of partnering agencies and organizations.

**Check out our website at [www.wcconservation.net](http://www.wcconservation.net).** It includes information on our different programs including links to necessary forms. Information includes, but is not limited to the following: applications for camps, Dirt, Gravel & Low Volume Road Program applications, and Garden Plot Rentals. The Warren County Conservation District office is located in Warren, PA at the corner of Hatch Run Rd and Conewango Avenue.

# **WORKSHOPS AND EDUCATIONAL HAPPENINGS TO LOOK FORWARD TO:**

## **APRIL**

**My Pal & Me - April 22 6:30 pm– 7:30 pm– Bobbers & Buddies:** For more information see Page 7.

**Envirothon - April 29 -** An Environmental Academic Competition for children in grades 7-12 to be held at Chapman State Park.

**Storybook Walk (April & May) -** For more information see Page 7.

## **MAY**

**My Pal & Me - May 20 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm -** For more information see Page 7.

**Rain Barrel Workshop - May 21 10:00am - 1:00pm -** Come and join us at Ekey Florist & Greenhouse to learn about the benefits of having rain barrels and see the great job Warren County High Schools did on the rain barrel painting contest.

## **JUNE**

**Youth Conservation Camp - June 21 - 23**

For more information see Page 7.

**My Pal & Me - June 10 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm Creek Critters -** For more information see Page 7.

**Black Bear Extravaganza (June & July)-** For more information see Page 7.

## **JULY**

**Environmental education camps for children entering the following grades:** For more information see Page 7.

**Children's Nature Camp III - July 11 & 12 -** Grades 5 & 6.

**Children's Nature Camp II - July 14 & 15 -** Grades 3 & 4.

**Children's Nature Camp I - July 26 & 27 -** Grades 1 & 2.

**Kindergarten Nature Camp - July 28 -** Kindergarteners



## **AUGUST**

**Critter Walk (August & September)–** For more information see page 7.

## **SEPTEMBER**

**WCCD Annual Photo Contest -** For more information see Page 3.

## **OCTOBER**

**Walk in Penns Woods - October 2-** Come for a walk in the woods and learn about this intricate ecosystem.

**Fall Trivia Quest (October)-** For more information see page 7.

*See our website for more information on each event as it becomes available.*

**Additional copies of this newsletter are available at [www.wcconservation.net](http://www.wcconservation.net) and the WCCD Office at 4000 Conewango Avenue, Warren, PA.**

# Bits & Pieces

## Envirothon

In 2020 we saw a unique virtual Warren County Envirothon that featured five students from three area schools; Warren Area High School, Youngsville Middle/High School, and Tidioute Community Charter School. In



3rd Place Team from  
Tidioute Community  
Charter School

2021 the event represented a more familiar format to the county Envirothon. Although still virtual, instead of featuring individual students, five Varsity teams participated from three schools. Kyra's Team from Sheffield Middle/High School (2<sup>nd</sup> Place), Jolynn's Team from Tidioute Community Charter School (3<sup>rd</sup> Place), and Joe's Team (1<sup>st</sup> Place) and Fawne's Team (4<sup>th</sup> Place) from Youngsville High School. Three Junior Varsity Teams from Beaty/Warren Middle School were: Hayden's Team (1<sup>st</sup> Place), Lexi's Team (2<sup>nd</sup> Place), and Tyson's Team (3<sup>rd</sup> Place). Lorelle Steach, the Pennsylvania State Envirothon coordinator, and the Envirothon Committee did a terrific job managing the event and working out any technical glitches that sprung up here and there. Topics included Forestry, Wildlife, Soils, Aquatics, and Current Issue (Water Resource Management). Planning is currently underway to hold an in-person event in April, 2022.

## Photo Contest

WCCD will be hosting its annual photo contest sponsored by Allegheny Outfitters. The four categories will be: Rocks, Storms, Plant Life and Live-stock. Photos must be taken in Warren County and will be accepted until September 16, 2022 at 4:00pm. Prizes will be awarded for 1st place in each category, People's Choice, and Best of Show. A People's Choice photo will be awarded in each category so please stop into WCCD and vote between September 19 - October 3, 2022. On October 5, 2022 judges will select the top three photos in each category and an overall Best of Show. For a list of rules and more information please call 814-726-1441 or go to [www.wcconservation.net](http://www.wcconservation.net). Please drop off your photos to the Warren County Conservation District at 4000 Conewango Ave, Warren, PA 16365.



## Art Contest

The Conservation District held an Art Contest sponsored by the Warren County Visitor Bureau. The artwork was due on March 18. The age groups were K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12 and the theme was Healthy Soil = Healthy Life. On April 4th, Judges will select the top three artwork submissions in each age group. The artwork will be judged on conservation message, visual effectiveness, originality, and universal appeal. There will also be a ribbon awarded in each age group for the People's Choice.



The children pictured on the right are some of the winners from 2021.

## Pavilion Rental

The pavilion at the Hatch Run Conservation Demonstration Area on Hatch Run Road is available for rent for a family reunion, graduation party, birthday party, or any other type of large-group gathering. This area offers plenty of parking, picnic tables, an outdoor privy, plus the beauty of nature. Electricity is not available. Groups can bring their own grill if they wish to cook out. We also ask that you please respect this beautiful outdoor space by carrying out your garbage. The cost is \$25.00 and **reservations are required for all organized events**. Contact the District for more information or to reserve the pavilion for your next picnic or gathering.



## Community Gardens

Garden plots are available this spring at the Hatch Run Conservation Area. The fee is \$25 for a 25'x25' plot. For more information contact the Conservation District by calling 814-726-1441. Rain barrels will be placed on site. We cannot guarantee the availability of water, especially during drought conditions.



# *Land Development and Permitting.*

## **Before any earth disturbance activity can occur required permits and plans must be approved.**

Projects requiring earth disturbance or occurring near a watercourse and may require special permits and approvals. Check with the Conservation District before you begin your project to obtain accurate information as to what permits are needed.

### **Working in or Near Water**

The PA Code: Title 25 Chapter 105 Program regulates work in and around streams, wetlands and other water bodies with a focus on avoiding or minimizing impacts to water quality, flooding frequency and riparian habitats.

Do you have a project that you're itching to get done to improve the quality and beauty of your property or maybe that stream that runs through your yard? Did you know that WCCD can help you get the required permits and plans needed to get that project done right? Chapter 105 general permits can be applied for through WCCD for any work in or around waterways in Warren County. If your project is listed below, and you are under one acre of disturbance for the project, a General Permit is just what you need.

#### **Activities covered by Chapter 105 General Permits:**

- GP1- Fish habitat structures
- GP2- Small docks & boat launches/ramps
- GP3- Bank stabilization, rehabilitation & gravel bar removal
- GP4- Intake and Outfall structures
- GP5- Utility Line crossing
- GP6- Agricultural crossings or ramps
- GP7- Minor road crossing
- GP8- Temporary road crossing
- GP9- Agricultural activities



### **Earth Disturbances**

The PA Code: Title 25: Chapter 102 Erosion and Sediment (E&S) Control Plans, Permits, and NPDES Permits regulates Earth Disturbance Activities and Best Management Practices (BMP) of those activities.

#### **If your project's area of earth disturbance is:**

**A. Under 5,000 sq ft:** State Regulations note that these sites are still required to install, implement and maintain BMP's to minimize accelerated erosion and sedimentation. These E&S plans are **not** required to be approved by the District.

**B. Over 5,000 sq ft - 1 acre (43,560 sq ft):** Requires a written E&S Plan to be reviewed and approved by the District. The approved plan should be available on site, implemented and maintained for the duration of construction.

**C. 1 acre or more of earth disturbance:** Will require a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit. These NPDES permits are reviewed and approved by DEP's NW Regional Office.

- Individual NPDES - projects taking place in special protection watersheds will need an Individual Permit.
- General NPDES - all other projects that meet NPDES criteria but are not in a Special Protection Watershed.
- Also an approved, stamped, signed and dated COPY of the E&S plans must be kept on site for both Individual and General NPDES Permits.

#### **D. Timber Harvest or Road Maintenance Activity:**

- Over 5,000 sq ft of earth disturbance will require an E&S Plan to be written and available on site. BMP's need to be installed, implemented and maintained but the E&S plan does not need to be approved by WCCD.
- 25 acres of earth disturbance or more will require an E&S PERMIT to be submitted to the District for review and approval.

# *Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Roads Program*

**Application Deadlines: May 6, 2022 and November 4, 2022**

Since the creation of the Dirt & Gravel Roads Program (DGR) in 1997, the Warren County Conservation District has funded the improvement of over a hundred work sites in various municipalities in Warren County, totaling over \$6 million spent on local roads. The goal of this program is to create a more environmentally and economically sustainable dirt & gravel roads network in the state of Pennsylvania through education, outreach and project funding.

In Pennsylvania, non-point source pollution is responsible for 88% of all impaired streams. The dust and sediment pollution resulting from the poor maintenance of the more than 27,000 miles of dirt and gravel roads in the Commonwealth has been shown to be a large contributor to this pollution.

For more information about the program and the different practices used you can visit The Penn State Center for Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Roads Studies website at <http://www.dirtandgravel.psu.edu/index.html>. Municipalities may contact the Warren County Conservation District Manager, Heather Wilcox to schedule a pre-application site visit.



After several years of planning and engineering, the Sheffield Township Spicer Road Demo Project was completed. This project included 240 feet of streambank stabilization which included a 120 foot modified mudsill & root wads to stabilize the toe of the slope. Approximately 693 cubic yards of native soil were required to be removed to build 130 linear feet of a Tensar Sierra Slope System nine feet high.



## *How to Manage Winter Manure*

Winter can be a tough time of year; cold, snow, ice, manure. Yes, if you are one of the many farm operators in Warren County managing the manure produced by your animals through the year, winter can present a challenge. Spreading manure through winter is generally discouraged because of the risk it poses to nutrient loss and water pollution. Spreading manure on top of snow can cause pollution of nearby streams when the snow melts and runs downhill. Also, winter ground is less able to absorb nutrients, which contributes to nutrient loss.

Winter is considered to be the time between December 15 to February 28, any time the ground is snow covered, or when the ground is frozen four inches or deeper. Ideally, an operation would have sufficient storage to holdover the manure until spring. However, this is not always possible. If farm operators must spread manure in winter, here are some tips: 1) Spread on flat land. 2) Stay 100 feet away from streams, lakes, ponds, drinking water wells, and aboveground inlets. 3) Spread on fields with 25% cover or an established cover crop. 4) Avoid clay or poorly drained soils.

Some best management practices (BMPs) that can help you manage winter manure is adequate storage, protecting your heavy use areas, and maintaining vegetated treatment areas and roof runoff structures. Maintaining these areas can help keep your operation cleaner and reduce eye-sores. Also, have a Manure Management Plan (BMP) or Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) can help you better plan and manage this valuable resource. Proper spreading practices can enrich your soils and increase crop yield. NMPs are better used for large operations that are at or near Concentrated Animal Operation or Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAO or CAFO) status. NMPs also need to be written by a certified Nutrient Management Plan Writer and reviewed by a certified reviewer. However, every operation that contains livestock and therefore produces manure needs an MMP, which the operator can write themselves. For more information about plans and BMPs, or assistance with writing an MMP, contact the Warren County Conservation District at 814-726-1441 or [info@wconconservation.net](mailto:info@wconconservation.net).



## *Warren County “Saves the Rain”*



2022 saw the first ever “Warren County Saves the Rain” rain barrel art contest. Art students from Youngsville High School, Tidioute Community Charter School, Eisenhower High School, Warren County Christian School, and Sheffield High School (pictured from top left to bottom right) expressed their talent and creativity on this unique canvas.

The rain barrel project is part of a Department of Environmental Protection-Environmental Education (DEP-EE) grant to educate the public about runoff and non-point source pollution. We wanted to involve the schools to educate the younger generations and persuade them to make wise decisions in the future.

When it rains, water flows downhill (this is runoff) and picks up any pollutants it might come in contact with. This includes fertilizer, herbicides, car oil on a driveway, pet waste, etc. These substances are non-point source pollution (pollution that you cannot pin-point the source of). The runoff then deposits that pollution in the lowest point of the watershed; a lake, river, or stream.

Rain barrels are typically 55 gallon food-grade barrels residents can attach to the downspout of pretty much any structure. The idea is to hold back some of this runoff so it doesn't pick up quite as much pollution. Water from the rain barrels can then be used to water gardens and hanging baskets, give the dog a bath, etc. (I wouldn't recommend drinking it or giving it to your pet to drink.) If you're expecting another heavy rain before you can use all of the water in your barrel you can just drain it where it stands.

## ***2022 Conservation Camp Time Explorers***

Take an adventure back in time and experience the wonders of the past. Have fun and make new friends while we explore nature through time.

***June 21-23, 2022 for children entering 7th-9th grades - Youth Conservation Camp (YCC)***  
***July 11-12, 2022 for children entering 5th-6th grades - Children's Nature Camp (CNC III)***  
***July 14-15, 2022 for children entering 3rd-4th grades - Children's Nature Camp (CNC II)***  
***July 26-27, 2022 for children entering 1st-2nd grades - Children's Nature Camp (CNC I)***  
***July 28, 2022 for children entering Kindergarten - Kindergarten Nature Camp (KNC)***

Applications are available online at [www.wcconservation.net](http://www.wcconservation.net) or at the office. There are potentially scholarships available to offset the cost of camp registration. For more information please call 814-726-1441 or stop in at 4000 Conewango Ave, Warren, PA 16365. **Space is limited so sign up early.**

### ***Self-Guided Activities:***

In 2021 we had numerous self guided activities. There was a bird scavenger hunt, tree ID, insect critter walk with insects, trivia quest, track detective and a storybook walk. The tree ID will stay up for 2022.

In 2022 the Warren County Conservation District will be offering some new family oriented self-guided activities at the Hatch Run Trails. To start off the year we will have a storybook walk on Simmons Trail. You can read the book "A Salamander's Life" while you walk along the trail. In June & July come try the Black Bear Extravaganza. There will be black bear silhouettes placed on each of the trails, see if you can find all five of them. In August and September a critter walk will be along Hemlock Ridge. Come and learn about different amphibians while you walk the trail. During October a fall trivia quest will be set up along the Hatch Run Loop. The information for all of the self-guided activities found on the Hatch Run Trails will be located at the Hatch Run Kiosk and on our website at [www.wcconservation.net](http://www.wcconservation.net).



### ***My Pal and Me***

**April 22 6:30 pm– 7:30 pm– Bobbers & Buddies:** This event is limited to 20 kids and their buddy, so it **will need to be registered** for by calling 814-726-1441 or emailing [smoore@wcconservation.net](mailto:smoore@wcconservation.net). We will go up to the pond and enjoy catch & release fishing. Poles will be provided.

**May 20 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm - It's more than just dirt.** Soil... it's more than just dirt on your boots. Have you ever thought about all the things that soil does for us? It grows food for us to eat, is the solid foundation of our roads and buildings, it is the basis of forests and wetlands. Come learn about this amazing material.

**June 10 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm Creek Critters.** Come learn about macros (a.k.a. water bugs) in the stream. We will be able to look through the aquascopes to see the macros in the water.

# Conservation Education Newsletter

Warren County Conservation District  
4000 Conewango Avenue

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Sherry Moore, Conservation Program Assistant  
James Marquis, Hatch Run Conservation Assistant  
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)  
Laura Ayers, District Conservationist  
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Board Meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month, 7:30pm at  
4000 Conewango Avenue, Warren, PA

