
Westmoreland
Conservation
District
2020
ANNUAL REPORT

On the cover

In the early days, the District took its conservation message to area farmers by holding “barn meetings.” They pulled a few hay bales inside to serve as seats, and invited neighbors to come and hear what this new way of farming was all about.

That personal, on-site approach was key to getting conservation accepted back then, and it has continued to create advocates through all of the 70 years since. There is just something special about talking face-to-face, sharing conservation’s benefits with farmers in their barns, earthmovers on construction sites, engineers at stormwater basins, timber harvesters on wood lots, municipal officials in their communities, and so on.

But in 2020, the threat of COVID-19 meant that all that in-person communicating had to stop. And we had to find new ways of working with those we serve.

Technology, of course, was the answer, and our staff quickly learned and began using online meeting platforms, videos, webinars, and conference calls…and making optimum use of our new, expanded website and the 3,000 addresses on our email list.

Many of you were willing to join us in these new ways of keeping in touch. Our agricultural/nutrient management technician, for instance, found that farmers, who as a group are not typically the first to embrace technology, were using texting to communicate with him during the year more than ever before.

We are very grateful for your willingness to adapt and to use these new ways of communicating.

Most of all, we look forward to the days when we can be together again in person. Hopefully, that will not be too much longer.

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Dear friend of conservation,

What a year it's been.

Our "business as usual" pace through most of the first quarter of 2020 was the last "normalcy" we would experience although, like most Americans, we didn't know it at the time.

The COVID-19 pandemic challenged our staff and our operations in ways that even our decades of strategic planning could not have predicted.

The most serious, of course, was the challenge to personal health. Some of our staff contracted the illness. All recovered, thankfully, with the exception of our long-time board treasurer, Connie Donovan, who passed away from it in early 2021.*

Organizationally, we all suddenly had to find ways to do our work from home, and our board grappled with how to deal with a significant loss of revenue. The fees we receive for reviewing construction plans make up about a quarter of our annual income, and they had dried up almost entirely as local building activities came to a halt. Fortunately, construction did pick up again as the year went on, although it never returned to pre-COVID levels.

The actual income loss and the uncertainty of future revenue challenged our ability to make payroll. In the District's 72 years of existence, it has never had to layoff an employee and we wanted to do everything we could not to have to do so in 2020. The solution we came up with was to institute rolling furloughs of various lengths – still a difficult decision, but one that was made a little easier by the fact that our staff could offset most if not all of their loss of salary by collecting Pandemic Unemployment Assistance. Organizationally, we also were fortunate to receive a year-end governmental award of $30,000 from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act to help with the technology expenses we incurred so our staff could do their jobs remotely.

We also faced the issue of how to stay in touch with each other and with those we serve, since our preferred method – face-to-face communication – had to be severely

curtailed (see "On the cover"). Our staff pulled together to set up online meeting platforms and procured the headsets, laptops, and other equipment that we needed to make it all work. With these new options we were able not only to communicate, but to transition all the planning for our Engineers' Workshop from an in-person event to a series of on-line workshops.

As you'll see in the following pages, that same ability to find a way runs throughout this report. Even with office closings, loss of revenue, changes in plans, and limited communications, we accomplished a significant amount of conservation work during the year.

Every program area advanced at least some of its goals and we ended the year with a vote of confidence to do even more. A record eight "above and beyond" conservation projects that we submitted received grant awards from Growing Greener in December (see "Above and Beyond" on pages 31-33). We'll be beginning to put these projects on the ground in 2021, with the goal of improving water quality in all corners of our county.

We appreciate your support and understanding during this past year. And we look forward to a brighter 2021.

Ronald J. Rohall
Board Chair

Gregory M. Phillips
District Manager/CEO

** We will be honoring Connie's service in the next annual report.*

Stable Soils

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

When construction began in June, we began monthly erosion control inspections of the **Grandview Estates housing plan** site, near Fosterville Road in Hempfield Township.

Formerly a trailer park, this property is being developed by Cherry Hill, L.P. and Ryan Homes in four phases and will include 100 lots with either patio or single-family homes.

Blackthorne Investors, LLC is adding to its 299-acre golf course community, **Blackthorne Estates,** near Route 22 in Penn Township.

Our senior erosion control specialist inspected this site this year during and after the construction of a large, new clubhouse.

The Blackthorne Estates project is ongoing, with Ryan Homes planning to build an additional 220 single-family, duplex, and townhomes in three phases.

Elliott Company's new testing facility (far right in photo) and the conservation measures installed to reduce flooding in Jeannette.

The large green area in the center of the photo is three landscape mounds planted with trees, shrubs, and wildflowers that also serve as a buffer for the new, 40-foot-wide water channel running along its left side.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

This was the second year that our senior erosion control specialist inspected construction-site work at **Elliott Company's new $60-million testing facility in Jeannette**.

Most of the site work, including stormwater management measures and channels, at this former home of Jeannette Glass was completed in November.

The site will be stabilized in the spring.

WATER, SEWAGE

More than 220 homes and businesses were connected to a **new sanitary sewer trunk line** that was installed by the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County along PA Route 66 north of Greensburg, and our senior erosion control specialist made regular inspections to ensure that controls were in place during construction and that restoration occurred when the project was complete.

Work began in January, but like so many other construction projects, was shut down temporarily due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

In addition to the four-plus miles along Route 66, the sewer line also extended along some roads that intersect with that highway, including Oakford Park Road.

The Western Westmoreland Municipal Authority **completed the last portion of its work to prevent sewage overflows into Brush Creek in 2020**.

In this, the fourth year of the project, our staff conducted monthly inspections as existing sewage lines between Manor and Harrison City were removed and replaced with larger diameter lines.

This latest three-mile replacement work supports earlier efforts that constructed a storage tank and pump station and laid new sewer line between Irwin and Manor.

HIGHWAYS AND ROADS

The **major project to improve Interstate 70**, like many construction projects, was shut down for a while in the spring but later restarted.

In January, our senior erosion control specialist participated in a pre-construction meeting for the current focus of improvement work — the section of road roughly between the Yukon and Madison interchanges. When construction restarted, he inspected the nearly four-mile work site monthly.

Like previously improved sections of the highway, the lanes and shoulders in this area are being widened. Crews are working on one side of the east-west highway at a time, and installing stormwater management controls as they go. The original corridor was designed and built more than 55 years ago, and so had no adequate stormwater management.

Improvements to this section of highway will take about three years to complete, and will include relocating a township road that intersects with I-70, and construction of two roundabouts.

Youngwood Borough's long struggle with motorists speeding through the heart of its community took the first step toward resolution in July, when **major reconstruction of that portion of U.S. Route 119 began**.

An aerial view of some of the most recent work on Interstate 70 that our senior erosion control specialist (pictured, inset) regularly inspected.

This work disturbs massive amounts of earth, and our job is to help ensure that it does not get into local waterways.

Initial project work in 2020, involved removing a portion of the roadway surface through Youngwood and putting in all new utilities — water, sewage, and natural gas — as well as installing drainage to manage stormwater.

Most of the new utility lines were put in the ground and backfilled the same day, and our senior erosion control specialist visited the site frequently to ensure compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits.

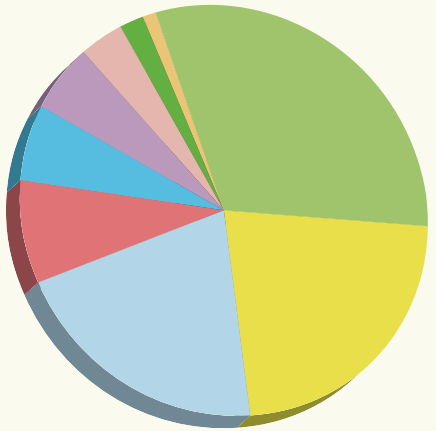
In the future, additional improvements will take place, including milling and repaving the entire road surface, and alternating on-street parking from side to side every few blocks to create a serpentine effect that will slow through traffic.

The three-year, $23.8-million project also will include new sidewalks, ADA-accessible ramps, and improved pedestrian access to the Five Star Trail. We will continue to inspect the project through each phase.

Roadwork at the junction of PA Route 31 and the

2020 Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan Reviews

by Watershed



Loyalhanna Creek	61
Sewickley Creek	45
Turtle Creek	40
Pucketa Creek/Allegheny River	16
Kiskiminetas River	12
Youghiogheny River	11
Jacobs Creek	7
Conemaugh River	4
Monongahela River	2

Total Plan Reviews.....198

Brown Road in Allegheny Township is no longer essentially a one-lane road with dangerously steep berms. Trees were removed, and the bank on one side of the road cut back (right side in photo) to make the road wider. The road surface also was raised and a number of measures were installed to manage stormwater.

Pennsylvania Turnpike in Donegal was completed during the year.

This final phase of the four-year project involved installing numerous traffic signals and converting the sediment basins into stormwater management ponds.

Our erosion control specialist made regular visits to monitor the controls during construction, which disturbed some 42 acres near Indian Creek.

A multi-year project to **improve a 1.4-mile section of PA Route 356 in Allegheny Township was completed** this year and permanent vegetative cover will be added in the spring of 2021.

As we have for the past several years, we inspected this site in 2020, while work was in progress to add a truck-climbing lane, and to convert the sediment basins installed during construction to permanent stormwater management measures.

Some $301,097 of improvements were installed on six dirt, gravel and low volume road projects throughout the county in 2020 (see map on page 34).

A total of two dirt and gravel roads and four low-volume roads were improved.

Our watershed staff coordinate this work because it is important to water quality. Eroding dirt and gravel from unpaved roads, and water runoff from both unpaved and paved roads can harm the quality of local streams. This effort focuses on improving roads that are near streams with high-quality water.

Funding for the road-improvement projects is provided by the Pennsylvania Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program.

Brown Road in Allegheny Township was one of the more extensive road-improvement projects we worked on during the year.

This dirt road was in very poor shape, highly eroded and edged with very steep sides, so that the driving lane was wide enough for only one car in good weather and often impassible in winter.

There was no control of stormwater, so the road surface was rapidly eroding and loading the nearby stream, a tributary of the Kiskiminetas River, with sediment.

Allegheny Township did the improvement work, donating labor and equipment to implement the recommendations of our watershed specialist, which included removing trees on one side of the road and cutting the embankment back to make the road wider, using the shale material removed from the embankment as fill to raise the surface of the road, installing six new cross pipes and 1,000 feet of underdrain, and replacing a stream crossing that was so rusted it would have soon failed.

In addition to the in-kind contribution of Allegheny Township, this project was made possible with $97,000 in grant funding from the Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program.

RECREATIONAL DAM

At Donegal Lake, a boat launch was added and the site was stabilized as the last steps in a two-year effort that reconstructed the original earthen dam and made other improvements at this popular recreation site.

Our erosion control specialist monitored the site to ensure that erosion controls were in place and functioning properly during all phases of construction.

ENERGY

More than 40 acres in Unity and Derry townships were disturbed during the year by Equitrans Midstream Corporation in a project to **install new, 20-inch-diameter natural-gas pipe along a four-mile corridor.** The pipe that previously ran through this area was capped off and abandoned in place.

Our erosion control specialist inspected the work in progress, and by the end of the year, all that remained to be done was final restoration work, which will include permanent water bars on slopes.

Construction of the Mariner East 2 natural gas pipeline through Westmoreland County concluded in 2020, with the completion of a 16-inch pipeline and all site restoration work.

This pipeline is the second one that Sunoco, the pipeline's originator, has installed in our county. It runs from Delmont eastward along a route that last year involved horizontal, directional drilling under Loyalhanna Lake.

Inspection of that sensitive area revealed that the work was done with proper environmental controls.

Several years ago, during the installation of the 20-inch portion of the pipeline project, the company was penalized for not containing hydraulic fracturing fluid and allowing it to spill into waterways. The money it was fined was used as grants to improve

water quality, including $62,000 that was used to stabilize streambanks along Turtle Creek.

SERVICES

Our technical staff participated in 19 pre-application meetings and 22 pre-construction meetings during the year — and both numbers are lower than in past years because the new coronavirus outbreak stopped or slowed many local construction projects.

Both types of meetings benefit the engineer/project manager/builder. In pre-application meetings, our staff help applicants learn about the permits required for construction and the process of obtaining them. In pre-construction meetings, our technical professionals review the project specifics to make sure that all work will be done in compliance with permits and regulations.

Given the need for social distancing, most of these meetings were done virtually, using a variety of platforms, including Skype, Microsoft Teams, and GoToMeeting.

Laurel Mountain Borough (entrance shown here) is the latest community to sign a formal agreement with the District to work together to protect and conserve the area's natural resources.

We established a Conservation Partnership Agreement this year with Laurel Mountain Borough.

This document outlines how we can work together to protect and conserve the area's natural resources.

This is the first year we have had a CPA with this municipality. We typically revisit/renew them every five years.

When colder weather made ticks and mosquitoes inactive, our West Nile Virus program technician provided support to our Erosion and Sedimentation Control Program by **conducting the final site inspections on 45 projects and closing out those files**.

Our plans and permits coordinator sent out forms at the beginning of the year to **update the District's municipal contacts** — verifying who's who at each of 65 municipalities in the county by name, title, phone number, email address, and so on.

An exacting job, she found working from home on this project reduced interruptions and made it easier to concentrate.

OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Our **Municipal Roundtable event** was held in February, and attracted 45 local officials who came to learn more about the Integrated Water Resources Plan, PennVest funding, the Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program, as well as updates in the areas of agriculture and forestry.

Our annual **"After the Storms: Driveway Workshop"** had to be cancelled due to the pandemic.

2020 Erosion and Sedimentation Control Inspections

by Municipality

Hempfield Township	48
Unity Township	45
Salem Township	29
North Huntingdon Township	27
Penn Township	26
Washington Township	25
Municipality of Murrysville	23
Derry Township	18
Rostraver Township	17
Ligonier Township	16
Upper Burrell Township	14
Allegheny Township	11
Mount Pleasant Township	10
South Huntingdon Township	9
Donegal Township	9
East Huntingdon Township	7
Cook Township	7
Municipalities with six inspections or fewer	51

Total Inspections..... 392

Clean Streams

We reached out to each of Westmoreland County's 65 municipalities with an offer to help them as they worked to develop a stormwater ordinance by the end of 2020.

The purpose of the ordinance is to make sure that, when land is developed for shopping centers, gas stations, housing developments, and so on, the stormwater runoff that occurs is effectively managed. Good stormwater management means that area streams are cleaner and that there is less chance of homes and businesses being flooded.

A model for the stormwater ordinance was provided in the Integrated Water Resources Plan, which was approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and adopted by the Westmoreland County Commissioners. The model ordinance was developed by members of our staff and Technical Programs Advisory Committee.

The model ordinance is flexible, so that each municipality could adapt it to fit the specific conditions in that community. Some municipalities, such as St. Clair Township, are more rural and have relatively little new development. Others, such as North Huntingdon Township, are more urban and have a lot of development. So the details of their ordinances are different, but the overall goal is the same: to control the amount of stormwater that runs off new development.

Because stormwater does not stop its flow at municipal boundaries, we encouraged communities to include a provision to work with their neighbors to create partnerships to solve stormwater concerns.

Our stormwater staff worked with each municipality in the county to help it create an ordinance that is relevant to its particular conditions and consistent with the guidelines in the Integrated Water Resources Plan.

Left photo: Representatives of the District, Scottdale Borough, engineering firms, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service gathered in Scottdale to assess the current state of stormwater management in that area, which is prone to flooding.

Right photo: Our stormwater staff used webinars as one way to help Westmoreland County communities develop their stormwater ordinances.

Early in the year, we did this by offering a series of in-person working sessions with municipal officials, and making a presentation at the Township Supervisors Convention. After the new coronavirus restrictions, we relied heavily on email, telephone, and U.S. mail to coordinate with municipal officials. And after we had time to investigate and select an appropriate remote software platform, we also offered a webinar to the municipal solicitors.

As of December 31, 12 municipalities had completed and adopted stormwater ordinances, 41 more were either writing them or in the process of adopting them, and 12 had not responded to our offers of assistance.

Area conditions were extensively studied during **the year as the first step in a comprehensive effort to address the long-standing flooding problem in Scottdale and East Huntingdon Township**.

An engineering study included measuring the width and depth of the streams, running a camera through area culverts to determine how they are functioning, and doing field work to uncover information about the area's century-old infrastructure, including hundreds of feet of underground pipes of unknown size, condition, and direction that carry portions of three streams — Anderson Run, Stauffer Run, and Little Sherrick Run.

More than 125 Scottdale and East Huntingdon Township residents' homes sit low on steep slopes that are traversed by these three small feeder streams to Jacobs Creek. In heavy rains, the streams are frequently overwhelmed with stormwater runoff from nearby commercial development, causing them to top their banks, wash out roads, flood basements, and threaten people and property.

Information gained during the engineering study, which was coordinated by Michael Baker International of Pittsburgh along with input from area residents at two public meetings during the year, will help determine the best way to resolve the flooding problems. The hope is that most of the solutions can be very targeted, and include such things as rain gardens, detention ponds, and/or storm sewers.

Once the solutions are identified, their design and

construction will take place in the next phases of the multi-year project, which is being coordinated by the District and funded by the United States Department of Agriculture.

Project partners with the District also include the Borough of Scottdale, East Huntingdon Township, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

When Franklin Regional School District decided to construct an entirely new second building next to the original Sloan Elementary School, it also significantly increased the need for stormwater management measures from what had been

The Sloan Elementary School campus in Murrysville includes a number of new stormwater management measures, including permeable parking areas, rain gardens (the curbed islands at the end of the parking rows), and more than 35 newly planted trees.

previously proposed for this Murrysville site.

The addition of the second building, for instance, increased the amount of permeable parking material needed by 50%, to some 11,000 square feet. It quadrupled (to 36) the number of trees to be planted. And it added three rain gardens to the mix.

To make these improvements, the school district added its own funding ($85,000) to money provided by a Growing Greener grant ($129,000) that had been written, applied for, and awarded prior to the decision to build the second building. The grant included funding for permeable pavement and trees, but not in the amounts actually installed. And it did not include any funding for rain gardens.

During construction at the site, the school district also installed erosion controls that went 'above and beyond' in an effort to limit the amount of sediment that might enter Haymaker Run, a designated high-quality stream that runs along the edge of the site.

The six trees we planted in 2010, along **Columbia Avenue in Vandergrift** are flourishing, adding beauty to that historic city and capturing the stormwater that falls along that 16-foot-wide by 80-foot-long section of permeable sidewalk.

We have always wanted to plant six more trees along that city block, and this year we took our idea to the state Department of Environmental Protection in the hope of obtaining funding from the Growing Greener program.

DEP liked the idea and asked us to **not only plant trees to capture sidewalk water, but also to find a way to capture runoff from the street, and to channel and release the excess water once it was captured**.

Vandergrift, like many western Pennsylvania towns, was founded more than a century ago and so does not have adequate infrastructure capacity for today's needs. In addition, because this town was designed with extremely wide streets, stormwater very quickly grows in volume and speed as it races through the town and toward the river.

With the help of a $5,000 Growing Greener grant, we were able to research and design the more complex project DEP asked for, which includes the trees planted in specialized soil cells; catch basins to filter out debris; and 300 feet of pipe that will take the excess water to an existing inlet at the edge of the central business district.

This comprehensive project was submitted to Growing Greener in December 2020 for funding.

Thanks to a $104,196 Growing Greener grant in 2019, we have **funding to improve stormwater management in Hempfield Township**, one of Westmoreland County's most developed municipalities.

A Hempfield Township municipal engineer stands in a field (foreground) while our watershed manager stands in a gully carved by uncontrolled stormwater runoff from the school.

The photo on the right shows a camera being lowered into the underground stormwater management system to locate the cause of the problem, which was subsequently resolved.

This work began in 2020, when we installed a retrofit at one basin and improved underground stormwater detention near Greensburg-Salem's Maxwell Elementary School.

Neighbors downstream of this school were dealing with runoff that was so frequent and severe that it flowed through a field and cut a gully that in some places was more than 10 feet deep and 20 feet wide.

Because the system that conveys stormwater from the school is underground, we hired a company with a remote-control camera to inspect it and try to find the problem. The camera showed that the system was not retaining any stormwater at all, because the diameter of the pipe leaving the site was too large.

We were able to engineer a fix that added a steel plate with a hole that is smaller in diameter than the original pipe. This reduces how much water can leave the site at any one time, and eliminates the severe runoff problem.

The Growing Greener grant used for the work done in 2020 also will be used to design and install retrofits at 10 more stormwater basins in Hempfield, beginning in 2021.

A Growing Greener grant that several years ago funded 11 municipal stormwater basin retrofits in Allegheny and Westmoreland counties, along with a permeable pavement installation at the Monroeville Library, was extended for one more year so that the remaining funds could be used to **construct permeable paving and a rain garden at the Monroeville Library**.

The District began this $283,000 project in 2016, as a way to improve stormwater management in the Turtle Creek Watershed. Because that watershed falls in both Westmoreland and Allegheny county, we applied for this grant in conjunction with the Allegheny County Conservation District.

Our landscape architect/stormwater technician designed the new library project and our conservation programs technologist created the drawings. In addition to the rain garden, this project will create reverse angle parking along the entrance drive to help make the area safer for pedestrians.

Given the constantly changing conditions schools were dealing with in 2020, our watershed program manager opted to **defer a conservation project that will involve using the grounds around Mount Pleasant High School to mitigate the stormwater runoff from improvements to PA Route 981 in that area**.

School officials have agreed to the plan, which will entail four separate best management practices: creating a series of cascading shallow pools between the high school and the bus garage, retrofitting an existing stormwater basin, creating underground detention in the front of the school, and stabilizing the banks of the stream that runs below the school athletic fields.

Under our agreement with the Mount Pleasant School Board and PennDOT, we have five years to implement these stormwater management measures.

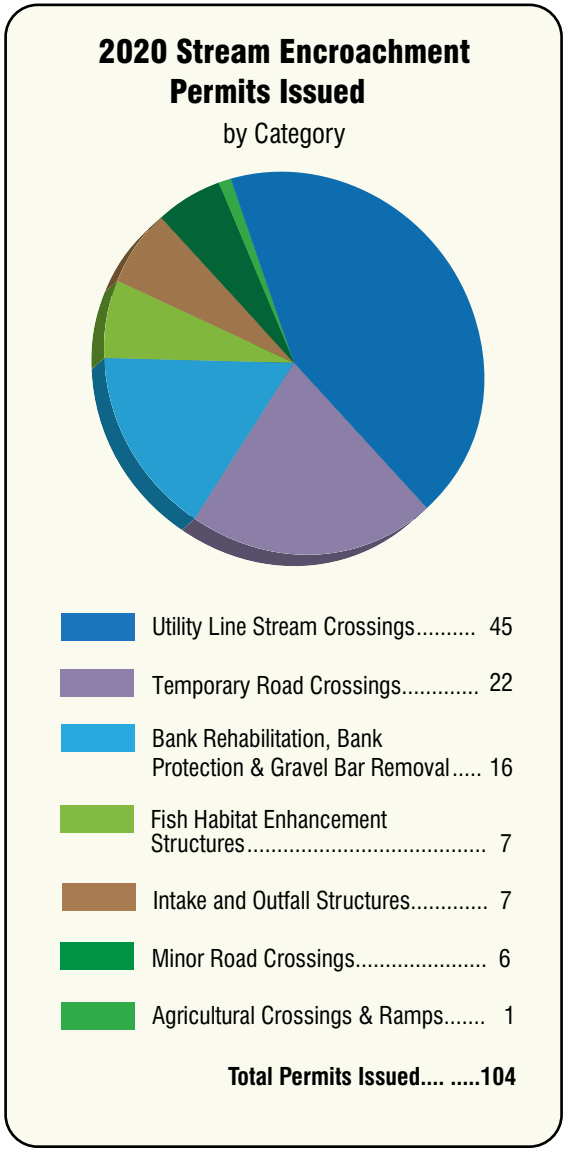
We were notified at year-end that **three more stormwater management projects we proposed had been funded by Growing Greener**.

The first, at the Derry Borough Municipal Water Authority, will use $113,500 to install a variety of best management practices such as a sediment forebay, permeable paving, and a rain garden, as well as plant native trees to capture and treat the stormwater runoff that is currently uncontrolled (up to 4,700 cubic feet during a two-year, 24-hour storm).

The second, at the Manor Borough offices, library, and parking lot, also will install rain gardens, permeable paving, and landscaping to capture, treat, and reduce the amount of stormwater that runs off this one-acre site. The grant amount for this work is $133,500.

The third grant, some $30,000, is money needed to complete the work we began in 2018 to manage stormwater runoff from the First Presbyterian Church of Murrysville, and reduce the amount of sediment being carried into Haymaker Run, a designated high-quality stream.

The most recent grant money will be used to



install a permanent connection between the church's parking lot (at the top of a steep slope) and the new retention basin we previously installed at the bottom of that slope.

OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Our **Engineers' Workshop**, a long-standing annual education event held in March, had to be postponed several times and its format changed due to COVID-19.

In the early days of the pandemic, we rescheduled this in-person, two-day event for the summer, hoping that conditions would be better then. But as the weeks went on, it was clear that an in-person workshop was no longer a viable option, especially for an event that normally attracts between 350 and 400 people. We had to do something virtual.

Our education program coordinator and conservation program technologist investigated different remote platforms, and determined the one that best fit our needs — a speaker/audience format with the ability for presenters to download documents, use highlighters, share screens, and launch audience polls and surveys to create interaction.

We also changed the length of the event. Instead of the usual all-day format, we divided it into a series of five webinars, each an hour and a half long, and held them live on successive Fridays from mid-September through mid-October.

Topics included green infrastructure, brownfield redevelopment, monitoring technology, and other conservation-related concerns.

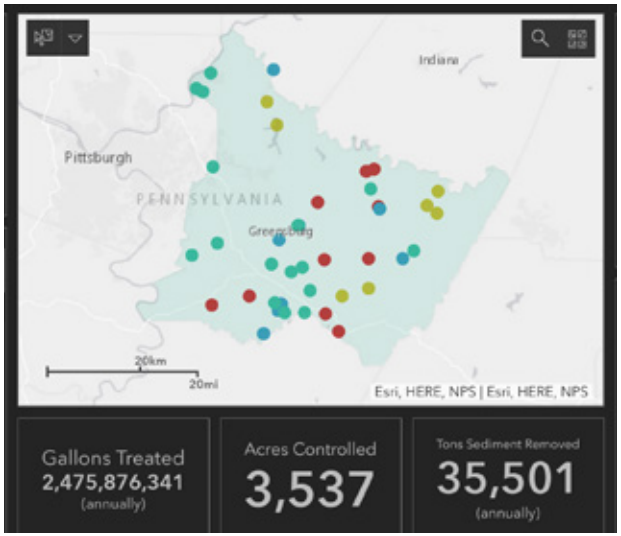
Because both District staff and outside experts were making presentations at the webinars, a good bit of pre-event coordination was needed to ensure that everyone had the correct equipment and understood how to use the webinar software. Our education specialist and conservation program technologist were behind the scenes at each webinar to make sure it flowed as planned.

About 100 people paid to attend each live webinar, and those participants were able to receive credit for education hours as usual, thanks to a feature of the on-line platform that tracks the time a person spent in active attendance.

Recordings of the webinars are available on the District's website, www.westmoreland conservation.org.

Our conservation programs technologist **built a new web-based Best Management Practices Portfolio** — a compendium of data from actual, on-the-ground conservation practices throughout Westmoreland County.

The portfolio uses GIS data provided by Westmoreland County and others, and is based on a model used by the City of Detroit that tracks metrics similar to ours.



An enhanced portfolio of Best Management Practices allows visitors to our website learn how well conservation practices do their job.

The practices can be evaluated individually or in combination to discover how much water is treated, how many acres are controlled, and how many tons of sediment are removed.

It allows users to learn a variety of information about each conservation project (or combination of projects of their choosing), including the number of gallons of water that are treated annually, the number of acres that are controlled, and the tons of sediment that are removed.

The portfolio also includes a searchable photo gallery, which links to downloadable fact sheets.

In addition to the upgrades of the portfolio, 20 additional best management projects were added.

2020 Stormwater Plans Reviewed

by Municipality

Hempfield Township	14
North Huntingdon Township	9
Unity Township	8
Ligonier Township	5
Mount Pleasant Township	5
Municipality of Murrysville	5
New Stanton Borough	5
Penn Township	5
Upper Burrell Township	5
Allegheny Township	3
Sewickley Township	3
Washington Township	3
Municipalities with two plans reviewed or fewer	28
Total Stormwater Plans Reviewed	**101**

Productive Farms

Our nutrient management specialist/agricultural conservation technician spent most of 2020 **working with farmers virtually — via email and telephone and, increasingly, via text**.

Despite not being able to conduct farm visits as usual or hold most of the scheduled in-person workshops, he still was able to **facilitate the creation and approval of a nutrient management plan for two farms in the county, manure management plans for six farms, and agricultural erosion and sediment control plans for two farms**.

He also verified that best-management conservation practices were installed on an area farm, meaning that the farmer could receive reimbursement under the state's Resource Enhancement & Protection Program.

To respond to **public complaints about five area agricultural operations**, our nutrient management specialist/agricultural conservation technician drove to the farm sites and observed as much as he could from his vehicle or from a nearby distance outside the property boundary.

Even with these social-distance limitations, he was able to work with the owners of four of the farms to satisfactorily resolve the complaints.

The fifth is expected to be resolved by the end of 2021.

Our District manager/CEO and several District board members serve on the board of GreenForge, Inc., a nonprofit that helps area farms become more viable.

In 2020, GreenForge was working to **divest two harvesters** it had purchased in 2019 to promote hemp as a cash crop in Westmoreland County. That promise was not realized for several reasons, including the fact that the nationwide supply of hemp quickly out-paced the demand for one of its key products, CBD oil.

We were part of a partnership that explored the feasibility of raising a non-traditional crop – barley – on two area farms.

The barley was planted using no-till methods (left) and the harvested grain (right) was processed into malt, which will be used by a local microbrewer to make beer.

GreenForge continues to pursue ways to support area farms, including by supporting the work of Food 21, a nonprofit that works to grow our regional food economy.

In the spring of 2020, that group **contracted with two Westmoreland County farms to each plant, manage, and harvest a 25-acre plot of barley** for the craft beer industry.

The barley was processed into malt in a facility in Butler County, and All Saints Brewing in Greensburg plans to use it in the spring of 2021 to create a truly local beer called Old Hanna's Town Ale.

One **Growing Greener** grant, previously awarded to install best management practices on a farm in Salem Township, was extended through 2021.

Two other conservation projects previously funded by Growing Greener — one on two adjacent farms along Turtle Creek, and one on a farm in the Borough of Delmont — did not move forward during the year and may have to be forfeited unless we are successful in our efforts to work with the funder, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, to apply the funds to conservation efforts elsewhere in the Turtle Creek Watershed.

OUTREACH & EDUCATION

The **2020 Soil Health Conference** was held in late January, before COVID-19 restrictions, as it has been every year since 2004.

This conference featured presenters George Lake, who has used the unique practice of winter grazing of corn for more than 35 years, and Colin Lennox, who spoke on how to treat "dirty" water on the farm so it can be recycled for other uses instead of having to haul it out as part of the manure.

The conference also featured a farmer panel on

various aspects of no-till, and a vendor show.

Some 110 people attended the event, which the District sponsors with Penn's Corner Conservancy Charitable Trust, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, other conservation districts located in the Southwest Region of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture — Bureau of Plant Industry.

In planning for the 2021 Soil Health Conference, the nine-county committee realized that that event most likely would not be able to be held in-person as usual and, since many farmers have computers with lower bandwidth capabilities, a webinar format also would not be practical.

As an alternative, the committee prepared a document with resource links that will help farmers keep current on various ag practices and cover crops, and provided it free-of-charge through email and U.S. mail to some 120 area farmers who have attended the conference in years past.

These links also are available on the District's website, www.westmorelandconservation.org.

A workshop for horse owners, planned for spring 2020 at a local horse farm, was cancelled due to concerns over the virus.

We subsequently rewrote the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts grant that had provided funding for this event, asking to use the money to create several short videos instead of hosting the in-person event.

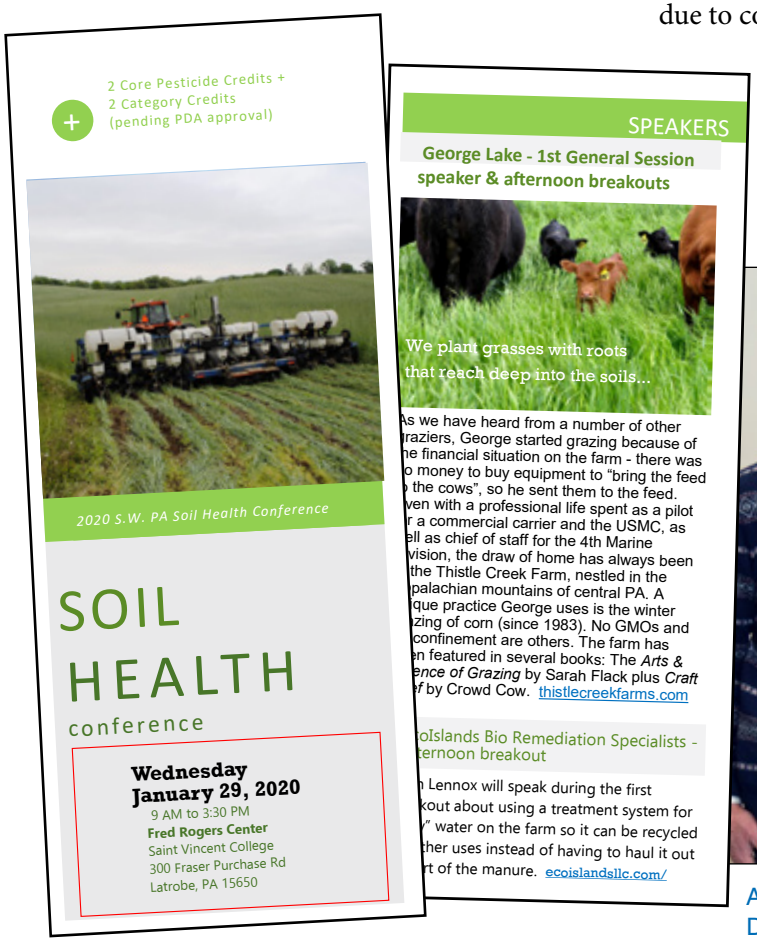
Approval was given and work on the videos will be done in 2021.

Also **cancelled for 2020 was the Next Generation Farm Summit.**

An information and networking event, the summit had been held for the past two years and offered farmers and would-be farmers the opportunity to learn about a variety of topics from more than 20 agriculture-related organizations.

The statewide **Grassland Evaluation Contest**, which provides scholarships to high-school students who exhibit the most knowledge about the value and benefits of grazing and other conservation practices, **was cancelled** for 2020.

It is normally hosted by the Southwest Project Grass.



At the Soil Health Conference (l-r): District Board Member Fred Slezak, retired U.S. Department of Agriculture District Conservationist Tom Sierzega, conference speaker George Lake, District Nutrient Management Specialist/Agricultural Conservation Technician Dan Griffith, and District Board Member Bill Doney.

Healthy Forests

At the request of two separate local woodlot owners, our forester worked on **developing Forest Stewardship Plans** for their properties.

To devise each plan, he conducted an extensive inventory of the property, and talked to the owners about what they hope to achieve on the site, including such goals as improving the habitat for wildlife and timber productivity. He then prepared a detailed plan of specific recommendations for achieving those goals and a 10-year schedule of activities.

One of the properties he was completing a Forest Stewardship Plan for at year-end was a 100-acre woodlot around a stream and wetland mitigation project in Hempfield Township. The other was a 120-acre property in Penn Township, near Route 130. He also updated a Forest Stewardship Plan done a few years ago for a property in South Huntingdon Township.

In addition to helping ensure the health of the woodlot, a Forest Stewardship Plan may make a property eligible for cost-share money to implement certain practices recommended in that plan.

Four additional woodlot owners contacted us in 2020, asking our forester to **develop a brief management plan** for their properties.

This plan is not as comprehensive as the Forest Stewardship Plan but still provides general guidance on the best way to steward a given property, based on the types of trees, soils, and wooded stands found there.

The four properties our forester developed these brief management plans for represent a total of 220 acres, and are located in Manor Borough as well as in Hempfield, Penn, and Upper Burrell townships.

Back at his desk, our forester plots out the type, number, and location of trees he observed on local properties applying for Clean and Green, a state program that reduces the property tax on land that is kept as forest.

Our forester **assisted seven Westmoreland County owners of forest land apply for Clean and Green**, a Pennsylvania program that reduces the property tax on land that is kept as forest.

Each of the sites — which range in size from 11 to 260 acres — had to be assessed and the types of trees growing there documented for the application. So our forester travelled to the properties in Allegheny, Fairfield, Ligonier, Mount Pleasant, and Sewickley townships to do this.

By the end of the year, all seven properties were accepted into the program, adding nearly 500 acres to those in Westmoreland County already enrolled in Clean and Green.

Timber-harvesting was down in the county for the second straight year, a result of low market prices and COVID-19 restrictions.

As a result, we did only 12 pre-plan meetings (14 in 2019), and we reviewed only half as many erosion and sediment control plans for timber sites (12) as we did in 2019 (25). Most of those reviews were done by phone and email, rather than in-person.

This latter number also was somewhat depressed by a recent policy determination consistent with the state's ACRE* law that stated that there was nothing in the Pennsylvania Clean Streams Law (Chapter 102) that requires harvesters to have their erosion and sediment control plan reviewed.

*Pennsylvania Act 38 is also known as **"ACRE"** (Agriculture, Communities and Rural Environment).

Our long-standing good working relationship with area timber harvesters meant that many of those who were working in 2020, asked us to look at their plans, even though it was not a formal review.

The depressed timber market and the pandemic also limited the number of timber-harvest inspections our forester conducted during the year to 16. That number was 36 in 2019.

We received **two complaints related to cutting timber** during the year, both in Ligonier Township.

Our forester satisfactorily resolved both by visiting the sites and determining that the tree removal was done responsibly and would not create a problem (such as increased water runoff) for neighboring properties.

Our forester also **responded to six requests from landowners for guidance on selling timber**.

Three of these requests were limited to telephone discussions on the best ways to go about selling and how to find a qualified consulting forester to help with the sale.

The other three also involved a visit to the site, where our forester assessed the timber stand and determined if there was potential for a timber sale.

Thirteen woodlot owners called with specific questions about the insects and diseases affecting their trees, including the hemlock woolly adelgid, the spotted lanternfly, and the oak shothole leafminer, populations of which were unusually high in 2020.

Many of these callers also had concerns about invasive plants, including Japanese stiltgrass and Japanese knotweed.

Our forester provided guidance on dealing with all these threats to forest health.

Sustainable Communities

CLEAN STREAMS

We continued to **focus conservation efforts in areas that support Westmoreland County's Comprehensive Plan**.

The District is a lead partner for the plan's goal to "Improve & Sustain Water Resources."

In 2020, we took a number of actions to advance this goal, with the primary one being helping municipalities write and adopt the new stormwater ordinance. We also implemented three water quality projects — at Lowber, Latrobe Transfer Station, and Sloan Elementary School — and completed six dirt, gravel, and low-volume road projects.

We also helped install two gauges to monitor local streams, and included more information about water quality on our website.

Each of these projects is detailed in this section and elsewhere in this report.

Efforts to remove iron oxide from the treatment ponds at Lowber hit delays the past few years, mostly because there is not much available land at that site where it can be stored until it is dry enough to be trucked away.

In 2020, however, we were able to help the Sewickley Creek Watershed Association make some progress in this regard by using a $171,000 Growing Greener grant and $6,000 from the PA Environmental Council to first **get a large existing pile of dry iron oxide (some 1,000 tons) trucked from the Lowber site... and then, by getting some 950 tons of iron oxide sludge pumped out of two of Lowber's ponds**.

The iron oxide sludge was put into three large fabric

(left photo) An excavator stirs the water in one of Lowber's ponds, causing the iron oxide to become liquid (sludge).

Next, the iron oxide sludge is pumped into a TenCate Geotube® container, 120 feet long by 100 feet wide (right photo is a filled Geotube with a man standing on top).

Enough iron oxide was removed from two of Lowber's treatment ponds to fill three of these Geotubes.

The water in the sludge will slowly drain through the small pores in the Geotube fabric. More than 99% of the iron oxide solid will remain in the Geotube.

containers where it will start the drying out process.

We also helped to install 1,300 feet of pipe that will make the next iron oxide removal easier.

Perhaps most importantly, we were able to **obtain additional grant money** ($152,000 from the state's Growing Greener program) that will help **find a long-term solution to the problem of where to store the iron oxide** that is removed from the ponds.

At Lowber, six ponds collect water from an abandoned underground coal mine and hold it long enough for the iron oxide to drop out. The clean water then is released to Sewickley Creek.

The iron oxide has to be regularly cleaned out of the holding ponds to make room for the next round of "dirty" water that continuously flows out of the coal mine.

At the end of the year, we also were notified that PA's Growing Greener program was providing **$277,000 to do a "significant" cleanout of the iron oxide sludge that has accumulated in another area wetland treatment system along Sewickley Creek, this one at Brinkerton**.

Immediately upstream of this site, the water quality in Sewickley Creek is very good (it is scientifically designated as a high-quality cold-water fishery). The abandoned coal mine drainage at Brinkerton, however, significantly degrades the water quality (to a warm-water fishery).

Some of the funding also will be used to remove an invasive, 20-foot-tall reed from the treatment ponds.

The fees that help fund cleanup of the pollution, safety hazards, and other damaging legacies left by abandoned coal mine operations will dry up in September 2022, unless the U.S. Congress reauthorizes the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act.

These fees have helped to fund a number of cleanups of land and water in Westmoreland County for the past several decades.

The health and financial impacts of COVID-19 understandably took precedence in the 2020 Congress and so SMCRA and a related act, RECLAIM, were not addressed.

Our board chair and watershed manager have been working with the Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, Trout Unlimited, and others to ensure that these two bills – H.R. 4248 and H.R. 2156 – will be re-introduced in the Congressional session that begins in January 2021.

The City of Latrobe contacted us about a long-standing and worsening problem on the east side of the municipality, near the transfer station.

Here, years of the erosive action of the Loyalhanna Creek had cut into the stream's banks, toppling large trees, and breaching a decades-old landfill, polluting the stream with large amounts of sediment and litter.

Our watershed specialist coordinated the use of a $57,000 Growing Greener grant to **reconfigure the steep bank to a gentle slope, remove the large trees from the creek, and stabilize the old landfill** with topsoil, grass, and 80 tree seedlings.

While the original plan was to stabilize some 100 feet of streambank, we were able to do much more than that, improving 250 feet.

We worked with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy to **plant woody shrubs and other plants in a two-acre buffer along Stony Run in Derry Township**.

The water quality in this stream is designated as impaired by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, so adding conservation measures such as vegetated buffers can help improve its quality.

During the planting, our watershed specialist had the opportunity to talk with nearby landowners who also are amenable to installing stream buffers on their properties.

In 2021, she plans to implement two of these projects — a four-acre buffer planted with trees and shrubs and a one-plus acre buffer planted with

A finished conservation project in the City of Latrobe.
The Loyalhanna Creek is in the foreground. The fallen trees have been removed from the stream, the steep slope re-graded and stabilized with riprap, and the old landfill stabilized with topsoil, grass and trees.

pollinator plants and wildflowers.

We received a **promise of funding to make more repairs to Cedar Creek** in the county park of the same name in Rostraver Township.

In 2017, we helped make emergency repairs here that shored up the abutment of a bridge that carries the Great Allegheny Passage over the stream. That abutment had been dangerously undercut by the force and velocity of the stream, both of which had been artificially magnified for years by the remains of a water wheel that had been left in the stream.

The banks of the stream also were severely eroded and this is the area we will be focusing our work on in 2021.

We plan to stabilize and rebuild about 900 feet of the stream's banks, including a bend where they have eroded to within a foot of a well-used walking trail.

Riprap will be used in a terracing fashion along the streambank near the bridge abutment as a way to protect it from further erosion. A very large mud sill will be installed at the upstream bend, creating critically needed bank, as well as habitat for fish. Farther upstream, log deflectors will be strategically placed to encourage sediment buildup, which will help rebuild the bank.

The water wheel that was causing most of this damage was removed several years ago. In this new project, we also will remove part of a piece of concrete that is still in the stream, and that should reduce erosion even more by allowing the water to access the full width of the channel.

Partners on this project with us are the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and PennDOT, the latter of which is providing the funding for this $136,000 project through its mitigation program.

Pennsylvania's Growing Greener grant program announced in late 2020 that it will **fund three projects that will improve the water quality in Turtle Creek**.

Severe erosion has worn some of Cedar Creek's streambanks to within inches of the blazed trail in the county park of the same name. In 2020, we received funding to stabilize and rebuild about 900 feet of those banks. That work is planned for 2021.

An $86,000 grant will be invested in Irwin Borough, specifically in the vicinity of Irwin Park, which has a stream that leads to Brush Creek.

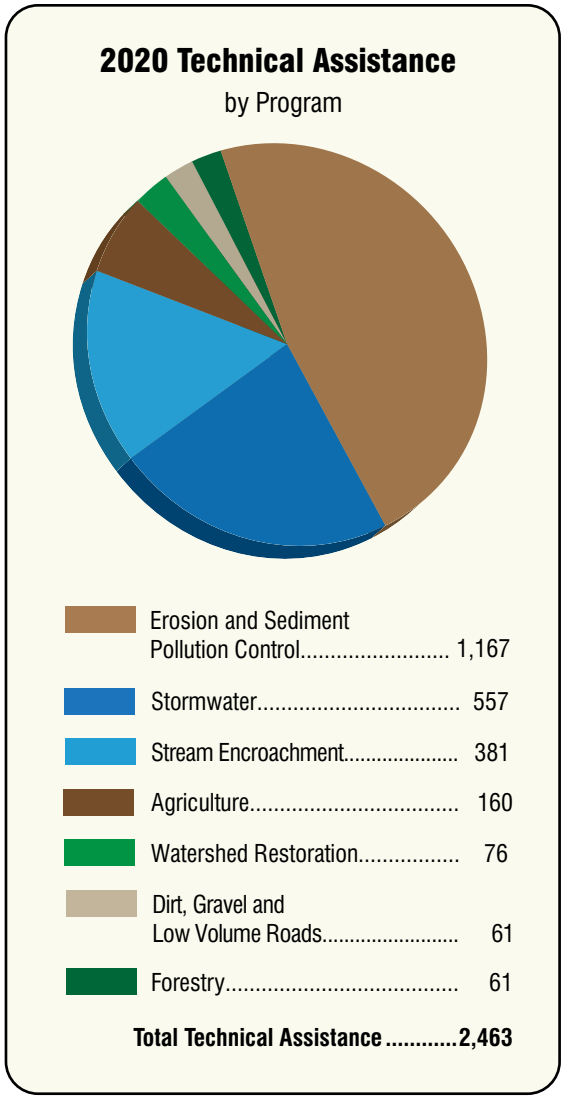
Improvements will include creating a riparian buffer and a "no mow" zone along some 450 feet of badly eroded streambank, and replacing some of the hard parking surface at the park with permeable materials and creating infiltration swales and rain gardens.

A second Growing Greener grant of $35,000 was awarded to **stabilize an abutment that carries a bridge over Turtle Creek**.

The work is planned for 2021, and will be done in a way that reduces erosion and improves fish habitat.

We are partnering on this project with the Westmoreland Heritage Trail, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation.

A third Growing Greener grant of $97,600 will be used to resolve **historic flooding problems** for some businesses along Route 22 as well as for the



With several partners, we were able to create a new concrete access to the Youghiogheny River in West Newton, which will significantly reduce erosion from this very popular boat launch area.

Westmoreland Heritage Trail, which runs behind them.

A new vegetated channel will be created to divert water from Route 22 to a new stormwater detention basin that also will be created on one of the business's properties.

Our watershed program manager provided strong support to the **Sewickley Creek Watershed Association** during the year, including **helping obtain several government grants** for operations and projects (see Lowber and Brinkerton items, pages 15-16), as well as **providing support for developing a new website, newsletter, Zoom meeting platform, and better tracking system for employees and volunteers**.

The Sewickley Creek Watershed encompasses a 168-square-mile area in the southwestern part of Westmoreland County.

Our watershed specialist served on the **Jacobs Creek Watershed Association**'s project committee and **helped the organization apply for grant funding for two projects**: one to reduce erosion along a portion of Shupe Run in Mount Pleasant, and the other, to improve stormwater infiltration at the Laurel Highlands YMCA, also in Mount Pleasant.

Decisions on the grant applications will be made in 2021.

Funding for these Clean Water Act Section 319 funds are provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for nonpoint source management programs.

RECREATION

Early in 2020, we helped **improve a well-used boat launch in West Newton** along the Sutersville Road, near the Giant Eagle plaza.

With funding from the borough and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, we were able to transform a mud ramp to the Youghiogheny River into a stable, concrete access.

We also used the funds to add a handicap parking area and new signage.

In addition to the Borough of West Newton and the conservancy, the Sewickley Creek Watershed Association and the West Newton Sportsman's Club partnered with us on this project.

Our watershed staff assisted the **Westmoreland Heritage Trail** group in its efforts to **obtain $25,000 in government funding for maintenance equipment and computer technology, as well as in its efforts to find a way to construct the "middle gap" section of the trail**.

The middle gap is an uncompleted section of the trail, approximately four miles in length, which is close to PA Route 66.

The middle gap area is challenging to construct because of the number of private landowners in this area, and the fact that the trail has to cross the Route 66 highway.

The committee has developed several potential solutions, including taking the trail under Route 66. No decision has been made and work is continuing.

A **pollinator garden was created on our conservation campus**, and planted with both native perennials and native wildflower seeds.

The one-acre garden's first season suffered a bit because COVID-19 restrictions limited the amount of

A tiger swallowtail enjoys one of the blooms in the new pollinator garden we planted during the year on our campus.

work that county workers were able to do, meaning that the garden wasn't mowed at the right point in the growing season to reduce the tall annual grasses that had been planted to protect the wildflower seedlings from aggressive weeds.

Nonetheless, the garden did show some promising signs and a healthy amount of pollinator activity, including butterflies and a variety of bees.

A brochure and quality outdoor sign explaining the garden also were created. The brochure is available on our website, westmorelandconservation.org.

We weren't able to undertake additional efforts to restore the health of a portion of the wooded Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park in 2020 due to uncertainty of work schedules and contractor availability.

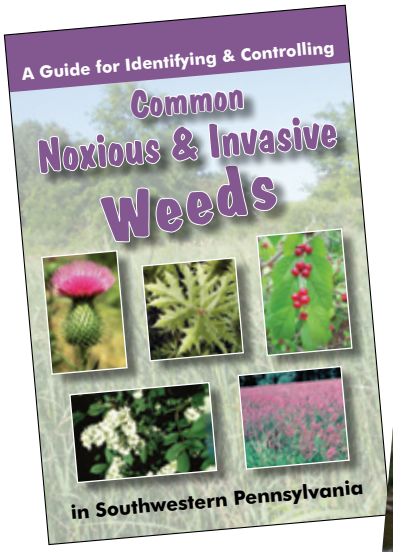
We had secured new funding for this project, and were planning to use it to eliminate more of the invasive plant species that are so prevalent in this wooded, passive-recreation park.

We hope to be able to secure funding again in the near future to continue this work that we began in 2018.

OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Our visual communication specialist partnered with a representative of the Allegheny County Conservation District to update the **Noxious and Invasive Weed Guide for Southwestern Pennsylvania.**

He provided the graphic design and layout services for both this latest version, and for the original version of this laminated field guide, which was first printed in early 2006.



We helped produce two information references for conservation partners.

One is an updated field guide to Noxious and Invasive Weeds in our region, and the other lists the canoe/kayak access areas along Sewickley Creek.

The original guide went on to serve as a prototype for similar guides created for the three other major geographic regions of Pennsylvania.

The updated guide for Southwestern Pennsylvania includes an additional seven weeds.

With more people than ever taking advantage of outdoor opportunities in 2020, **Sewickley Creek Watershed Association wanted to develop a brochure showing the three areas where people could easily access the watershed's main stream** for canoeing, kayaking, and fishing.

Our visual communications specialist helped the association produce this piece, which coordinates visually with outdoor signs that had previously been installed at these sites in New Stanton, Yukon, and Lowber.

The District's longest-running continuous education event, **the Westmoreland County Envirothon, was cancelled due to the pandemic**.

Under normal circumstances, up to 100 Westmoreland County high school students participate in this annual hands-on event, gathering at a county park to test their knowledge of the natural world. The winning county team then would go on to compete at the state level.

The state-level Envirothon also was cancelled in 2020, but organizers were able to create five on-line challenges, one for each of the topics that students had studied: soils, wildlife, aquatic ecology, forestry, and management of water resources. Instead of being a team event, students submitted their answers individually to a series of 10 questions, and the top scorers each received a gift card.

Area students from Kiski Area and Derry Area high schools participated in the state-level, on-line competition.

Scientific Monitoring

When the Turtle Creek Watershed Association and the Jacobs Creek Watershed Association wanted to know more about those respective streams, our stormwater staff **helped by recommending hardware, building the gauges, working with volunteers to install them, and setting up the monitors in our cloud database**.

Both instruments measure conductivity (an indicator of dissolved solids), temperature, and depth of the water. One of them also has the ability to track local precipitation.

Data from the gauges is included on the District's county-wide stream-monitoring network in near real-time.

More and more conservation districts have been successfully using drones to monitor large and difficult-to-reach conservation sites.

Our staff also saw the value in doing this, and so our watershed technician researched the topic, helped determine the specific equipment that would best suit our needs, and applied for grant funding.

She was successful in acquiring a $1,000 award through The Pittsburgh Foundation during the year. That grant, along with an additional $1,500 allocation from the District's mitigation monitoring fund, will allow us to make the purchase in 2021.

In addition to conservation site monitoring, we hope to use the drone to provide aerial photographs and videos that can be used in our outreach and education efforts.

Our conservation programs technologist has been collaborating with like-minded organizations, including the 3 Rivers Wet Weather Green Infrastructure Working Group, on **creating monitoring dashboards.**

Our watershed technician and a volunteer associate board member installed a data logger to monitor the water quality in Turtle Creek.

A major goal of the collaboration is to create consistency of data and maintain professional standards so that every group's information will be beneficial to every other organization.

For five years, we have been monitoring a project we did in 2016 to stabilize some 750 feet of streambank along Cherry Creek on the campus of Westmoreland County Community College.

During one of those inspections, we noticed erosion and water flowing from the side of one of the rock vanes we originally had installed to keep water from cutting into the bank. A closer look at two other rock vanes revealed that they were starting to have the same problem.

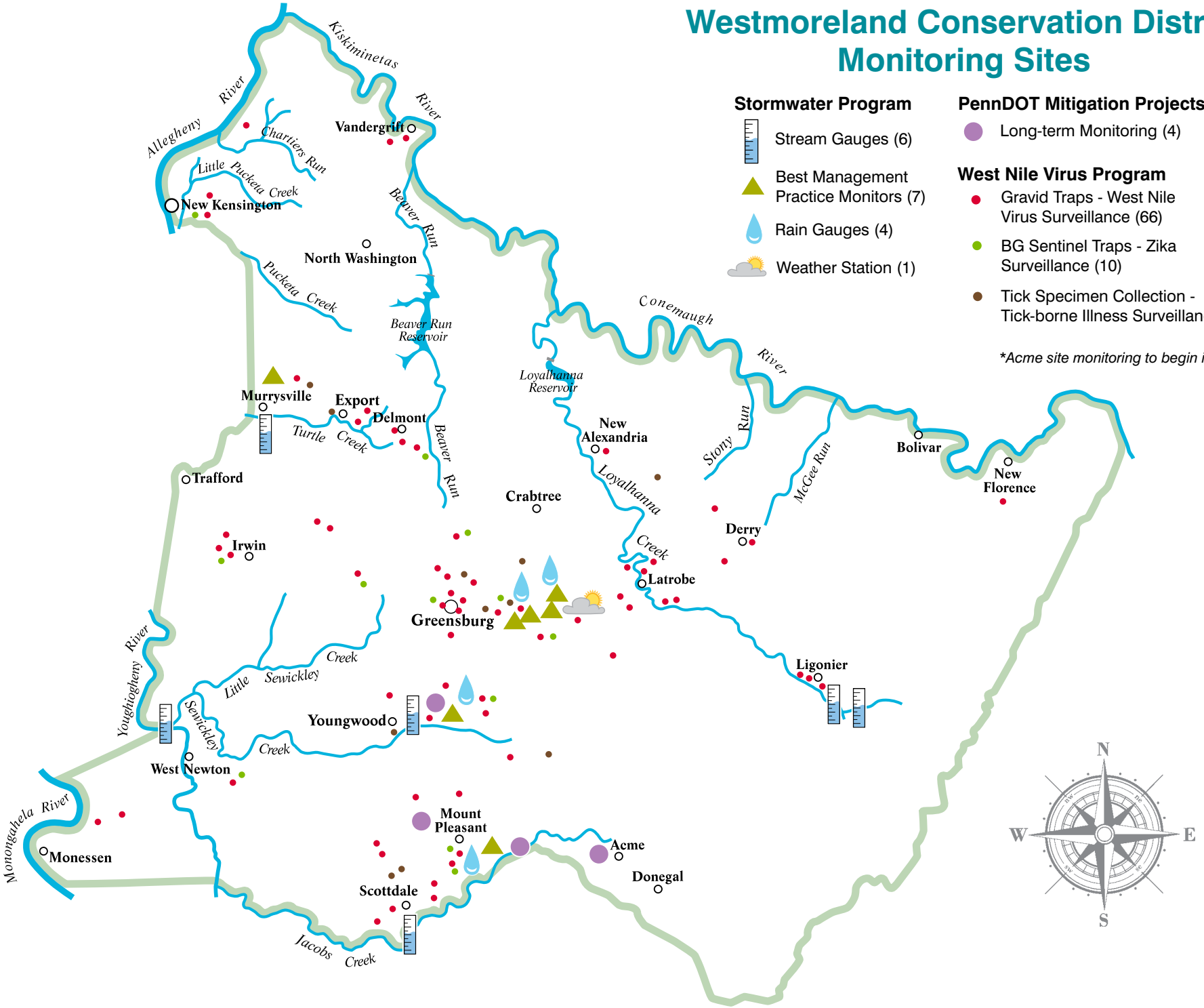
In 2020, we were able to **obtain a $1,950 quick-response grant from the Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, that allowed us to bring in rip rap, add some concrete to fill in the holes and crevices, excavate into the bank, and key-in the rock — all to prevent the water from finding another "run around."**

We returned to the site several months later and found that the fix was functioning as it should.

In addition to reinforcing the value of project monitoring, this situation has been a learning opportunity for our staff.

Cherry Creek is one of three PennDOT stream-mitigation projects that we monitored in 2020. The others are Sherrick Run, as it flows near

Westmoreland Conservation District Monitoring Sites



Stormwater Program

- Stream Gauges (6)
- Best Management Practice Monitors (7)
- Rain Gauges (4)
- Weather Station (1)

PennDOT Mitigation Projects*

- Long-term Monitoring (4)

West Nile Virus Program

- Gravid Traps - West Nile Virus Surveillance (66)
- BG Sentinel Traps - Zika Surveillance (10)
- Tick Specimen Collection - Tick-borne Illness Surveillance (10)

**Acme site monitoring to begin in 2021*

U.S. Route 119, and a section of Jacobs Creek near Bridgeport Dam. The five-year monitoring of those two projects will conclude in 2021, and 2022 respectively.

In 2020, we also began a new monitoring effort — of a wetland we created near Acme Dam — and that monitoring will continue yearly, into the spring of 2029.

Our West Nile virus program technician **regularly collected mosquito samples from 66 unique sites throughout the county** during mosquito season (early May-early October) and forwarded them to the state Department of Environmental Protection for testing.

Only one was shown to be positive in 2020. In 2019, three samples were positive.

For the second straight year, no humans in Westmoreland County tested positive for West Nile virus.

Blacklegged ticks also were monitored in 2020, for the second straight year.

Bites from the nymphs of these ticks, also known as deer ticks, cause the most tick-borne illness in Pennsylvania, including Lyme disease, human babesiosis, and human granulocytic anaplasmosis.

From April through October, our West Nile virus program technician monitors locations throughout the county for ticks and mosquitoes.

Our West Nile virus program technician (third from left) helped to coordinate the annual tire-recycling event with Westmoreland Cleanways and Recycling. Nearly 500 tires were collected.

From mid-April through August, our West Nile virus program technician collected samples of the tick nymphs every week, alternating her sampling locations in the county between two fixed sites one week and two random sites the next week.

The samples were sent to the state Department of Environmental Protection, which tested the nymphs for Lyme disease (Borrelia burgdorferi), as well as for Anaplasma phagocytophilum, and Babesia microti.

None of the nymphs were positive for any of those three diseases.

We received **nine calls regarding troublesome mosquito situations**, and our West Nile virus program technician responded to and resolved all of them.

Several of those calls actually did not involve mosquitoes at all, but a harmless, look-alike insect, the crane fly, which sometimes emerges in large numbers in October.

OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Most public events we had planned to attend to share information about mosquitoes and ticks were cancelled, including Earth Day at Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve, the Westmoreland Fair, and an event at Valley School in Ligonier.

We were, however, **able to hold the annual tire collection** in conjunction with Westmoreland Cleanways and Recycling.

Because this is an outdoor collection where people have very limited contact and are able to social distance, we offered the public the chance to turn in old and fugitive tires for recycling.

Citizens from 23 separate municipalities participated, and turned in a total of 480 tires. That number was down from the 650 scrap tires collected in 2019, but still significant and important both for the environment and for eliminating a pervasive source of standing water where mosquitoes can breed.

The new look of a District monthly board meeting in 2020. The upper left-hand image is of individuals who attended by socially distancing inside our barn headquarters. All other images are of attendees who participated from their own homes or other personal locations.

In early March, when we were hearing the first warnings about a possible shutdown, our **district manager/CEO met with key staff members to discuss the best ways to proceed** if that were to occur.

When the District actually was shutdown by order of the governor a few weeks later, we immediately formalized our thinking into a **Continuity of Operations Plan**, and modified it several times during the year as conditions changed.

The plan provided procedures for how our staff would function — e.g., working from home, accessing the office building, and communicating with each other — as well as how our clients would reach us to submit plans, request permits, participate in our conservation education programs, and, if needed, arrange meetings.

The public interface details were published on our website, and referenced on the recorded message that answered our main phone numbers.

Subsequently, we developed a formal policy on reopening that was added to our Employee Handbook.

There was a lot of uncertainty in 2020, and **operating revenue was one of the most uncertain**, particularly in the early days of the pandemic.

Following the initial state shutdown in March, the number of construction plans coming in to be reviewed slowed down to a trickle, and so our revenue from plan-review fees — which historically make

up about 25% of our budget — decreased to almost nothing.

Without the ability to gather, our education program was forced to cancel events for most of the year, also resulting in a loss of about $40,000 in revenue (see item on fees, page 25).

And one of the allocations we regularly receive from the state of Pennsylvania related to gas-well impact fees was reduced by $4,000.

Running a range of "worst case" scenarios helped us clarify the total potential shortfalls we might face in operating revenues, and we began identifying the actions we would need to take to offset those losses.

We immediately initiated cost-cutting, suspending almost all staff continuing education expenses, and temporarily freezing future annual salary increases.

We borrowed from our operating reserve.

And we instituted staff furloughs, initially hoping they would be short-term. As conditions progressed, it was clear that some furloughs would become extended hiatuses and some would become rolling, one-week-on, one-week-off, work schedules.

As the months went on, and we were gradually able to shift to using more and more technology to serve our clients (Zoom meetings, cell phones, email correspondence, and on-line/interactive website), it became clear that the function of the furloughed secretary/receptionist was no longer needed. At the end of the year, that position was eliminated.

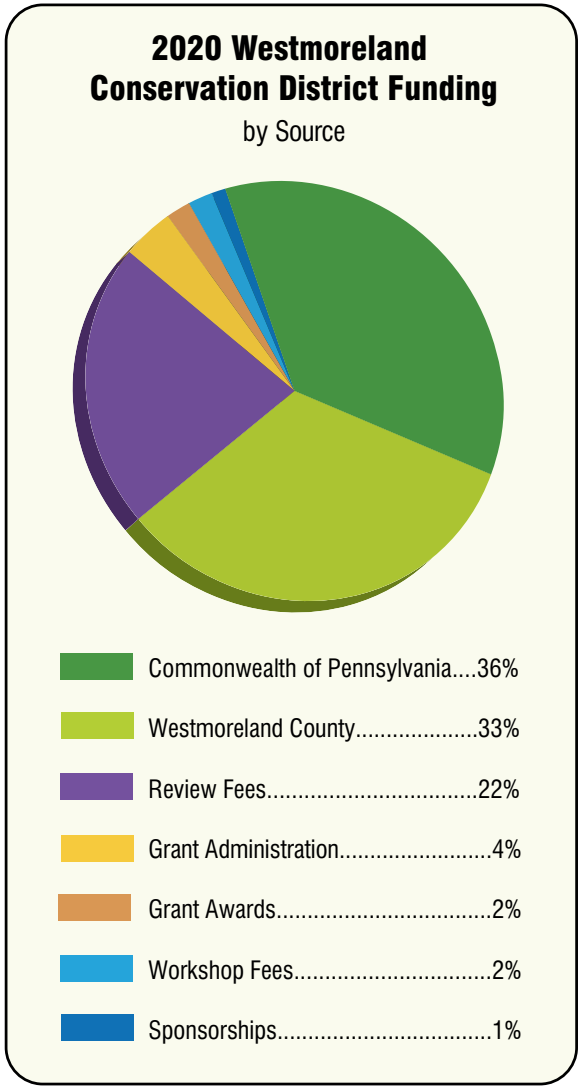
The **budget allocation we received from Westmoreland County in 2020 was essentially the same** as it has been since 2017.

Other revenue sources included private foundation grants, year-end donations, and sponsorships.

Private foundation grant awards were very limited, and we were grateful to receive funding from the Laurel Foundation for our education efforts, and The Pittsburgh Foundation for our drone.

We conducted our fourth **annual appeal at the end of the year**, and saw an increase in donations as well as in the number of givers from 2019.

In 2020, we raised some $11,100 in monetary donations from 41 individuals, organizations, and small businesses who support our conservation efforts. In 2019, those numbers were $7,800 and 23, respectively.



Money raised in this year's drive will go to supporting the work we do to help plan, build, maintain, and operate local recreation sites, including our recent work to create a canoe/kayak launch in West Newton, pave the way for the Westmoreland Heritage Trail through Murrysville, and improve the woodland in Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park in Greensburg.

Being outdoors is what got many of us through this very tough year. The annual appeal funds will help us keep these essential places in good shape, ready to be enjoyed.

An annual appeal was identified in our 2018 strategic plan as a new source of revenue to pursue.

Peoples Natural Gas led the way in **corporate sponsorships for us in 2020**, providing funding for our annual awards reception, which, because of COVID-19 restrictions, was not held but was replaced with a video featuring the award winners.

Other sponsors provided funding for the Envirothon (which also was not held in 2020) and the production of this annual report. The Envirothon sponsorships will be applied to next year's event.

In all, we received $15,000 in corporate sponsorships in 2020.

A new, **one-time source of federal funding — the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act — provided $30,000** to us in the fall, which we used to replace our 14-year-old computer server and its battery backup, and to purchase three laptops, and a speaker and a special microphone for our board room.

This new technology — along with the work we did earlier in the year with our outside information-technology consultant to improve our server's remote-access capability — proved invaluable in

giving our staff the ability to work more efficiently from home. It also allowed us to do a more seamless job of hosting board meetings from our barn headquarters via Zoom (see following item).

These new technology improvements are in line with the recommendations from a 2018 assessment of our information technology, conducted by the Bayer Center for Nonprofit Management at Robert Morris University.

Although construction projects did pick up again when the shutdown was lifted, they never returned to pre-COVID-19 levels, and consequently we ended the year with a shortfall of some $60,000 in revenues related to plan-review fees.

At the end of the year, our board voted to raise some of our plan-review fees on a graduated scale so that smaller construction projects — such as residential and small business developments — will see only a modest 2% increase in fees.

Larger projects, such as major commercial developments and utility lines, will see a 3% to 5% increase, depending on the number of acres the project disturbs.

The base fee for small, non-commercial construction projects, such as a single-family homes, did not increase.

The last time plan-review fees were increased was 2017. The new increase will go into effect in 2021.

In addition to the change in some plan-review fees, the District's board voted to **add a new fee for reviews of small projects related to the Stormwater Management Act 167** (Integrated Water Resources Plan).

These reviews are done at the request of a municipality. This fee also goes into effect in 2021.

The new summer kitchen, adjacent to the pavilion on campus and just steps away from our barn headquarters, will give us an opportunity to work with new partners and to hold more outdoor events.

Our education program coordinator, technical programs secretary, and conservation program technologist played important roles in **helping us shift to working remotely.**

In addition to researching software platforms for webinars (see Engineers' Workshop, page 11), they also introduced Zoom and GoToMeeting to give our staff several different ways to visually communicate with each other, and researched and helped procure headsets and microphones to make that experience more effective.

For our monthly Board of Directors meetings, they procured a new laptop, Bluetooth® speaker, and microphone, and helped train staff on how to use them. This equipment allows those who attend the meeting virtually to be seen on a screen in the front of the room by those who choose to attend in person. We were still working out some of the "bugs" with this online/in-person meeting system at year-end.

The State Conservation Commission conducted its every-three-year review of our Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Improvement Program and found that we were doing many things well — from the completeness of our files and policies, to the variety of projects we put on the ground to improve water quality.

The commission recommended that we make some improvements to the way we design and install stream crossings, and we plan to have our staff attend Penn State's training on this subject so we can make those adjustments beginning next year.

The commission also is talking with us about the method of reporting we use to obtain reimbursement for administrative and education expenses. This method has been recommended and approved by our auditor, and we are confident that we can come to a satisfactory resolution of this administrative question.

The State Conservation Commission administers the Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program.

Even though it was not required, we opted to do a **self-evaluation of our Erosion and Sediment**

Control Program. Representatives from our staff, board, and associate board participated.

They evaluated the program using criteria from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, the state agency that oversees our erosion control work.

Six areas were identified as needing improvement, including staff training, website information, and coordination with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

All areas were satisfactorily addressed during the year.

The modified plans for our **outdoor kitchen** were put out to bid in early 2020 and, after some delays due to the pandemic, construction began in May and was completed on budget in late September.

The open-air kitchen will help us foster new, more, and innovative relationships for both local agricultural producers and for our organization, such as relationships with:

- local chefs
- like-minded organizations (such as our sister agency on campus, Penn State Cooperative Extension, which hosts programs in food safety, food service, and nutrition education), and
- students from the Westmoreland County Community College culinary program.

An additional benefit of the summer kitchen is its ability to grow the District's capacity. Sitting adjacent to the Eric Oesterling pavilion, it will enhance our opportunities to hold outdoor events.

The kitchen contains a wood-fired pizza oven, a portable grill, a smoker, and a dry sink, and has room for large food and drink coolers. The area is well-lit, and monitored by security cameras. Seven specimen trees were planted nearby.

We are hopeful that as more people are vaccinated and the warmer weather returns, we will have opportunities to use the new kitchen in 2021.

The open-air kitchen was made possible through generous grants and donations from The Katherine Mabis McKenna Foundation, The Pittsburgh Foundation, Peoples Natural Gas, Somerset Trust, and a number of individual donors.

Conservation Farmer of the Year, represented by Jason, Ralph, and Ann Frye, receive a photomontage of their farm from Board member Connie Donovan.*

Pennsylvania's conservation districts are exploring a new partnership with several state agencies to **deal with the problem of invasive species**, including plants, animals, and diseases that are not native to our region.

Our forester, West Nile virus technician, agricultural conservation technician, and landscape architect all have extensive experience dealing with these invaders which, because they are free from many factors that kept their populations in check (predators, weather, etc.) can quickly out-compete our native species and upset the ecological balance. (See Healthy Forests, page 15 and Sustainable Communities, page 19.)

The Ralph Frye family and their operation, Pleasant Lane Farms of Unity Township, was named the 2020 Conservation Farmer of the Year, and the Municipality of Murrysville was named the 2020 J. Roy Houston Conservation Partner by the Westmoreland Conservation District.

The Fryes have been a conservation district partner since 1978, and this is the second time they have received this same award.

Over the past 50 years, the Fryes have installed many conservation measures to keep water clean on their dairy farm, including underground drains, barn gutters, a 1,800-square-foot heavy use area, a

The Municipality of Murrysville is the first municipality ever to receive the J. Roy Houston Conservation Partner Award. It is presented here by Board Chairman Ron Rohall (third from left) to municipal representatives Jim Morrison, chief administrator; Regis Synan, mayor; and Emily Mallisee, engineering technician.

200-foot-long animal walkway, a stabilized stream crossing, and a streamside buffer.

Earlier in the year, the family starting making cheese in a new 5,000-square-foot production facility they built, and have the distinction of being the only cows-milk creamery in Westmoreland County.

The Municipality of Murrysville is the first municipality ever to receive the J. Roy Houston Conservation Partner award, which was established in 2011 by Peoples Natural Gas.

This community has had a formal working agreement with the District since 1989, and has been very progressive, leading the way with many conservation firsts over the years, including installing stormwater ponds; creating innovative ordinances, such as one that encourages residential neighborhoods to install on-site sump systems; requiring that half of all new parking lots be made of permeable material; and planting more than 300 trees and shrubs along Steele's Run to maintain the high quality of water in this stream.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the District did not host its **annual awards reception**, but presented the awards in small, individual ceremonies at each winner's location and produced a video, showing each winner's accomplishments. The video link is on the District's website, westmorelandconservation.org.

BOARD, ASSOCIATES & PARTNERS

Reappointed to our board of directors during 2020 were Ronald Rohall (public director; four-year term) and Conrad Donovan* (farmer director; four-year

*Connie passed away in early 2021.

Douglas Chew
Westmoreland County Commissioner

Dan Carpenter
Deputy Director
Westmoreland County Department of Planning and Development

Steffany Mellor
District Conservationist
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Greensburg Service Center

term). These board terms continue until December 31, 2023.

Douglas Chew was appointed to his first term on our board as the representative of the Westmoreland County Commissioners. This is a one-year appointment.

The board voted to retain its **slate of officers**: Ronald Rohall, chair; Chuck Duritsa, vice chair; Conrad Donovan*, treasurer; and Kim Miller, secretary.

Reappointed as **associate directors** were Bruce Corna, Jr., Karen Jurkovic, Barb McMillan, and Theresa Gay Rohall.

Appointed to his first term as an associate director was Daniel Carpenter, deputy director with the Westmoreland County Department of Planning and Development.

Associate directors are nonvoting members of our board.

Leadership Westmoreland's 2020 graduation ceremony was held at our barn headquarters in May. Pictured, l-r: Chad Amond, chamber president; Michael Storms, former chamber chair; Chelsea Walker, District watershed specialist.

Steffany Mellor, recently appointed district conservationist in the United States Department of Agriculture's Greensburg Service Center, was appointed as a member of the District's Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Program's Quality Assurance Board.

The Quality Assurance Board makes decisions regarding the awarding of funds for dirt, gravel, and low-volume road projects in Westmoreland County.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

When funding for travel and in-person workshop attendance was eliminated to reduce costs, **13 of our technical program and education staff turned to on-line continuing education classes through the Clean Water Academy**, a resource of some 400 webinars, demonstrations, and instructional videos compiled by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

Academy classes are very specific to our work, and include such topics as How to Read and Use Site Plans and Maps, Understanding the MS4 Permit, PA's Clean Streams Law for Horse and Stable Owners, and The Post Construction Stormwater Management Inspection Report.

Although new staff members as a group took the most classes last year (our newly hired technical programs secretary, for example, took 10, viewing them even when furloughed), seasoned staffers, such as our nutrient management/agricultural conservation technician, also enrolled and found the classes to be worthwhile refreshers.

All classes concluded with a test that the viewer had to pass to receive credit for attending.

In all, our staff successfully completed 82 Clean Water Academy classes in 2020.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection requires that technical staff members of the conservation districts that administer its programs (including erosion and sediment control and stream encroachments) receive regular, documented training.

As part of our staff development, we had provided the tuition for our **watershed specialist to attend the latest Leadership Westmoreland Program**, which began in the fall of 2019 and continued through May of 2020.

The nine-month program is sponsored by the Westmoreland County Chamber of Commerce. It offers participants a chance to network with professionals from a variety of businesses and organizations in the county, to learn more about key aspects

of our community, and to build leadership skills.

During this most recent Leadership Westmoreland Program, the District also for the first time became one of the community organizations that the attendees visited and learned more about. The group also held its graduation in our barn headquarters.

Our watershed specialist is the third District staff member to graduate from the Leadership Westmoreland Program.

Creation of **an advisory committee for our conservation programs technologist** was put on hold last year, because we were hesitant to ask for volunteers in a time when COVID-19 was creating additional demands and stress for so many people.

The conservation programs technologist is a new staff position, created in 2019. It is an ombudsman that uses advanced technology and a variety of software to support the work of the District in many areas, from website development to conservation project design.

Advisory committees have been created for various District programs over the years, and are especially valuable for areas such as this — that are technical in nature and have only one staff position (e.g., agriculture, forestry, communications).

Advisory committees are staff support systems, made up of area individuals who have experience in the respective disciplines who have agreed to provide professional insight, suggestions, and guidance.

OUTREACH & EDUCATION

We were able to **launch our new website in March**, just before COVID-19 forced the District to shut down.

The new site has a cleaner, simpler format and a new domain name: westmorelandconservation.org. It also is more responsive to a variety of digital devices.

The amount of information on the new site is extensive, and we continued to refine it throughout the year (see Best Management Practices Portfolio, page 11).

The timing of our new website launch was particularly fortunate, as we relied on it heavily during the shutdown, when in-person communications weren't possible. In all, more than 6,000 unique visitors used the site during the year.

Our visual communications specialist and conservation programs technologist led this effort.

Writing and design of our **2019 annual report** was nearly complete when COVID-19 forced operations to shut down in mid-March.

Our communication consultant and visual communications specialist continued to work remotely to put the finishing touches on this important organizational document, and we were able to publish it on our website and distribute it via email to some 3,000 contacts in late April.

When District operations resumed in June, we printed 150 copies in-house and distributed them via U.S. mail to a limited number of key audiences, including legislators, county and local officials, and area foundation representatives.

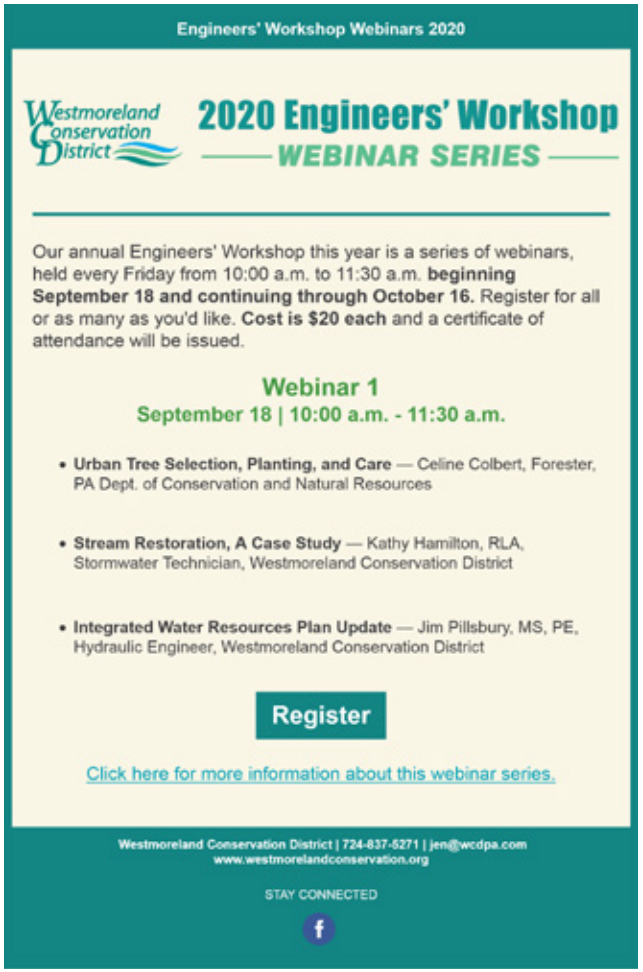
With in-person communication severely curtailed, we **leaned more heavily than usual on email as a way to get District news and updates out to more than 3,000 friends and conservation supporters**.

Changing our annual Engineers' Workshop from a two-day, in-person event to a series of webinars prompted the most email communications (four) to that group.

We also issued 10 other major communications, sharing information on a variety of subjects, including the development of municipal stormwater management ordinances, our new website, the new pollinator garden, the West Nile Virus program, and of course, the changes in operations due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The annual **Conservation Directory was updated** and a limited number of hard copies printed.

This reference of community, county, state, and federal conservation organizations also is available on the District's website.



One of a number of corporate emails – announcing our on-line Engineers' Workshop – that we used to keep in touch during the year.


BOLIVAR
BOAT ACCESS

Above and Beyond Projects

To do conservation projects that are needed in Westmoreland County, but that are "above and beyond" our funded, mandated duties, we seek out nontraditional sources of funding.

This mainly involves applying for competitive grants from the state and federal governments, and from foundations and organizations. How successful we are in winning these grants is a major factor in determining how many "above and beyond" conservation projects we can do.*

Sometimes, we also receive nontraditional funding from mitigation funds, consulting fees, or contracts for "above and beyond" projects.

In 2020, we had a total of $2,332,166 from all sources of nontraditional funding in-hand, and were using it toward 22 "above and beyond" conservation projects in our county.** These projects are shown as numbers 2 through 22 on the map on page 33.

In addition to the numbered projects, there was one other "above and beyond" project – the Integrated Water Resources Plan – that is not numbered or shown on the map because it is a countywide effort. This project also is referred to on page 8.

In the following list, all projects are funded by competitive grants (shown with the dollar amount of the award and the funding source), unless indicated otherwise by Consulting Fee Project, Contract Project, or Private Donation.

* Most of these grants are awarded directly to the District. Some are awarded to a partner agency(-ies) that we work with on the particular project.

** Some of the "above and beyond" projects are multi-year efforts.

(not numbered on map)

1 **Integrated Water Resources Plan**
Management of Water Resources
Countywide
$300,000 Richard King Mellon Foundation
Project status as of 12/31/20: Virtually complete.

2 **Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park**
Invasive Species Treatment
Hempfield Township
$ 3,800 Dominion grant
Project status as of 12/31/20: On hold due to COVID-19 restrictions.

3 **Sloan Elementary School**
Permeable Parking, Tree Planting, Rain Gardens
Municipality of Murrysville
$129,000 Growing Greener
$ 85,000 Franklin Regional School District
Project status as of 12/31/20: Completed.

4 **Columbia Avenue**
Design a Comprehensive Stormwater Management Project
Borough of Vandergrift
$5,000 Growing Greener
Project status as of 12/31/20: Completed.

5 **Municipal Water Authority Stormwater Management**
Install Best Management Practices
Derry Borough
$113,500 Growing Greener
Project status as of 12/31/20: Grant awarded at end of year.

6 **Municipal Stormwater Management**
Rain Gardens, Permeable Paving, Landscaping
Manor Borough
$133,500 Growing Greener
Project status as of 12/31/20: Grant awarded at end of year.

7 **First Presbyterian Church of Murrysville**
Stormwater Best Management Practices
Municipality of Murrysville
$ 30,000 Growing Greener
Project status as of 12/31/20: Grant awarded at end of year.
(Note: Over the past few years, other conservation measures were implemented on this project, thanks in part to a $103,000 grant from Growing Greener.)

8 **Turtle Creek Watershed Stormwater Improvements**
Retrofitting Municipal Stormwater Basins; Installing Stormwater Best Management Practices
Various Municipalities in Allegheny and Westmoreland county
Partnership project with Allegheny County Conservation District
$283,000 Growing Greener
Project status as of 12/31/20:
A portion of this grant has been invested in conservation improvements (11 municipal stormwater basin retrofits and a permeable pavement installation at the Monroeville Library). Remainder will be used to construct permeable paving and a rain garden at the Monroeville Library.

Above and Beyond Projects

9 McQuaide Dairy Farm
Agricultural Best Management Practices
Salem Township
$80,000 Growing Greener
Project status as of 12/31/20: Extended until 12/31/21.

10 Idle Creek Boarding Stables and Jeff Graham Beef Farm
Agricultural Best Management Practices
Export
$22,965 Growing Greener
Project status as of 12/31/20: Working with PA DEP to apply elsewhere in the watershed.

11 Rebitch Beef Farm
Agricultural Best Management Practices
Borough of Delmont
$15,655 Growing Greener
Project status as of 12/31/20: Working with PA DEP to apply elsewhere in the watershed.

12 Access to Youghiogheny River
Boat Launch Improvement
Partnership project with the Borough of West Newton, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, the Sewickley Creek Watershed Association, and the West Newton Sportsman's Club
$4,000 Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
Remainder-Borough of West Newton and donations
Project status as of 12/31/20: Completed.

13 Municipal Stormwater Management
Basin Retrofits and Underground Detention Improvement
Hempfield Township
$104,196 Growing Greener
Project status as of 12/31/20: Underground detention improvement completed. Basin retrofits scheduled to begin in 2021.

14 Lowber Treatment System
Iron Oxide Recovery
Lowber
$171,000 Growing Greener
$ 6,000 Pennsylvania Environmental Council
$152,000 Growing Greener
Project status as of 12/31/20: First two grants were used in 2020 to remove 1,000 tons of iron oxide and almost as much sludge. Second grant was awarded at end of year to find a long-term solution to storing iron oxide.

15 Brinkerton Treatment System
Iron Oxide Recovery
Brinkerton
$277,000 Growing Greener
Project status as of 12/31/20: Grant awarded at end of year.

16 Loyalhanna Creek
Reducing Sediment and Debris
City of Latrobe
$57,000 Growing Greener
Project status as of 12/31/20: Completed.

17 Brush Creek/Irwin Park
Reducing Sediment and Pollution
Irwin Borough
$86,000 Growing Greener
Project status as of 12/31/20: Grant awarded at end of year.

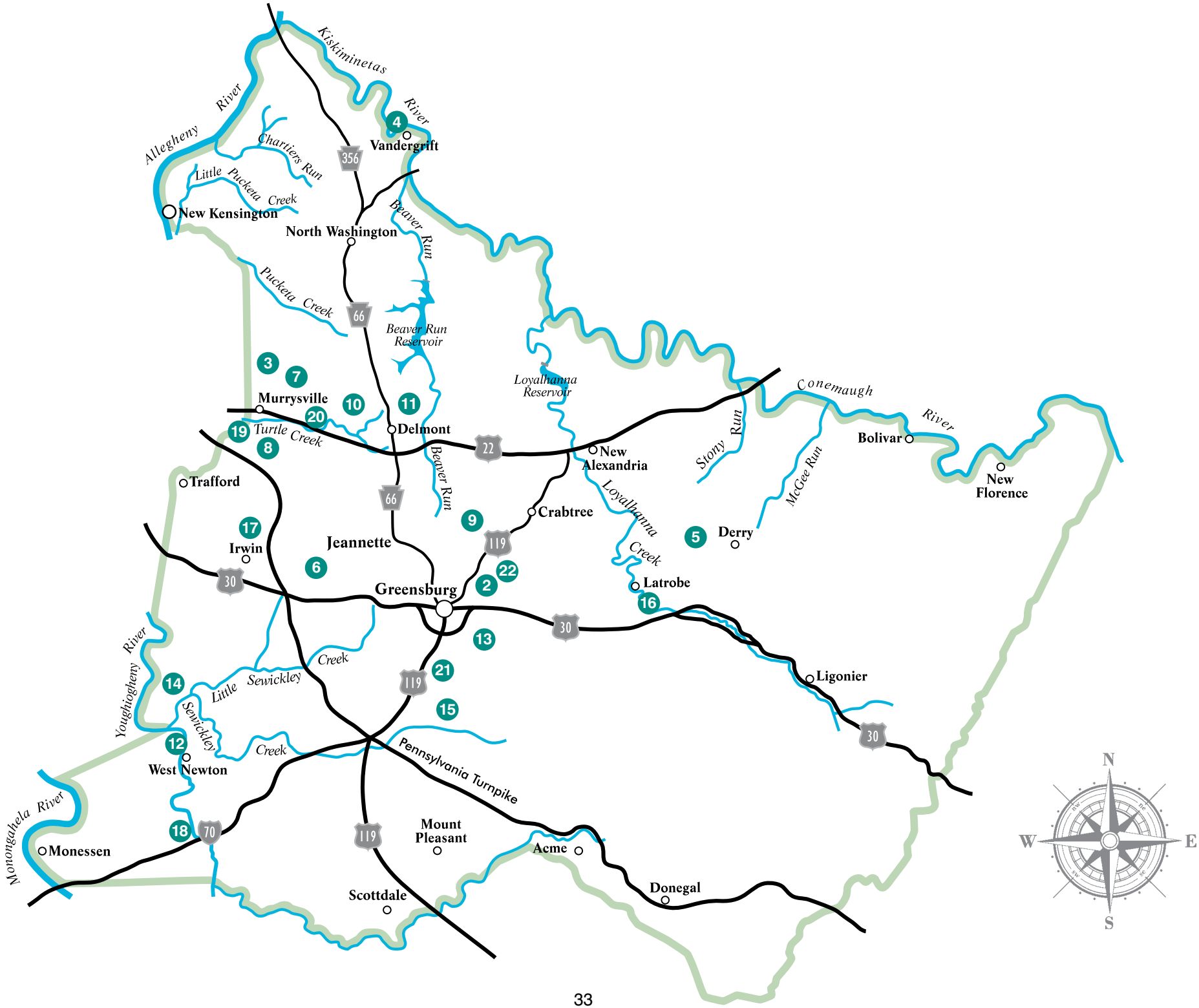
18 Cedar Creek
Streambank Stabilization
Rostraver Township
$136,000 PennDOT mitigation funding
Project status as of 12/31/20: Formal agreement in process.

19 Turtle Creek
Streambank Stabilization
Penn Township
Partnership project with Westmoreland Heritage Trail, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, PA Fish and Boat Commission, and Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation
$35,000 Growing Greener
Project status as of 12/31/20: Grant awarded at end of year.

20 Westmoreland Heritage Trail/Local Businesses
Reducing Flooding
Municipality of Murrysville
$97,600 Growing Greener
Project status as of 12/31/20: Grant awarded at end of year.

21 Cherry Creek
Reducing Sediment
Hempfield Township
$ 1,950 Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation
Project status as of 12/31/20: Completed.

22 Pollinator Garden
Habitat Creation
Hempfield Township
$ 3,000 Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Environmental Education Mini-grant
Project status as of 12/31/20: Completed.


Kiskiminetas River
Allegheny River
Chartiers Run
Little Pucketa Creek
New Kensington
North Washington
Vandergrift
Beaver Run
Pucketa Creek
Beaver Run Reservoir
Loyalhanna Reservoir
Conemaugh River
Stony Run
McGee Run
Bolivar
New Florence
Murrysville
Turtle Creek
Delmont
New Alexandria
Trafford
Beaver Run
Crabtree
Loyalhanna Creek
Derry
Irwin
Jeannette
Greensburg
Latrobe
Ligonier
Youghiogheny River
Little Sewickley Creek
Sewickley Creek
West Newton
Monongahela River
Monessen
Pennsylvania Turnpike
Mount Pleasant
Acme
Donegal
Scottdale
356
66
22
119
30
70
N
S
E
W

2020 Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Maintenance Projects

These projects are put in place under a standing District program.

They are funded annually by the Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program.

The Pennsylvania legislature established this program to eliminate stream pollution caused by water runoff and sediment from roads.

Money for this program is allocated to conservation districts by the State Conservation Commission, based on the number of miles of dirt, gravel and low-volume roads in a given county.

DIRT AND GRAVEL ROADS

1. **Brown Road**
   Allegheny Township
   Kiskiminetas River Watershed

2. **Sawmill Road**
   Mount Pleasant Township
   Jacobs Creek Watershed

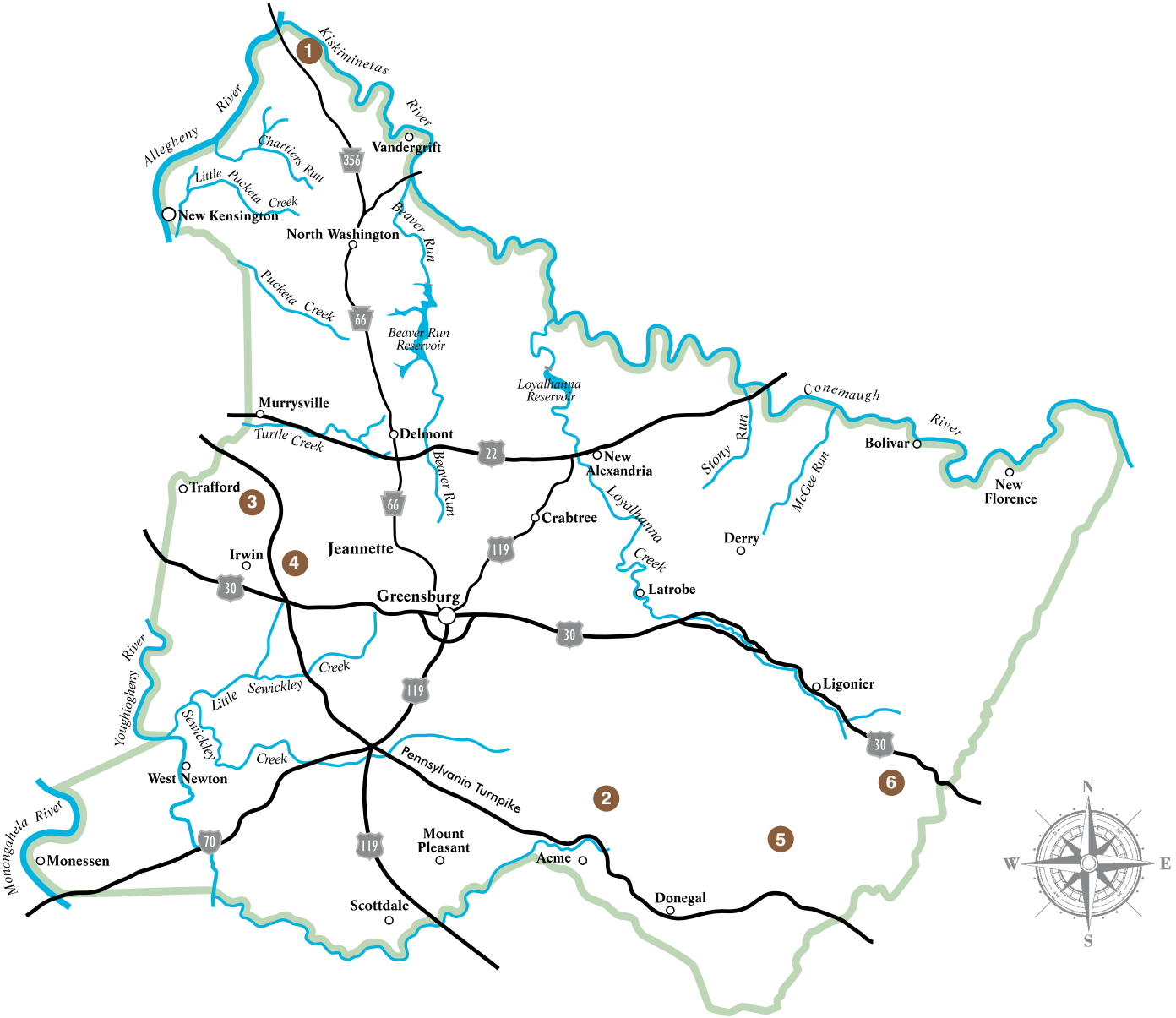
LOW VOLUME ROADS

3. **Pine Hollow Road Extension**
   Penn Township
   Turtle Creek Watershed

4. **Brush Creek Road**
   Penn Township
   Turtle Creek Watershed

5. **Kregar Road**
   Donegal Township
   Loyalhanna Creek Watershed

6. **Weaver Mill Road***
   Cook Township
   Loyalhanna Creek Watershed



* Funding for this improvement was allocated in 2019. Improvements were finalized in 2020.

2020 DONORS

Special Projects

BENEFACTOR
$10,000 to $99,999

The Laurel Foundation

PATRON
$5,000 to $9,999

Douglas Webster, Sonoma Communication Resource Management (CRM)

SPONSOR
$1,000 to $2,499

The Pittsburgh Foundation

Sponsors

BENEFACTOR
$10,000 to $99,999

Peoples Natural Gas

PARTNER
$500 to $999

Adam Eidemiller, Inc.

Apex Energy

Pennsylvania Envirothon

Smithfield Support Services Corp.

The Wilson Group

ASSOCIATE
$250 to $499

Fahringer, McCarty, Grey, Inc.

Markosky Engineering Group, Inc.

Pleasant Unity Supply

DONOR
up to $249

Deluzio & Company, LLP

Victor P. Regola & Associates, Inc.

James J. Stossel, MBA

Annual Appeal

FRIEND
$2,500 to $4,999

Markosky Engineering Group, Inc.

SPONSOR
$1,000 to $2,499

Lehigh Hanson, Inc.

Robindale

PARTNER
$500 to $999

Antonacci Design Associates, Inc. Civil/Structural Engineers

Charles and Judy Duritsa

Gibson-Thomas Engineering Co., Inc.

David Herrholtz – Creekside Hill Farm

Greg and Leanne Phillips

ASSOCIATE
$250 to $499

Creekside Hill Farm – David Herrholtz

Mr. and Mrs. William Doney

David Herrholtz

KU Resources, Inc.

Lewis and Kate Lobdell

Lutterman Excavating

Bill and Kathy Mihalco

Gary Sefchock & Associates

Jay and Mary Lou Tarara

DONOR
Up to $249

Anonymous

Wayne and Eileen Baughman

Emil Bove

Bill and Sandra Finley

First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Greensburg, PA

Larry Gasparato

Ken and Traci Halleck and Family

Mark and Jill Jackson

Betsey and Larry Larese

Brian and Julie Lawrence

John Lohr

Terrence Matty

Barbara and David McMillan, Stillwaters Farm

Kim E. Miller

Larry and Diane Myers

Reverend Jeremiah T. O'Shea

Nancy Page

Steve and Peg Pilipovich

Jim and Sarah Pillsbury

Ron and Theresa Rohall

Joseph Smierciak

SPK Engineering, Inc.

John and Margi Starr

Westmoreland Bird and Nature Club

Special Projects include our education program offerings, annual awards video, and purchase of a drone.

Sponsors include support for our Envirothon and publications, including this annual report.

Money raised in our **Annual Appeal** this year will go toward our efforts to help plan, build, maintain, and operate local recreation sites.

Financial Statement

Concise Statement of Financial Position

Combined Funds - December 31, 2020

ASSETS

Cash	$ 1,077,161
Grants Receivable	$ 89,630
Capital Assets	$ 106,458
Prepaid Expenses	$ 16,275
Total	$ 1,289,524

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities	$ 139,383
Net Assets	$ 1,015,961
Long Term Liabilities	$ 134,180
Total	$ 1,289,524

Concise Statement of Activites

Combined Funds - Year Ending - December 31, 2020

SUPPORT

Westmoreland County	$ 671,685
State Grants	$ 732,008
Administrative Services	$ 113,425
Consulting, Planning & Fees	$ 398,818
Room Rental/Interest	$ 4,741
Unclassified Operating Revenues	$ 14,695
Grants & Contributions	$ 94,488
Special Projects/Intergovernmental	$ 12,750
Total	$ 2,042,610

EXPENDITURES

General Conservation	$ 1,561,834
Specific Projects	$ 652,852
Capital Outlays	$ 22,960
Other	$ 45,588
Total	$ 2,283,234
Net Change in Fund Balance	$ (240,624)
Fund Balance - Beginning	$ 1,291,663
Fund Balance - End	$ 1,051,039

Westmoreland Conservation District

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ronald J. Rohall
Chairman

Charles Duritsa
Vice Chairman

Vacant *Treasurer*

Kim Edward Miller
Secretary

Emil Bove, PLS

William Doney

County Commissioner Douglas W. Chew

Paul R. Sarver

Fred J. Slezak

Associate Directors

Jay Bell
Daniel Carpenter
Bruce J. Corna, Jr.
Reid Crosby
John Hardiman
Karen Jurkovic
Kathleen Fritz
Lawrence Gasparato
Larry Larese
John Lohr
Barbara D. McMillan
William Mihalco, PE
Robert Pore
William Roberts
Theresa Gay Rohall
Thomas Sierzega
John Turack
Keith Walters

STAFF

Gregory M. Phillips
District Manager/CEO

Anthony P. Quadro, Jr.
Assistant District Manager/Technical Programs Director/Forester

Karen Barnhart
Fiscal Administrator

Sandra Dzendzel
Director of Administration

Mark Jackson
Visual Communications Specialist

Technical Staff

James W. Pillsbury, MS, PE
Hydraulic Engineer

Kathryn Hamilton, PLA
Landscape Architect/Stormwater Technician

Justin DeCarlucci
Conservation Programs Technologist

Christopher Droste, CESCO, CESCP
Senior Erosion Control Specialist

Chelsea Gross
Erosion Control Specialist

Robert D. Cronauer
Watershed Program Manager

Chelsea Walker
Watershed Specialist

Alyssa Davis
Watershed Technician

Daniel Griffith
Nutrient Management Specialist/ Agricultural Conservation Technician

Andrea Halfhill
West Nile Virus Program Technician/ Conservation Technician

Christie Sebek
Plans and Permits Coordinator

Tammy Woodward
Technical Programs Secretary

Educational Staff

Janette Novak-Mitchell
Education Program Coordinator

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

These committees are made up of community volunteers, District board members, associate board members, and staff members. We very much appreciate all the volunteers who provide their professional expertise and give their time to help develop and sustain the District's programs.

AGRICULTURE

Wayne Baughman
Gisela Carmenaty
William Doney
Daniel Griffith
Dustin Heeter
Anne Hong
Kim Edward Miller
Gregory Phillips
Jason Pontillo
Robert Pore
Betty Reefer
Laurel Rush
Paul Sarver
Thomas Sierzega
Fred Slezak

AGRICULTURE COMPLIANCE

William Doney
Daniel Griffith
Anthony Quadro
Paul Sarver
Fred Slezak

COMMUNICATIONS

Mark Jackson
Karen Jurkovic
Janette Novak-Mitchell
Gregory Phillips
John Turack
David Uhrinek

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Thank you to our state legislators and county commissioners, who allocate funding every year for the District.

State funding supports many of the core conservation programs we offer, including programs delegated to us by the state in agriculture, post-construction stormwater management, erosion and sedimentation control, and dirt, gravel, and low volume roads.

County funding has been instrumental in helping us attract significant additional dollars for "above and beyond" conservation improvements throughout Westmoreland County (see pages 31 - 33).

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Rep. Ryan Warner

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