

THE WESTMORELAND COUNTY  
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT

1954

The following are Directors for the Westmoreland County Soil Conservation District:

- Chairman - John R. Millen, Greensburg, Pa.
- Vice Chairman - Robert Torrance, Export, Pa.
- Member - Mortie Gongaware, Irwin, Pa.
- Member - Eugene Cairns, Ligonier, Pa.
- Member - Harry C. Gongaware, County Commissioner

Ford M. Frank, Ruffsedale, Pa. served as appointed Secretary for the Board.

The Directors are appointed by the Board of the County Commissioners from lists submitted by county farm organizations. They serve for a period of four years without compensation. (The main responsibility of the Directors is to coordinate the conservation activities of cooperating agencies such as the Soil Conservation Service, Department of Forests and Waters, Department of Highways, Fish Commission, Game Commission, Extension Program and Farmers Home Administration in order that soil and water conservation problems in the county can be met in the best possible manner. The goal of the District Directors is to encourage all Westmoreland County Farmers to become Conservation Farmers.

The Directors feel that the best approach to soil and water conservation is by working with groups of farmers on small watersheds. By this method, results can be obtained in less time and at reduced cost.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DISTRICT

Highlights of the Districts activities during 1954 follow:

As of this date there are 517 farmers developing conservation plans for their land comprising over 67,089 acres, of which, 33 became cooperators during 1954.

The District, in cooperation with the Soil Conservation Service, was responsible for 49 news articles, 8 conservation tours, 6 demonstrations, and 8 conservation education meetings.

The farm of Levi Silvis was entered in the Baltimore and Ohio

Railroad Conservation Contest, and received honorable mention.

District board members attended the Agricultural Conservation and Stabilization meeting called to formulate the County A.S.C. program.

The district was represented at the Annual Meeting of the Soil Conservation District Directors in Harrisburg.

Board meetings were held monthly with representatives of cooperating agencies in attendance at most meetings.

FOLLOWING IS A BRIEF REPORT BY COOPERATING AGENCIES OF 1954 ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN COOPERATION WITH THE DISTRICT PROGRAM.

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

|                                      | <u>Farm Plans</u> |                | <u>Acres</u>     |                |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
|                                      | <u>This Year</u>  | <u>To Date</u> | <u>This Year</u> | <u>To Date</u> |
| Basic Conservation Plans<br>(Active) | 9                 | 244            | 970              | 29,912         |
| District Cooperators Plans           | 33                | 517            | 5,976            | 67,089         |
| Conservation Surveys                 |                   |                | 14,068           | 75,373         |

THE FOLLOWING IS A COMPILATION OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION PRACTICES ESTABLISHED:

| <u>PRACTICES</u>           | <u>UNIT</u> | <u>ESTABLISHED</u> |                |
|----------------------------|-------------|--------------------|----------------|
|                            |             | <u>THIS PERIOD</u> | <u>TO DATE</u> |
| Contour Farming            | Acres       | 814                | 5,700          |
| Cover Cropping             | Acres       | 71                 | 610            |
| Strip-Cropping             | Acres       | 814                | 6,389          |
| Conservation Crop Rotation | Acres       | 385                | 3,611          |
| Pasture Seeding            | Acres       | 21                 | 357            |
| Pasture Improvement        | Acres       | 191                | 1,755          |

|                            |        |        |         |
|----------------------------|--------|--------|---------|
| Establishing Perennial Hay | Acres  | 14     | 322     |
| Tree Planting              | Acres  | 12     | 172     |
| Hedges                     | L. Ft. | 7,000  | 121,700 |
| Farm Drainage              | Acres  | 100    | 191     |
| Closed Drains              | L. Ft. | 44,125 | 113,644 |
| Diversion Construction     | Miles  | 1.1    | 3.1     |
| Farm Ponds                 | No.    | 12     | 42      |
| Constructed Outlets        | L. Ft. | 800    | 7,800   |
| Land Clearing              | Acres  | 45     | 365     |

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTS AND WATERS, WESTMORELAND COUNTY.

Services rendered throughout the county in cooperation with the Westmoreland County Soil Conservation District during the calendar year 1954, follow herewith:

Timber marked for sale or removal --  
 12 acres, 90,000 board feet.  
 These are small areas in timber stands marked as guide for the owner when making sales. The areas of the woodlots involved vary from 10 acres and over.

Ninty-two applications for planting stock were reviewed and approved. In cases where the land-owner is not familiar with planting methods, he is contacted and advised. 185,000 seedlings and transplants were distributed for reforestation and watershed protection.

Films and talks are given before civic clubs and others relative to conservation and land management.

From diseased samples, owners are advised of the name of any insect or fungal disease. Methods of treatment are prescribed where injury is serious and treatment is practical.

Office interviews are at all times granted those who wish same.

NOTE: The supervision of "Strip Mine Revegetation" is no longer a function of this Department.

V. M. Bearer, District Forester

VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE AND VETERANS FARM TRAINING PROGRAM,  
WESTMORELAND COUNTY.

Vocational Agriculture and Veterans' In Farm Training as carried on by our Westmoreland County Schools is still taking an active part in the conservation program in Westmoreland County.

Numerous field trips are carried on both by the vocational agriculture departments, of which we have 13 in the county, and the veterans' classes. This is done in order to acquaint the farmers with first-hand information on the supervised soil conservation program as it is being conducted by the county soil conservation district.

Group meetings were conducted throughout the county by the teachers of agriculture and the instructor in the veterans' agricultural program. In the teaching of soil conservation programs, 21 of our boys are conducting conservation programs as their school projects. Derry Township and Ligonier Township are particularly strong in carrying on soil conservation programs.

In three of our schools we are using the lesson programs as put out by the soil conservation people in several of our elementary schools. The teachers say they have found these lessons helpful in working out their projects and making the elementary science close and interesting to the boys and girls living in the rural districts.

The county superintendent and the area agricultural adviser wishes to express their sincere thanks for the cooperation of the staff and committee of the soil conservation districts in Westmoreland County for their interest in the schools and their desire to help us.

Ray E. Seamens, County Adviser  
Agriculture Education.

PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION -- WESTMORELAND COUNTY.

As a cooperating agency of the Westmoreland County Soil Conservation District, the Pennsylvania Game Commission respectfully reports the following field activities during 1954, relative to your soil conservation and better land use program:

Distributed, free of charge, 23,500 evergreen seedlings, 2500 shrub seedlings, and 340 chestnut seedlings to fifty-six (56) farmers for reforestation, food production, and reduction of soil erosion effecting approximately twenty-six acres.

Clear cut woodland border 4160 feet by 30 feet adjoining fields to increase crop production by removal of overshadowing trees and improve wildlife habitat.

Please note that the above activities were confined to the six Cooperative Farm-Game Projects located within Westmoreland County.

G. L. Norris, Supervisor,  
Southwest Division.

AGRICULTURAL STABILIZATION AND CONSERVATION, WESTMORELAND COUNTY.

Our program's purpose is to provide assistance to aid individual farmers in protecting and improving their land and in conserving water. Following is a report of assistance granted to Westmoreland County Farmers for materials ordered through the Conservation Program and assistance on other practices under the 1954 program:

MATERIALS

8,150 tons of limestone

This figure includes only materials ordered through the program. It does not include conservation practices which materials are supplied by the farmer and the government assumes part of the cost-sharing.

PRACTICES

816 Acres of Strip-Cropping  
5510 Ft. of Field Diversions  
90163 Ft. of Tile Drainage  
1000 Ft. of Sod Waterways  
12 Farm Ponds

Technical practices are only those completed under the supervision of the Soil Conservation Service.

Mortie Gongaware, Chairman,  
Agricultural Stabilization &  
Conservation.