

1971 ANNUAL REPORT



WESTMORELAND COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

YOUR DISTRICT

WESTMORELAND COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT is a subdivision of Pennsylvania State Government responsible under state law for conservation work within its boundaries. The District promotes conservation practices on public and private lands through cooperation with federal, state, and local governments and their various agencies, and with business and civic organizations and private individuals. It improves the environment through legislation and promotes conservation education at all levels. It also focuses attention on land, water, and related problems and develops programs to solve these problems.

Appreciation is expressed to the Westmoreland County Commissioners--James R. Kelley, John J. LaCarte, and Dr. Bernard F. Scherer for their financial support and encouragement and to the cooperating agencies, organizations, and individuals whose personnel and facilities have helped further conservation programs in Westmoreland County.

Board of Directors

J. Roy Houston	Chairman
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Randall Campbell	Mrs. John L. Pollock	Alex J. Smith
Kenneth Cyphert	Ronald F. Rigby	Mrs. John Turnage
Thomas Hughes	Mrs. Harry S. Saxman	William H. Walker, Jr.

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Ford M. Frank, District Secretary; Elwood J. Leslie, Executive Assistant; Marge Copeman, Administrative Secretary; Barbara Skinner, Secretary.

All Westmoreland County residents are invited to become Associate Members of the Conservation District. Members strive to emphasize positive ways of preserving the environment. Cost is \$1.00 per person or family, or \$5.00 for an organization. Memberships are renewable each year.

COVER PICTURE -- Ecology minded young adults, under the direction of the Westmoreland County Junior Board of Directors, clean trash from Brush Creek and its tributaries.

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION

The United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, and the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service provided technical and cost-sharing assistance in planning and establishing 849 acres of stripcropping; 80,551 feet of tile drains; 12,985 feet of diversions, 21 acres of grassed waterways; 12 ponds; and 22 spring developments during 1971.

Conservation cropping systems, cover cropping, pasture and hayland planting and renovation, and crop residue use were included in the agronomic practices applied to aid in conserving soil and water and eliminating pollution.

The District received requests for planning from 43 landowners during 1971. Thirty-eight landowners received technical assistance in developing soil and water conservation plans for their land.



Critical area planting in the Jacobs Creek Watershed - Alex J. Smith, 1970 Conservation Educator, leads a group of young people in installing plantings in an area where much of the land requires stabilization to prevent erosion.

WATERSHED PROTECTION AND FLOOD PREVENTION

The Jacobs Creek Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Project moved steadily ahead during 1971. Necessary land rights were secured for sites PA 657 (Acme) and PA 656 (Green Lick). Stripcropping, water impoundment reservoirs, and grassed waterways are among the resource conservation programs being installed on land within the Jacobs Creek Watershed.

The Loyalhanna and Turtle Creek Watershed Associations continued their environmental programs during the year. Existing subdivision regulations were revised to include erosion and sedimentation recommendations and programs on conservation education were established. Steps were taken to organize a Jacobs Creek Watershed Association.

WOODLAND IMPROVEMENT

The Bureau of Forestry, Department of Environmental Resources, distributed 98,000 forest tree seedlings in Westmoreland County. Nine woodland management plans were developed and 37 woodland recommendations made.

One-third of Westmoreland County's land area is woodland. Understanding and concern together with proper attitudes and habits regarding woodland will insure wise management of this great natural resource. Broad programs of conservation education are aimed at helping people to insure future as well as present benefits from our county's woodland.

WILDLIFE HABITAT IMPROVEMENT

The Pennsylvania Game Commission continued wildlife habitat improvement on their lands during 1971. Conservation and special wildlife planting on farm land contributed to an increase of wildlife. Bear, deer, rabbit, squirrel, pheasant, turkey, and grouse are among the species of wildlife which make hunting one of the most popular forms of outdoor recreation in Westmoreland County. Farm lands provide much of the food and cover necessary to maintain this wildlife. The Game Commission has 73,848 acres open to public hunting in the county comprising Game Lands and 1-2-3- Safety Zones and Farm Game Projects. Four hundred thirty-two landowners received 81,000 seedlings and assistance in establishing 85 acres of border cuttings.



Pictured at left is the Westmoreland County Federation of Sportsmen's exhibit at the Town and Country Conservation Show at the Greengate Mall. Federal, state, county, and private organizations participated in a week-long conservation show.

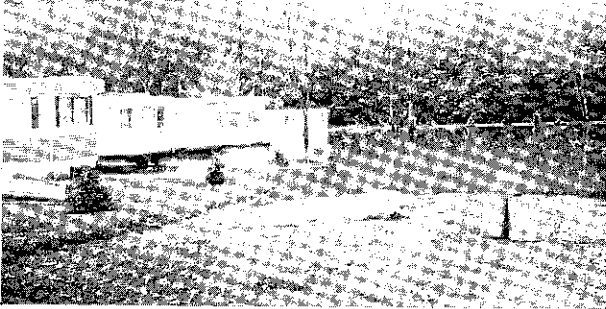
Sportsmen's groups expanded their involvement in improving wildlife habitat in the county and assisting with conservation education.

Thirteen farm ponds were stocked with fish from the Department of Interior during the year. Farm pond management by fertilization was carried out on a large number of these ponds.

The Pennsylvania Fish Commission stocked 77,613 fish in approximately 164 miles of streams and 269 acres of lakes in Westmoreland County.

RESOURCE PLANNING IN URBAN AREAS

Decisions on future land use that best serve the general welfare over extended time periods begin with planning. Local authorities use county resource data as a basis for decision making as they fulfill the objectives established by broad plans. Land studies to determine suitability, use, and disposition of the land in Westmoreland County include preserving prime agricultural areas for cropland; maintaining an economic agricultural use; developing attractive residential, industrial, and institutional areas; protecting historic, scenic, and natural beauty areas; providing for open space and parks; and proper use of flood plains.



Pictured at left - Flood plains prove unsuitable for family dwellings. Data included in the *Soil Survey of Westmoreland County* stresses the hazards of flood plains.

The Westmoreland County Conservation District, U.S.D.A., Soil Conservation Service, and the Westmoreland County Planning Department continued to give technical resource data pertaining to soil, water, and plant conservation and its relationship in upgrading the quality of the environment. Citizen participation was deemed essential for proper understanding and fulfillment of resource plans.

Resource planning in urban areas for 1971 included these major activities:

1. Inclusion of erosion and sediment control guidelines in local ordinances.
2. Soil and water management inventory and evaluations prepared for thirty units of land undergoing urban development in Westmoreland County. Included were housing, mobile home and industrial development sites, highway construction sites, etc.
3. Providing inventories and evaluations of resource data to planning commissions and other agencies of local and state government.
4. Review of highway corridor locations.

ROADSIDE CONSERVATION AND BEAUTIFICATION

Approximately 575,457 square yards of highway rights-of-way were seeded, mulched, and soil supplemented. Over three hundred evergreen and deciduous tree species were planted throughout Westmoreland County. Unwanted growth of grass and weeds was controlled and tree trimming and removal were performed. Established areas of Crown Vetch and Turf Grass on slopes, highways, grass interchanges, islands, and median strips were fertilized and maintained.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Personal involvement in conservation by concerned citizens who are Associate Members of the District moved conservation into high gear during 1971. With their assistance, the District continued to provide sources of information for Westmoreland County residents who asked "What can we do to help? What are the problems? What are the possible solutions?"

Many of the District's 1,200 landowner cooperators were assisted in carrying out land use planning, pollution abatement, and erosion control through conservation plans. Under Section 1001 of the Westmoreland County Interim Zoning Ordinance, the District reviewed and evaluated all developments five acres or larger. The District's *Long Range Program* and the *Soil Survey of Westmoreland County* were utilized in development of the Water System Plan and Official Sewage Facilities Plan for Westmoreland County and its municipalities. Soil survey interpretations were provided to municipalities to aid in identifying flood plains and encourage wise decisions on future land use.

A handbook on *Standards and Specifications for Erosion and Sediment Control* was prepared and a Symposium on Urban Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Problems held for municipalities, realtors, developers, professional land planners, and architects.

The Junior Board of District Directors (a group of young adults between 16 and 21) led their peers in conservation, beautification, and litter-prevention programs. Under their direction, a Litter-Free Stream Campaign was started which resulted in a massive clean-up of Brush Creek. (See front cover) As representatives of the Conservation District, they worked with and for conservation education in all school districts.



Left: Carol Pollock, Director of the Environmental Information Center, is assisted by volunteer workers. The Center houses a complete up-to-date environmental library. Students, educators, organizations, and all interested residents of Westmoreland County are encouraged to make use of these facilities.

The District sponsored Federal, State, County, and Private Organizations in a week-long Town and Country Conservation Show at the Greengate Mall. Widespread recognition of Soil Stewardship Week and Earth Day was prevalent in Westmoreland County. A Conservation Queen was chosen and a Plowing Contest held. Scholarships were awarded to teachers for summer conservation courses and young adults received scholarships to the Sportsmen's Conservation School. The District conducted tours, presented radio and television shows, and held conservation seminars for civic, religious, and education groups.

The Turtle Creek and Loyalhanna Watershed Associations continued to receive encouragement and assistance from the Conservation District and final plans were developed for a Jacobs Creek Watershed Association.

Conservation awards were presented to Westmoreland County residents during special ceremonies. Cited were William H. Walker, Jr., "Outstanding Conservation Educator"; Paul A. Heyworth, "Outstanding Conservationist"; Mrs. Harry S. Saxman, "Outstanding Achievements in Conservation"; John G. Mondics, "Outstanding Cooperator"; Glenn S. Work and Glenn R. Kepple, "Outstanding Conservation Contractors"; Greensburg Garden and Civic Center, "Outstanding Conservation Organization"; and Latrobe Brewing Company, "Outstanding Service in Conservation". The District served as liaison with the Westmoreland-Fayette Boy Scouts of America on the "1971 Conservation Good Turn" project. A Boy Scout *Conservation Reference Manual* was prepared by the District and awards presented to the troop and individual who achieved the most in conservation education and community service projects. Total commitment by your Conservation District during 1971 emphasized positive ways of preserving the environment.

DISTRICT PROGRAM

An ambitious new program to provide environmental information to the public proved very successful in Westmoreland County during 1971. Accelerated conservation programs were established by the Conservation District to meet the challenges and demands created by a broad scope of public involvement in conservation. The first element in the program was the *Directory of Environmental Information for Westmoreland County*. This 40-page, 5 x 8", directory covers the entire ecological spectrum, outlines conservation concerns, lists helpful individuals and organizations, and provides book listings and audio-visual materials available to the public. Backing up the Directory is an Environmental Information Center which is manned by volunteers. This serves as a clearing-house and source of information concerning environmental programs. It also indicates sources of educational and program materials and coordinates the plans of groups and individuals in order to prevent overlapping and wasted effort on environmental improvement projects. Included in the Center is a complete up-to-date environmental library.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

The District Board of Directors held twelve regular and two special meetings to conduct the business of the District. The District Program was formulated, assistance secured from cooperating agencies, services of governmental agencies coordinated and priorities assigned.

COOPERATING AGENCIES

The following local, state, and federal agencies are playing a vital role in assisting the Westmoreland County Conservation District: Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources--Bureau of Forestry, Health Department, State Soil and Water Conservation Commission; Pennsylvania--Department of Transportation, Fish Commission, Game Commission; U.S. Department of Interior; U.S.D.A.--Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Farmers Home Administration, Soil Conservation Service; Westmoreland County--Cooperative Extension Service, Department of Parks and Recreation, Planning Department, Vocational Agricultural Schools.



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