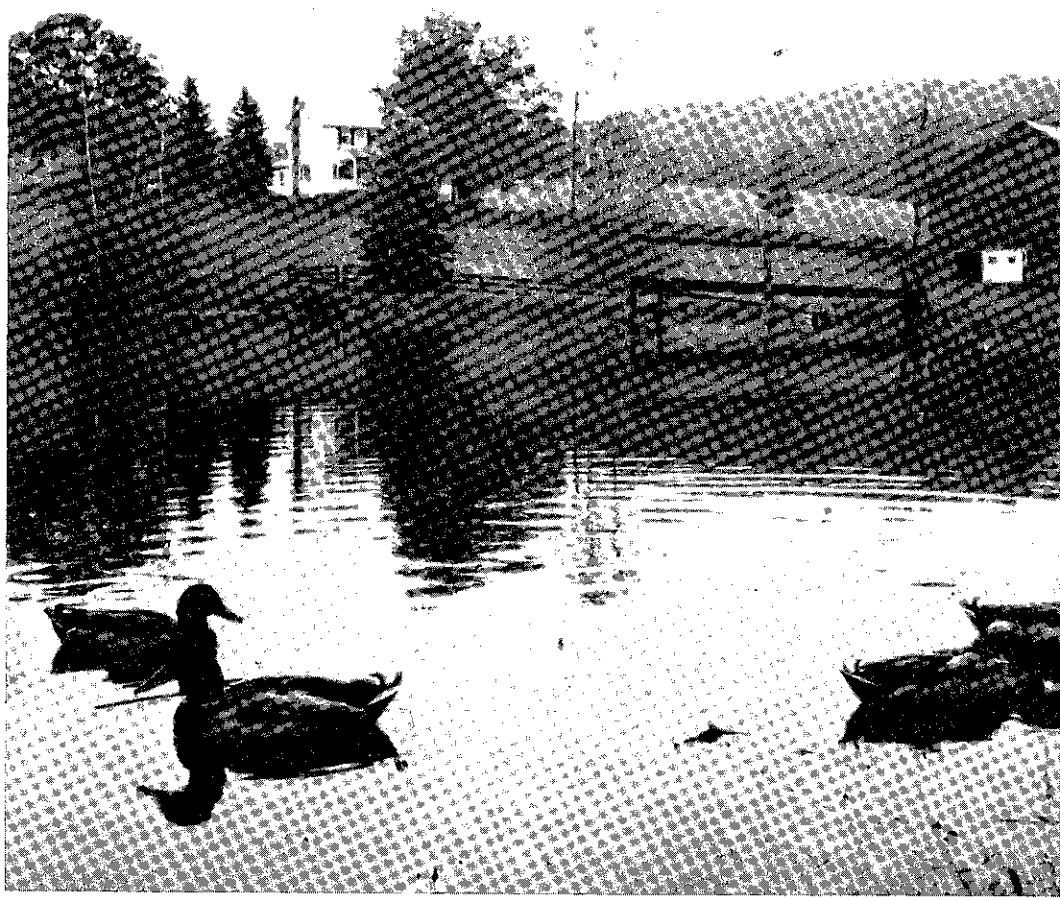
1973 ANNUAL REPORT

73 Review.....74 Preview



WESTMORELAND COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Its Responsibilities and Leaders

The Conservation District for Westmoreland County is a subdivision of Pennsylvania government responsible under State law for conservation work within the county. The District is governed by a seven-man Board of Directors appointed by the County Board of Commissioners. They serve without pay to improve the environment. Operating with assistance from many agencies, public and private, the District has been successful in involving large numbers of people at the grass roots level in effective conservation programs.

Appreciation is expressed to the Westmoreland County Board of Commissioners--Mrs. Dorothy Shope, James R. Kelley and Robert G. Shirey for their financial support and to the cooperating agencies whose expertise is so important to the success of the Conservation District. The State Commission provided support, assistance and guidance to fulfill the District's responsibilities and financial assistance for the executive Assistant Program and the Jacobs Creek Watershed Project. These were conducted under cost-sharing in which local monies were matched by the Commission. Sincere appreciation is expressed to county individuals and organizations who contributed their time and efforts.

STAFF

Elwood J. Leslie . . . . . Executive Assistant and Office Manager
Marge Copeman . . . . . Administrative Secretary

Phone: 412-837-5271
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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

J. Roy Houston . . . . . Chairman
Frank E. Skacel . . . . . Vice Chairman
Robert G. Shirey . . . . . County Commissioner Director
Edward A. Rinkhoff, Jr. . . . . Treasurer
Gilbert Hutter . . . . . Director
Alex J. Smith . . . . . Director
Boyd E. Wolff . . . . . Director

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

Father Firmin Beyer	Mr. John L. Pollock	Mrs. George Shupe
Charles DeNunzio	Mrs. Harry S. Saxman	Mrs. John Turnage
Milan Martinisko	Dr. Wm. D. Shea	Wm. H. Walker, Jr.

COOPERATING AGENCIES

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources: State Conservation Commission, Bureaus of Water Quality Management, Community Environmental Control, Forestry; Pennsylvania: Dept. of Transportation, Fish Commission, Game Commission; U.S. Dept. of the Interior; U.S.D.A.: Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Farmers Home Administration, Soil Conservation Service; Westmoreland County: Cooperative Extension Service, Dept. of Parks and Recreation, Dept. of Planning, Vocational Agricultural Schools.

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COVER PICTURES

Front: Summer Farm Scene in Westmoreland County
Back: Winter Farm Scene in Westmoreland County

DISTRICT'S 1973 REVIEW AND 1974 PREVIEW

Nineteen seventy-three was a challenging year for conservation, better known as the wise use of our natural resources. God's gifts of natural resources were meant to be used; but wisely. They are the common property of all people including generations yet to be born and must be sustained for the benefit of all.

EROSION AND SEDIMENTATION CONTROL REGULATIONS

Conservation Districts in Pennsylvania were recognized in 1973 as the vehicle by which environmental problems would be solved. An amendment to the Clean Streams law requires a Plan for Erosion and Sedimentation Control be prepared and implemented for all earthmoving activities. As of July 1, Department of Environmental Resources permits were required for earthmoving activities involving 25 acres or more in all areas in the county except Turtle Creek where it is necessary to have a permit if 12 acres or more are disturbed. On all disturbed land, regardless of tract size, regulations require that an Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan is prepared, present on the site, and implemented as planned before any earthmoving is started. Plowing and tilling for agriculture are excluded if there is an active Farm Plan. In the last half of 1973, seventy Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plans were reviewed by the District with technical assistance from SCS. A Standards and Specifications handbook was printed to assist in preparing plans. During 1973 administration of regulations was a joint function of the State Commission and the Bureau of Water Quality Management with the Westmoreland Conservation District reviewing applications for permits and making recommendations to the Dept.'s Regional Water Quality Offices regarding the issuance of denial of permits. Recently the District has officially been delegated the administration of the program. Westmoreland County is the first in Pennsylvania to receive this official delegation.

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCILS

In December, House bill 197 became law as Act 148, thus paving the way for local municipalities to establish Environmental Advisory Councils. These Councils will set the stage for local government to face problems associated with resource conservation and protection, particularly land use development. Stewardship over community land is being strengthened at the local level where it has the best chance of success. The District will promote a flow of information to these Advisory Councils from the State Commission and various local agencies who have the knowledge which these local Councils will require to reach their full potential.

ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION CENTER

The Environmental Information Center continued its unique role as Pennsylvania's most complete clearinghouse for materials and information covering all phases of conservation and ecology. Ten thousand copies of the Directory of Environmental Information have been distributed throughout the United States as well as locally and a revised 2nd Edition is ready for publication.

WATERSHED PROTECTION AND FLOOD CONTROL

District efforts were coordinated with the Westmoreland County Dept. of Planning and the USDA Soil Conservation Service on Flood Control Projects in the Jacobs Creek Watershed. Construction continued on the Acme impoundment reservoir and was completed on Greenlick. Planning got underway on flood control measures for the Jacks Run-Sewickley Creek Watershed. The Loyalhanna and Turtle Creek Watershed Associations attempted to eliminate and control acid mine drainage in their respective areas. The Turtle Creek Watershed Association, Inc., was named the State's "Watershed Association of the Year."

PENN'S CORNERS RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

A multimillion dollar coordinated effort to identify and solve environmental problems in Westmoreland and four surrounding counties was approved in 1973. County residents have been named to various RC&D committees to draw up action plans for their specific study area for presentation to the executive board for approval.

JUNIOR BOARD OF DISTRICT DIRECTORS -- Gathering Hardwood Seeds for Reforestation in State Forests.

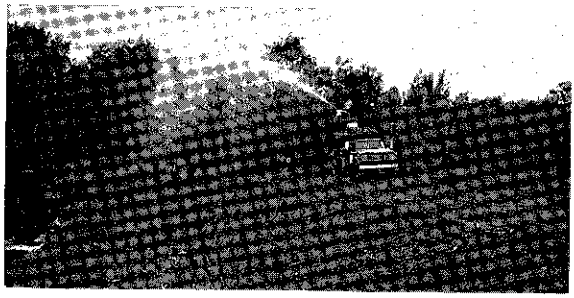
They're young, concerned and actively supporting conservation. The District in return supported participants of the FFA Speaking and Land Judging Contests and locally aided the Youth Conservation Corp. Earth Week, the Environmental Queen Contest, Soil Stewardship Week, and the Plowing Contest provided strong emphasis on environmental needs.

The District assisted by the Departments of Planning and Parks and Recreation embarked upon a comprehensive inventory of the profit and non-profit private outdoor recreational facilities for Westmoreland County. The data will serve as a basis for planning future recreational areas and facilities.

USDA, SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

Soil and water conservation technical assistance was provided to Westmoreland County landowners in establishing: 629 acres of stripcropping; 82,545 feet of tile drain; 5,395 feet of diversion; 7 acres of grassed waterways; 6 ponds; and 14 spring developments. Twenty-nine landowners received technical assistance in developing soil and water conservation plans for their land during 1973.

Nine miles of streams in Westmoreland County that were damaged by Hurricane Agnes were improved. Twenty-four streambanks and adjacent disturbed areas were seeded utilizing Federal Emergency Funds under the 1950 Flood Control Act. The major emphasis of the work done on streams in Hempfield, Derry and Mt. Pleasant Townships and Arona Borough was revegetating and stabilizing stream banks with grasses and legumes to reduce soil erosion and stream sedimentation. The over-all improvement of the stream areas damaged by Hurricane Agnes were improved.



STREAM BANK REVEGETATION Under Section 216 Flood Control Act 1950

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES BUREAU OF FORESTRY

The Bureau of Forestry distributed 128,500 forest tree seedlings in Westmoreland County during 1973. Woodland management assistance was provided to 27 woodland owners involving 1,028 acres. The quality of existing woodlands has been materially improved through the use of proper forest management practices with 141 acres receiving treatment during 1973.

PENNSYLVANIA FISH COMMISSION

During the year 46,050 trout were stocked in 10 streams and one lake in the County by the Fish Commission. Over 500,000 warmwater game fish fry, fingerlings, and adults were stocked in various ponds and streams throughout the county. The year 1974 looks even better as the Fish Commission has announced it will increase its trout stocking to 74,150.

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Roadside Development Unit reported approximately 69,092 square yards of highway rights-of-way were seeded and mulched on slopes for the prevention and control of soil erosion along and adjacent to highways. Three Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plans were submitted to the District from PennDot for review, and controls implemented on projects as planned.

RESOURCE PLANNING

USDA Soil Conservation Service Resource Planning in Urban Areas for 1973 included soil and water management inventory and evaluations prepared for 29 units of land undergoing development. Sixty-five land use and conservation treatment plans were reviewed. SCS advised on the adequacy of land use and suggested treatment considerations to meet conservation standards and local government land use policies.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Representatives from the department assisted in formative planning for the establishment of Penn's Corners Resource Conservation and Development Project and continues to give technical assistance to local recreation committees. Nature Center of Twin Lakes Park served as a permanent meeting place for the Junior Board of District Directors with a representative of Parks and Recreation volunteering his services as sponsor of the group. Conservation practices were implemented on all projects in the County Parks.

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

The department under Director Larry Larese included in their conservation activities for 1973: 1)Technical assistance to local communities; 2) Review of PennDot's proposed highway corridors; 3) Review of proposed sewage and water systems; 4) Reviews and approval of subdivisions and mobile home parks; 5) Water Quality Management board meetings; 6) Greengate Mall Conservation Week display; 7) Jack's Run Flood Control Project; 8) Flood Insurance Program administration; 9) Loyalhanna recreation plan; 10) Rural Development Committee membership.

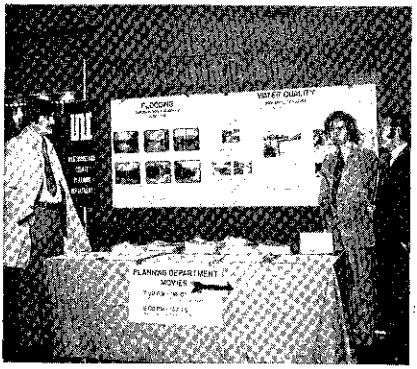
STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

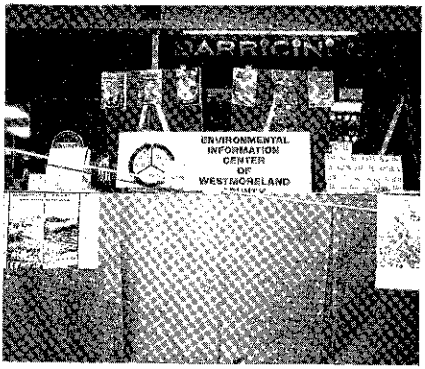
The State Conservation Commission provided support, assistance and guidance to fulfill the District's responsibility to safeguard the natural resources of our county and assure that these resources were wisely used. The executive assistant program and the Jacobs Creeks Watershed program received financial assistance from the state commission. These were conducted under cost-sharing arrangements in which local monies were matched by the Commission.

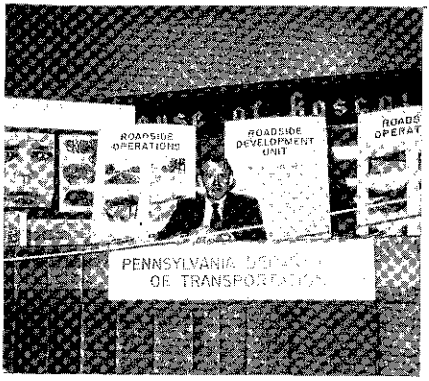
PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION

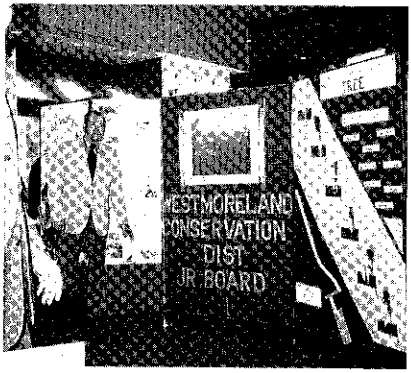
Wildlife Habitat Improvement on game lands continued during 1973. Conservation programs such as border cuttings, browse cutting and planting on farm lands contribute to sustaining adequate game populations. During 1973 an additional 500 acres of game lands were purchased in Westmoreland County making 75,248 acres of land available for public hunting through game lands, farm game projects, and the 1, 2, 3 safety zone program. Four hundred thirty-two landowners received 44,400 seedlings and assistance in establishing many acres of border cuttings. Sportsmen's groups united into an effective force for the continued protection of our natural resources and conservation awareness by education.

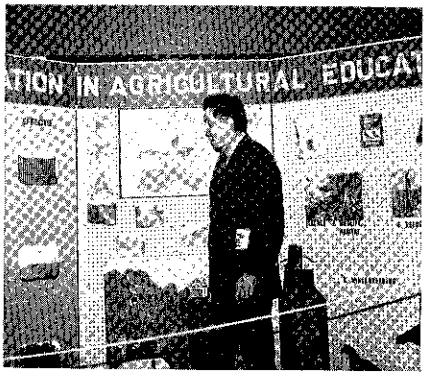
CONSERVATION STAGES HIT SHOW











The 5th Annual Conservation Show took place at Greengate Mall, February 26 to March 3, with 24 Federal, State, County, and private organizations participating. Through exhibits, conservation programs were exposed to an estimated 8,000 persons daily. The project sponsored by the Board of Directors of the Conservation District was coordinated by the Board's executive assistant Elwood Leslie.

WESTMORELAND COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
415 South Main Street
Greensburg, Pennsylvania 15601