WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT

1978 ANNUAL REPORT

DISTRICT LEADERS

The Conservation District is a subdivision of State government responsible, under law, for coordinating conservation activities within Westmoreland County.

The fundamental purpose of the district since its inception 30 years ago has been to control erosion. Those serving your conservation district are aware of our environmental changes resulting from rapid development within our boundaries. The board works in a positive manner for a complete understanding of priorities and procedures to alleviate environment problems.

District board members pictures left to right are Bill Buttermore, Boyd Wolff, Alex Smith, Frank Skacel (seated) Roy Houston and Gilbert Hutter

---

The Westmoreland Conservation District will celebrate its 30th anniversary this year. As part of the celebration, the district will host the Joint Annual Conference of the State Conservation Commission and the State Association of Conservation District Directors Inc. The meeting will be held October 1 - 3.

CONSERVATION PRIORITIES CHARTED AT PLANNING MEETING

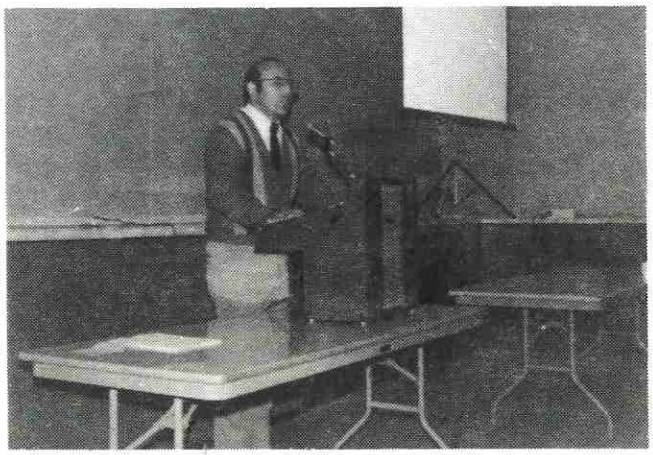
Local, county, state, and federal agencies met with the conservation district to coordinate conservation activities within Westmoreland County and formulate priorities for 1979.

1979 Priorties Include:

Conservation Plans
Erosion & Sedimentation Control
Storm Water Management
Land Use Planning
Flash Flood Program
PL 566
Critical Area Treatment
RC&D Funding
Public Relations Program

Discussion followed on strip mine reclamation, environmental advisory councils, storm water management and erosion and sediment control.

Municipality representatives stressed the importance of a unified effort between conservation agencies and local municipalities in dealing with conservation problems which have been the outgrowth of poor planning.



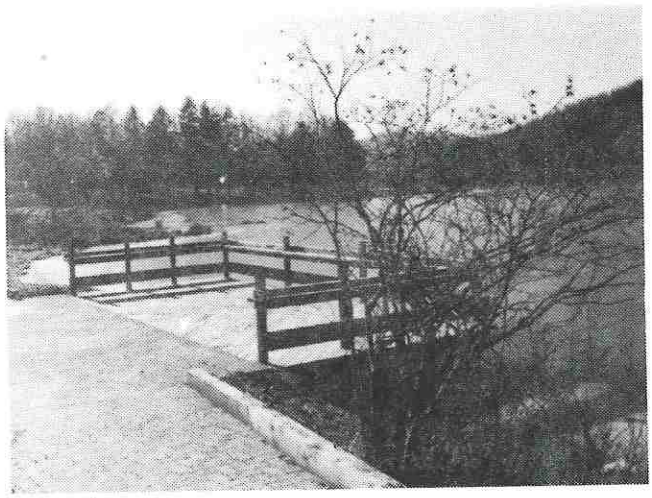
John Skavio, Hempfield Township Supervisor, discusses conservation work in his area.

COUNTY RC&D SITES TOURED

Several RC&D sites in Westmoreland County were toured by members from five counties to show what has been done through the program and what is planned at other sites.

Tour stops included Twin Lakes County Park, Mammoth County Park, Goehring Park in West Newton, and Lowber where the DER recently committed funds for an acid mine drainage treatment facility.

Funds from the USDA, Soil Conservation Service have been used to cost share fishing decks, hard surface trails, parking areas and improved restroom facilities for handicapped persons at Twin Lakes Park. At Goehring Park funds are being used to install drainage and erosion control practices. Similar practices are now planned for installation at Mammoth Park with cost sharing from RC&D.



FISHING FOR THE HANDICAPPED AT TWIN LAKES

Facilities installed or under construction with RC&D funding at Twin Lakes Park are valued at $83,714. In addition, a $10,500 design contract was cost shared with RC&D funds. At Goehring Park practices being installed with RC&D funding will cost $35,090. Practices planned for installation at Mammoth Park will cost an estimated $27,000.

The State Conservation Commission provides administrative and advisory assistance to Conservation Districts and has responsibility for administering various programs. The Commission continues to provide financial assistance in watershed development.

MICHIGAN CONSERVATION GROUP HOSTED BY WESTMORELAND

A group of Michigan conservationists was hosted by the Conservation District early this year. The purpose of the visit by the Michigan delegation pictured above was to observe the diversified conservation programs in Westmoreland County.

EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL

There is a law which states anyone who moves earth must have a plan that will prevent erosion. This law was made to control man-made erosion.

If 25 acres are disturbed a permit must be approved prior to earthmoving. In the Turtle Creek Watershed a permit is required for disturbance of 12 acres. To save time and money obtaining a permit it may be more practical to work in phases, which means, working on less than 25 acres and revegetating before going on to the next phase.

The Erosion and Sediment Control Plan requirement applies to everyone engaged in construction or any other operation which disturbs the earth. Some examples are:

- subdivision development activities
- logging and mining operations
- utility installations
- shopping center construction
- housing developments

Bare soil is eroded up to 2,000 times faster than grasslands or woodlands and it is worse on steep or long slopes. It is simpler and less time consuming to work on the solution before pollution begins.

FEDERAL & STATE FUNDS CONTRIBUTED TO WESTMORELAND COUNTY FOR CONSERVATION

$ 51,753.74	SCS	—	USDA, Soil Conservation Service
39,000.00	CETA	—	County Employment and Training Administration
64,665.65	RC&D	—	Resource Conservation and Development
100,000.00	ASCS	—	Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service
5,000.00	DER	—	Department of Environmental Resources
104,658.89	DER	—	For Jacobs Creek Land Rights Reimbursement
28,108.71	SCS	—	For Jacobs Creek Relocation Costs
$393,186.99	TOTAL FUNDS RECEIVED		

FLASH FLOOD WARNING SYSTEM

Westmoreland County has had a flash-flood warning system since 1972 when it was developed by Elwood Leslie, Executive Director of the Conservation District and John Chrin former Civil Defense Director.

Recently Westmoreland together with Cambria, Indiana, and Somerset participated in a three hour drill, the first multi-county test in the nation of the new Flash Flood Self-Help Warning Systems.

The County Flash Flood Warning System has been updated through the years and according to James Laffey, new Civil Preparedness Executive Director is being used as the prototype for the statewide network and in turn will serve as a guide to national systems.

Leslie received a certificate of award from George Cressman, director of the National Weather Service in recognition of "significant public service" in developing, coordinating and maintaining the Flash Flood Program.

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

The "Storm Water Management Act" authorizes a comprehensive program of storm water management designated to:

1) Preserve and restore the flood carrying capacity of Commonwealth streams
2) Preserve natural storm water courses
3) Protect and conserve ground waters and recharge areas

Within two years of enactment, every county shall prepare and adopt a watershed storm water management plan for each watershed designated by DER.

Each municipality shall adopt or amend ordinances, codes and regulations to conform to the established storm water plan.

Developers will implement measures to assure the maximum rate of storm water runoff is no greater after development than it was prior to development.

A watershed advisory committee composed of one representative from each municipality within the watershed and a representative from the conservation district and other agencies or groups will be established by the county.

Representatives Amos Hutchinson and Jess Stairs discuss storm water problems with District Chairman Roy Houston at a recent seminar.

The Storm Water Management Seminar held in October was sponsored cooperatively by the Department of Planning, Soil Conservation Service, and the Conservation District.

CONSERVATION SERVICES TO WESTMORELAND COUNTY

The Conservation District engages in and encourages conservation and environmental protection measures throughout the county. The Soil Conservation Service provides technical assistance to the District and residents of Westmoreland County. A summary of major services by Soil Conservation Service and the Conservation District include:

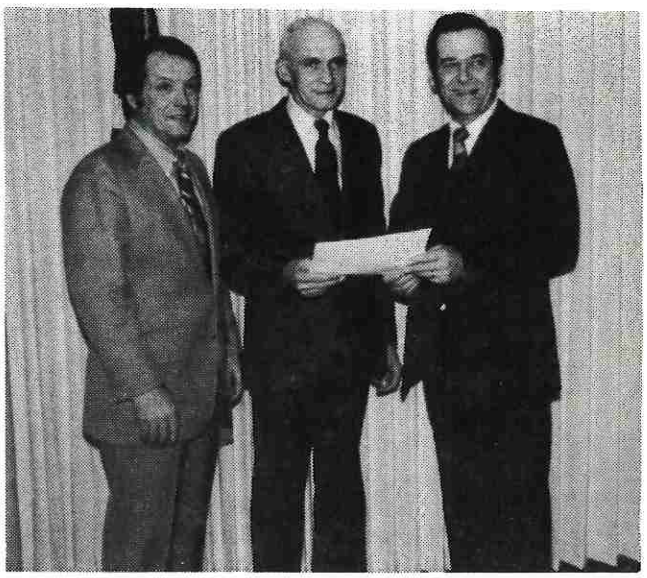
Number of Items	Services Provided
1,350	Total District Cooperators
39	Conservation Plans Completed
408	Services to Individuals
5	Conservation Plans Revised
71	Erosion & Sediment Plans Reviewed
46	Inventories & Evaluations
207	Site Inspections and Complaints Investigated
28	Violations, Erosion & Sediment
33	Received Technical Assistance in Applying Conservation Practices
3	Agriculture Waste Storage Structures
431 Ac.	Stripcropping Systems Established
48 Ac.	Critical Area Planting
30,779 Ft.	Subsurface Drains
2.1 Ac.	Grassed Waterways
8,790 Ft.	Diversions
5	Spring Developments

Also, various agronomic practices including pasture and hayland planting and management and conservation cropping systems to aid in conserving soil and water.

APPOINTMENTS BY COUNTY & DISTRICT

William W. Buttermore, R.D. 3, Mount Pleasant has been reappointed by the County Commissioners to serve a four-year term as District Directors.

J. Roy Houston, Marketing Supervisor, Peoples Natural Gas Company was elected Chairman of the District Board. Frank Skacel, Derry farm owner and operator was elected Vice-Chairman and Treasurer. Chairman Houston appointed Alex Smith, Vocational Agriculture teacher at Central Westmoreland Vo-Tech to serve as State Executive Council representative and Elwood Leslie, Executive Assistant was appointed legislative contact. Alex Smith presently is Secretary to the State Association of Districts.



Commissioners John Regoli, left, and Ted Simon, right, present Bill Buttermore with a certificate of reappointment following swearing in ceremonies.

OUTSTANDING FARM COOPERATOR FOR 1978

Donald Hutter was named "Outstanding Cooperator of the Year" by the Conservation District Board of Directors. Don owns and operates a 322 acre farm in Mount Pleasant Township. He has been a cooperator with the district since 1966. The following practices have been applied on his farm.

Contour Strips	92 acres	1966 & 1974
Diversions	1640 feet	1970
Grassed Waterways	1100 feet	1971
Tile Drains	2495 feet	1966
Pond	1	1970
Spring Developments	3	1977 & 1978

WATER IMPOUNDMENT INVENTORY

A two man team employed by the Conservation District with a grant from the County Employment and Training Administration completed an inventory of water impoundments throughout Westmoreland County.

Under the direction of District Executive Director, Elwood Leslie and SCS District Conservationist Wesley Gordon, the team identified locations of 336 ponds or lakes in the county.

The information will be used to locate water supplies for Civil Preparedness, Fire Companies, Municipalities and other agencies who may have a need for this information.

Field data includes outlet works description, embarkment data, up- and downstream conditions, and area vegetation. Evaluation of conditions of dams was not included in the project, however, this was a step leading toward a more detailed safety check by the state.

The study has been published in a book available from the Westmoreland Conservation District.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION ACT (RCA)

This law is one of the most significant pieces of legislation in the history of conservation. It requires the USDA, Soil Conservation Service to seek help from the PUBLIC in developing a resource conservation program for the future.

Under the new law, SCS will: 1) appraise the Nation's soil, water, and related resources; 2) develop a comprehensive 5-year program or strategy to guide conservation efforts; and 3) evaluate the effectiveness of ongoing conservation programs.

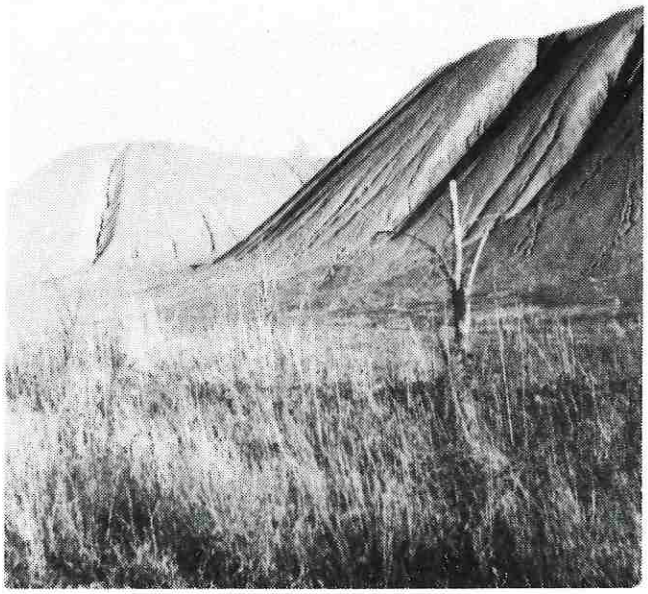
Conservation districts, citizen groups, and other federal state and local agencies will have an important voice in long range planning decisions that will guide the future of the Nation's soil and water resources.

Conservation District meetings are held at 8 p.m. the fourth Wednesday of each month and are open to the public.

RURAL ABANDONED MINE PROGRAM

Owners of land and water areas affected by abandoned mines may be eligible for cost sharing. To qualify, areas must have been unreclaimed or inadequately reclaimed. There will be no continuing bonding responsibility by mine operators or state.

The most severe problems in Westmoreland will be concentrated on first. Applications for program participation will be accepted by SCS and assigned a priority. The local conservation district or reclamation committee will review each application for cost sharing and suggest a funding priority.



Spoil piles like the one pictured above may be eligible for cost share under the Rural Abandoned Mine Program.

First priority will be protecting public health, welfare, safety and property from danger caused by past mining. Second will be protecting from adverse effects of mining. Third will be restoring the environment where it has been degraded.

The owner decides how the land will be used, but the use must be compatible with surrounding land uses and meet SCS and state conservation standards. Land may not be converted to other uses during the life of the cost-sharing contract which is 5 to 10 years.

WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

J. Roy Houston . . . . . Chairman
Frank E. Skacel . . . . . Treasurer and Vice-Chairman
Ted Simon . . . . . County Commissioner Director
William G. Buttermore . . . . . Director
Gilbert Hutter . . . . . Director
Alex J. Smith . . . . . Director
Boyd E. Wolff . . . . . Director

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

Paul A. Heyworth
Charles DeNunzio
Milan Martinisko
Dr. Wm. H. Walker Jr.
Mrs. Harry S. Saxman
Dr. Wm. D. Shea
Mrs. Steven Schellin
Mrs. George Shupe
Mrs. John Turnage
Mrs. John L. Pollock

STAFF

Elwood J. Leslie. . . . . Executive Director
Marge A. Copeman . . . . . Administrative Secretary
Kathleen A. Werner. . . . . Secretary

COOPERATING AGENCIES

PENNSYLVANIA: Dept. of Environmental Resources;
- State Conservation Commission
- Bureau of Water Quality Mgt.
- Community Environmental Control
- Bureau of Forestry

Department of Transportation
Fish Commission
Game Commission

UNITED STATES: Department of Agriculture;
- Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS)
- Soil Conservation Service
- Farmer's Home Administration

Department of the Interior
Department of the Army;
- Corps of Engineers

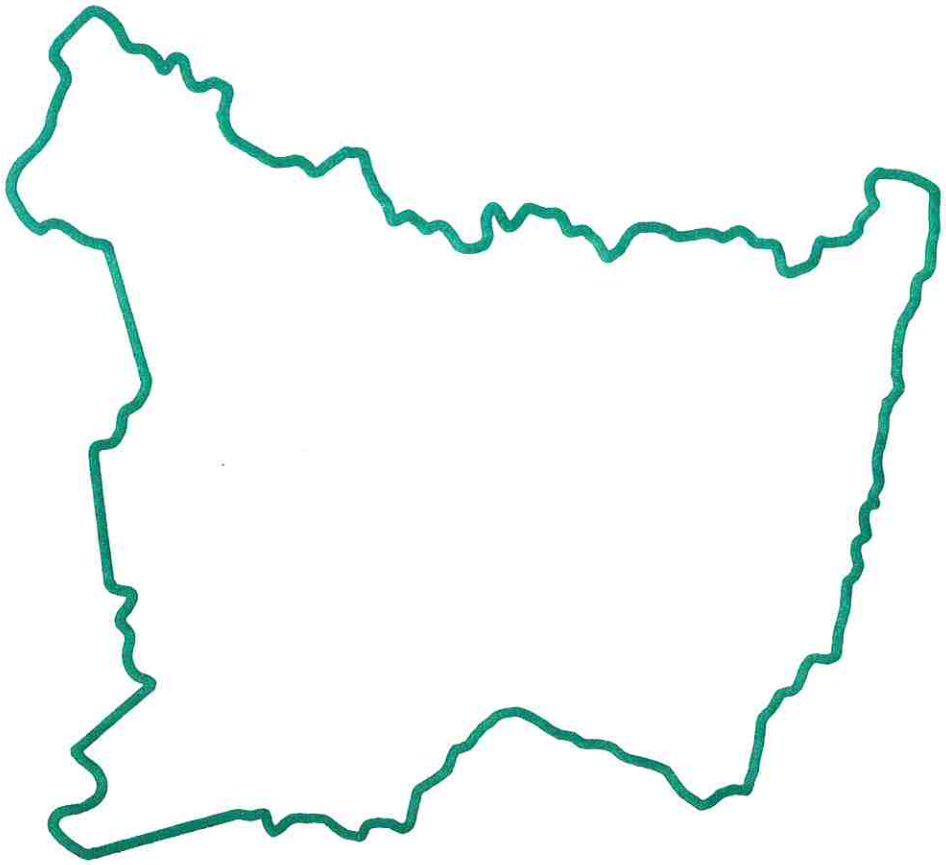
WESTMORELAND COUNTY: Cooperative Extention Service
Department of Planning
Dept. of Parks and Recreation
Vocational and Agricultural Schools

The network of cooperating agencies listed above have constructed working arrangements to cover the environment of Westmoreland County.

WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT
975 Old Salem Road
Greensburg, Pennsylvania 15601

1,040

SQUARE MILES

OF

OPPORTUNITY