

# Westmoreland Conservation District



2004 ANNUAL REPORT

## Hidden In Plain View



An Insider's Guide to Some of the Best Conservation Sites in Westmoreland County



*Dear Friend –*

Chances are, you pass by places every day that are helping to clean our water... protect the soil...grow healthy food...prevent flooding...and bring about a variety of conservation benefits that make life a little better for each of us.

But you probably don't realize it.

Because many of these important conservation places aren't marked with signs or noted on maps. In fact, they often blend so naturally with the environment that they essentially are 'hidden in plain view.'

This year, in addition to highlighting our recent accomplishments, our annual report gives you **an inside look at some of these often-overlooked places.**

We encourage you to get in your car and see them for yourself. Follow the directions to the featured sites...and use the photo captions to discover why each place is so special to conservation and our regional quality of life.

Along the route, be sure to take note of the other items called out for your interest...and the accompanying conservation perspective that will help you see Westmoreland County in ways you probably never have before.

Many of the things you'll see on this tour are the result of **partnership efforts** by the Westmoreland Conservation District, private citizens and public companies, grassroots organizations and government agencies — all working together to make Westmoreland County a better place to live. If you like what you see, we encourage you to get involved with us.

Some of the District's current and most recent activities are listed at the top of each page of this report. These activities are building blocks that will become future conservation projects in our county. Watch for signs of them being implemented along roadsides, in towns, and in neighborhoods throughout Westmoreland County (also watch for news about them in our upcoming *Landmarks* newsletters and annual reports)!

In the meanwhile, grab a free afternoon and a traveling buddy, fill up the gas tank, and follow the directions on the next pages to discover the conservation that is hidden in plain view all around us.

*Have fun! (and drive safely),*



J. Roy Houston  
Chairman

P.S. Open the facing page to begin the tour.



# Let's Go...



## THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

Westmoreland Conservation District Director Conrad Donovan prepares for the conservation road trip.

The entire tour circuit covers about 150 miles — all within the borders of Westmoreland County — and will take a full day to complete.

If you prefer, you can break the tour up into a series of smaller trips — visiting a few sites each time. This approach also will give you more time to leisurely enjoy the restaurants, farm markets, ice cream stands, gift shops, hiking trails, and other delightful places you'll encounter along the way.



### Taking a close-to-home adventure is a good way to save gasoline.

Some other things you can do to conserve:

- Keep your vehicle tuned up. Check the owner's manual for recommended intervals.
- Remove excess weight from your trunk or car (extra tires, roof-top cargo carrier). Less weight means better mileage.
- Keep your tires properly inflated. You'll get up to 5 percent more miles per gallon. And the tires last longer, too.
- Observe speed limits. Speeding decreases your miles per gallon.

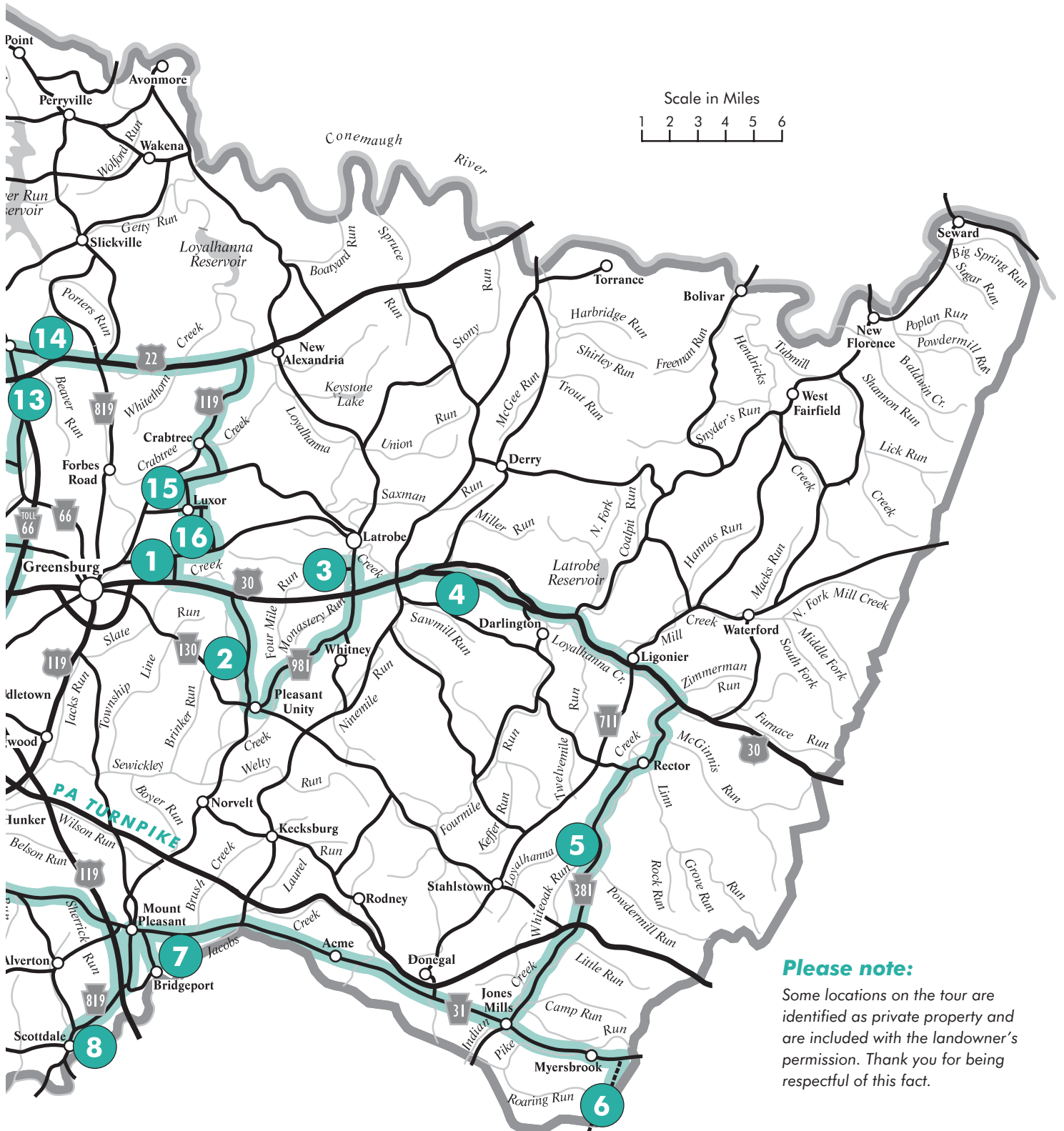
**Legend**

- Tour site
- Tour route
- Road
- Town or community
- Stream
- County border
- Dirt & gravel road



## WESTMORELAND COUNTY FACTS

- Westmoreland County is about 1,040 square miles in size – which is just about the same size as the state of Rhode Island.
- Westmoreland County has the largest rural population of any county in Pennsylvania.
- Some of the county's biggest conservation challenges are: sediment, mine drainage, and septage in the waterways.



### Please note:

Some locations on the tour are identified as private property and are included with the landowner's permission. Thank you for being respectful of this fact.

# WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT



## STABLE SOILS

- The county's **largest earth-moving projects** involved the reconfiguration of a runway at the busy Arnold Palmer Regional Airport (88 acres disturbed in the Loyalhanna Watershed), the elimination of a dangerous S-curve

on the Pennsylvania Turnpike near Donegal (74 acres disturbed in the Indian and Jacobs Creek watersheds), and the continued revitalization of the former Greengate Mall site in Hempfield Township (120 acres disturbed in the Turtle Creek Watershed).

District staff visited these sites numerous times during the year to ensure that the large amount of disturbed soil was not eroding into nearby streams (the turnpike construc-

tion project, for instance, crossed Jacobs Creek several times). Protecting area streams from excess sediment benefits thousands of Westmoreland County residents with better-quality water and a reduced likelihood of flooding.

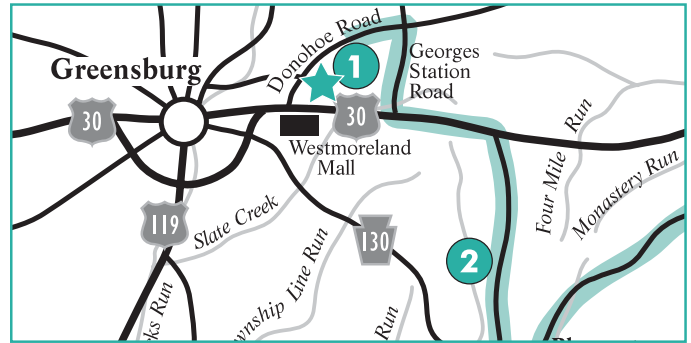
- **Residential development** continued at a brisk pace in the county and, along with it, the **number of plan reviews and site inspections** done by District staff.

## THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

### Begin at the headquarters of the Westmoreland Conservation District

where you can get answers to all your conservation needs

The Westmoreland Conservation District headquarters is the red barn on Donohoe Road in Hempfield Township. You'll find it just about 1 mile east of Westmoreland Mall (the intersection of US Route 30 and Donohoe Road).



NEAR the Westmoreland Conservation District...

### ★ SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Open Space and Recreation



The District joined with representatives of local foundations, government agencies, and concerned area citizens a few years ago to raise nearly \$40,000 to breathe new life into an almost-forgotten 60-acre natural area now known as Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park.

The funds added additional wooded acres to the park, a new entrance to make the park more amenable for people with disabilities, and improved the existing trail system.

Today, Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park is a quiet oasis of wildflowers, water, and wildlife where you can walk, picnic, and simply enjoy nature.

The park is open daily from 9 a.m. to dusk and is located next to the Westmoreland Conservation District.

In 2004, we reviewed a total of 304 plans, an increase of approximately 40% over the previous year. Part of this increase is due to changes in state permitting laws that now require an erosion and sediment control permit for most work that disturbs one or more acres of land in Westmoreland County (previously, permits were required only for work that disturbed five acres or more).

We also conducted 457 on-site

inspections of 1,325 acres under development in the county last year, numbers that have grown nearly 20% and 10% respectively from 2003.

The District's costs of conducting these plan review and inspection services is partially funded by the state of Pennsylvania, which has delegated the responsibility for erosion-control regulations to the District. Part of the District's costs also are paid by developers, who paid a total of \$60,055 in

fees to the District in 2004. The District assumed the remaining costs, which equalled about 50% of the total costs of administering the program.

- The District also began **evaluating sites with developers even earlier in the development process** — before the plans are drawn up — to identify ways to preserve the land's positive natural features, build with the existing terrain, and leave buffer areas

## 1 Westmoreland Conservation District



*Leanne Griffith, conservation education coordinator for the Westmoreland Conservation District (l), helps home-school parent/teacher Tammy Deemer gather information for her students outside the District's headquarters.*

### SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Adaptive Reuse

The Westmoreland Conservation District building is a prime example of **reusing resources**. Originally this building was a barn, built in the 1880s, and used to house crops and animals on a farm in Penn Township. By the late 1990s, the farm had ceased production and the barn was set to be razed to make way for a housing development.

Instead, the Conservation District used Amish craftsmen to dismantle the structure and rebuild it at its current location here on Donohoe Road in Hempfield Township.

In adapting the barn for its new use, the District incorporated a number of recycled/recyclable materials, energy-efficient fixtures, and low-maintenance, sustainable technologies so that

the structure itself would be a teaching tool; a working model of conservation in action.

The barn is part of a five-acre conservation campus that includes a number of alternative energy demonstrations (a wind turbine, solar panels, a geothermal system, and a plot of switch grass that may be used as biofuel)...a self-guided stormwater trail...a display of Westmoreland County soils...and an arboretum. Next door is the passive recreation 60-acre Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park.

*For more information: Westmoreland Conservation District (724) 837-5271, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com).*

# WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT

along streams. Last year, our staff walked five pending development sites with developers to offer these kind of conservation recommendations.

Mountain Ridge Estates in North Huntingdon became the first residential development proposed in the county to incorporate this kind of “conservation subdivision” thinking last year, with grassy swales that hold stormwater and allow it to slowly seep into the ground, and narrowed streets to reduce the volume

of stormwater.

- **Municipal ordinances** can open doors to getting more and innovative conservation measures incorporated on development sites. Last year, we strengthened our working relationship with a number of local governments, including the townships of Penn, North Huntingdon, and Rostraver; the municipality of Murrysville; and the borough of South Greensburg.

- Penn and North Huntingdon townships renewed their **formal Conservation Partnership Agreements** with the District, outlining the details of how our organizations will work together to minimize the impact of development on the natural resources in their area. This brings the total number of CPAs with local municipalities to 26.

## THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

### From Westmoreland Conservation District to the Marguerite site

where once-spoiled land is getting a new lease on life

R on Donohoe Road

At first stop sign, R onto Georges Station Road

At first traffic light, L onto US Route 30 E

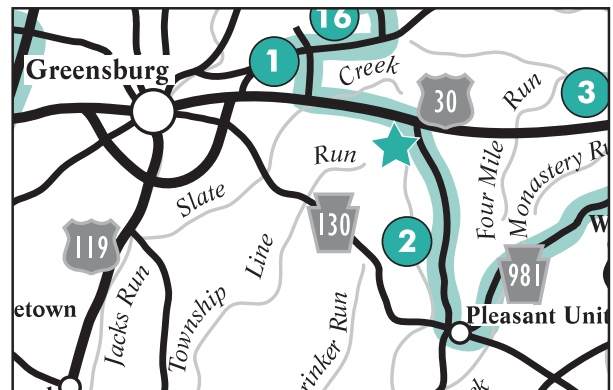
After about 1-1/2 miles, R at traffic light onto White School Road

After 100 yards, bear L at Y onto Marguerite Road (C6408)

After about 1-1/10 mile, pull off on R (this is the best view of the site; you can also see it from a pulloff a little farther down the road, on the right, across from the Yokwood Estates housing plan/Kimberly Drive).

The reclaimed site, formerly a bony pile, is on R

Please note: This is private property. The landowner has given permission to pull off here, but please don't walk on the site.



*ALONG THE WAY to the Marguerite site...*

### ★ SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Watersheds

This conservation tour stays within the borders of Westmoreland County. But it passes through a number of different watersheds — natural areas of varying size and shape. Watershed borders are determined not by people, but by water.

When rain hits the surface of the ground, the slope and shape of the terrain cause the rain to flow in a certain direction. All of the flowing water that ends up in the same place (in a certain creek or river) is in that watershed.

The Mountain View intersection on Route 30 is the approximate boundary between Sewickley Creek Watershed (which you are just leaving) and Loyalhanna Watershed (which you are just entering).

If you poured some water on each side of this natural divide, it would flow in different directions — one side would flow southwest, first into Slate Creek and then into Sewickley Creek (and then into the Youghiogheny River, the Monongahela River, and the Ohio River)... and the other side would flow northeast, first into Monastery Run, and then into the Loyalhanna Creek (and then into the Kiskiminetas River, the Allegheny River, and the



Ohio where it would meet up with the water you poured on the Sewickley Creek side!). So even though the water flowed through many miles of land in different, smaller watersheds...it all ended up in the same big watershed – the Ohio River Watershed.



## 2004 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Older, established developments can present a variety of sedimentation problems, and District staff provided **technical advice** to municipal engineers, planners, and zoning officers throughout the county to help them resolve these specific issues. We also assisted a number of area homeowners with erosion and sediment control issues on their properties. In all, our staff provided technical assistance on 397 individual situations

in the county last year involving erosion and sediment.

- The District marked a major milestone in June, when our technical department received, reviewed, and approved its **6,000th erosion and sediment control plan**. An erosion and sediment control plan usually is required for any work that disturbs one or more acres of land in Westmoreland County.
- Steps to **reduce sediment in areas**

**of the county with the highest water quality** were taken when the District helped to procure \$25,000 in funds from the Pennsylvania Conservation Commission so municipalities could repair eroding municipal dirt and gravel roads. The projects, which will improve a total of about 1-1/2 miles of unpaved roads in the Indian Creek, Loyalhanna, and Beaver Run watersheds, are scheduled to be complete in 2005.

## 2 Reclaimed Coal Mine Site at Marguerite



Before

Greg Phillips, Westmoreland Conservation District manager/CEO, surveys this rolling hillside after the reclamation work is complete.

### SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Land Reclamation

It will be hard to see much of anything unusual here, and that is a testimony to the success of the **reclamation work** done on this rolling Unity Township hillside.

Not all that long ago, it was a hazardous, polluting eyesore — an abandoned coal mine with dangerous sink holes, 3,000 feet of high wall, and spoil piles that also was illegally being used as a garbage dump.

A partnership of government and private industry came together in 2003 to harvest some of the marketable coal still remaining near the surface of these 48 acres and, in the process, clean up the pollution (acidic water from the site is now treated

with some 800 feet of alkaline drain) and re-contour the land to eliminate the dangers and make it useable again. Someday, there may be houses here.

There are more than 100 other abandoned coal mine sites like this one used to be, in need of reclamation in the county.

*For more information: Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation (814) 472-1800; or District Mining Operations (active mining sites) (724) 925-5400; also the Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation (724) 837-5271, [www.amrclearinghouse.org](http://www.amrclearinghouse.org).*

# WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT

- **Workshops** were held during the year for **earthmoving contractors**, who saw a live demonstration of the techniques being used to stabilize the steep banks and prevent erosion on the Wal-Mart construction site in Hempfield Township; and for **private landowners** in the eastern portion of the county, who learned ways to manage their private gravel roadways and driveways to minimize erosion into nearby streams, many of which

are high quality, trout-stocked fisheries and exceptional value waterways.

- Our **annual bus tour** gave more than 70 Westmoreland County residents a firsthand look at conservation practices at various earthmoving sites in the county, including the new residential developments in Unity Township, Palmer Place and Victoria Highlands; Creekside Trail in downtown Latrobe; and Green-gate Center (now Wal-Mart) in Hempfield Township.



## HEALTHY FORESTS

- We **completed forest stewardship plans for two major landowners** in the eastern portion of the county — the region where some of our best water quality originates.

## THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

### From the Marguerite site to Saint Vincent Wetlands/Gristmill

where wetlands clean iron oxide from the water, making the stream fit for fish and people

Continue E on Marguerite Road (C6408, changes to SR 2019)

After about 2 miles, L at blinker in Pleasant Unity onto SR 130 E (Main Street)

After 1/2 mile, bear L onto SR 981 N

Continue for 5-1/2 miles, crossing US Route 30 and making L at first traffic light onto Monastery Drive

Continue for about 1/2 mile, crossing small bridge, and bearing R at Y (C6410, Beatty Road)

Wetlands/Gristmill is on R



▲ The Arnold Palmer Regional Airport and surrounding area is important to regional commerce and economic development. It is part of the proposed high-tech corridor that will run from the Sony Industrial Park near New Stanton to Latrobe.

### ALONG THE WAY to Saint Vincent Wetlands/Gristmill...

## ★ PRODUCTIVE FARMS: Land Preservation

Notice the farms in this area along SR 981 N. Agriculture is Westmoreland County's number one industry in terms of gross dollar product, and dairy farming remains the county's dominant type of agriculture. Farmland, however, is increasingly being lost to housing plans, strip malls, highways, and other elements of urbanization.

When productive farm soils are built on and paved over, the community not only loses a local source of food and fiber, but an important natural resource that cannot be replaced.

About 1 mile after you turn onto SR 981 N, the farm in the distance on the right is protected by an agricultural conservation easement. The owner entered into a voluntary, legal agreement

with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Westmoreland County Agricultural Land Preservation Board that permanently protects the land from development by limiting its use to agriculture.

More than 50 farms (about 7,700 acres) have been preserved in Westmoreland County through this program since it was established here in 1990. There currently are some 143,000 additional acres of farmland in the county that are not preserved.

For more information: Westmoreland County Agricultural Land Preservation Program (724) 837-8971, [www.InWestmoreland.com/WCALP](http://www.InWestmoreland.com/WCALP).

## ■ SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Cleaning Up Illegal Dumping

This portion of Monastery Drive/Beatty Road is one of many roads in our county that has been adopted by volunteers of Westmoreland Cleanways, an organization that cleans up illegal dumpsites and heavily littered areas.

Since 1996, Westmoreland Cleanways volunteers have cleaned up more than 60 sites and kept them free of additional dumping.

The organization also sponsors a number of recycling events, including programs for hard-to-dispose of items such as vehicle batteries and Freon-containing appliances.

For more information: Westmoreland Cleanways (724) 836-4129, [www.pacleanways-wc.org](http://www.pacleanways-wc.org).

These forest stewardship plans give the landowners a detailed analysis of their property, and recommend a series of good management practices — to be implemented over the course of 10 years — based on the type of trees, their size, and the general topography of the area.

In all, the two plans will help professionally manage some 425 total acres in the Loyalhanna and Hendricks Creek watersheds in the eastern part

of the county, and provide healthy forests for recreation, wildlife, and good water quality.

- A committee of District Board and Associate Board members, staff, and representatives from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureau of Forestry Forbes District undertook a review of the 14-year-old **Memorandum of Understanding** that creates a

partnership between the District and the Bureau of Forestry.

Their goal is to increase the effectiveness of the forestry program, and ensure that these organizations are able to meet the needs of today’s forest landowners.

- Our forester **visited various active logging sites** throughout the county 65 times last year to ensure that best management practices were being

### 3 Monastery Run Improvement Project at Saint Vincent



Gristmill/Education Center



Wetlands

#### CLEAN STREAMS & WATER RESOURCES: Abandoned Mine Drainage

This Gristmill was one of the first buildings the Benedictine monks constructed here at Saint Vincent, and it has operated continuously since 1854. Also housed inside the Gristmill these days is an education center that explains the man-made wetlands in the floodplain behind the building.

Three wetlands were built here in the 1990s to capture and clean water from abandoned coal mines that was discharging right beside the nearby stream (Four Mile Run). The discharge water is laden with **iron oxide pollution**, which kills aquatic life and turns the stream a bright orange color. As the water is held in the

wetlands, this pollution drops out, and the cleaned water is released into Four Mile Run, which flows into Monastery Run.

This entire wetland system is passive technology; it doesn’t use any pumps, motors, electricity, or chemicals. Yet it cleans nearly 95% of the mine pollution from the water.

*For more information: Saint Vincent Environmental Education Center (724) 805-2330, [www.facweb.stvincent.edu/eec/](http://www.facweb.stvincent.edu/eec/); or The Loyalhanna Creek Mine Drainage Coalition c/o Loyalhanna Watershed Association (724) 238-7560, [www.loyalhannawatershed.org](http://www.loyalhannawatershed.org).*



*Need a little pick-me-up?  
There’s a nice, cozy coffee shop in the basement of the Gristmill.*

# WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT

followed, and that these logging operations did not adversely impact any nearby waterway.

He also used these site inspections as opportunities to share information on ways loggers could accomplish their work with minimal impact on the surrounding natural resources.

- Our District joined with Fayette County's Conservation District in January

to host an **erosion and sedimentation control workshop for loggers**.

More than 50 people attended this timely event, which presented information about the new timber harvesters' "action packet" — guidelines for controlling erosion and sediment on logging worksites.

- Forty forest landowners joined us in Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park in July for a **forestry workshop** to learn

common forestry terms, basic tree identification, how to measure the amount of board feet in a tree, and how to use a prism to estimate stand size.

This public workshop was similar to one we held earlier in the year for some 20 District staff and agency partners.

- More than 50 people came to hear Pennsylvania State Forester James Grace speak on the **state of our**

## THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

### From Saint Vincent Wetlands/Gristmill to Loyalhanna Gorge

where hardwood forests help protect water quality and provide recreation

Turn L out of Gristmill parking lot onto C6410, Beatty Road

Bear L at Y onto Monastery Drive

At first traffic light, R onto SR 981 S

At first traffic light, L onto US Route 30 E

After about 2-3/4 miles, the Loyalhanna Gorge begins and continues for about three miles more



- ▲ Side trip: About 4-1/4 miles after you turn onto US Route 30 E, there is a left turn that takes you to a causeway across the Loyalhanna Creek. Note: This road can flood. Also, remember that the Route 30 highway is divided by the creek. East and West are both one way only. Be certain of your direction before you return to the highway!

### ALONG THE WAY to Loyalhanna Gorge...

#### ★ STABLE SOILS

This very flat, plain-looking piece of ground about 2-1/2 miles after you turn onto US Route 30 E, just before the Kingston Dam, is some of the very best all-purpose soil in the county. It is called Chavies, and it usually is found along creeks and rivers. This is



one of the few places it occurs in Westmoreland County.

The most prevalent soil in our county is Gilpin, which is a good soil for farming (which helps explain why our county's number one industry is agriculture).

In all, Westmoreland County has 47 different kinds of soil...everything from floodplains where the soil gets very wet...to places where there may be as little as 10 inches of soil between the soles of your shoes and the Earth's bedrock.

Engineers, farmers, planners, builders, and botanists often consider the type of soil when they're making decisions about how to use the land in our community. You can do the same when you're making decisions about your own backyard.

For more information: Westmoreland Conservation District (724) 837-5271. The county soil survey is on the District's website, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com). At the John Millen Soil Display inside the District headquarters on Donohoe Road in Hempfield Township you can get a worm's eye view of some of the soils in Westmoreland County. Four-plus-foot vertical slices of Earth are on display, and there is a bin for touching and comparing different soils.

## 2004 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**commonwealth's forests** in a workshop we cosponsored with the Westmoreland Woodlands Improvement Association.

- The number of **forestry presentations to school students** continued to grow in 2004. Our forester gave presentations that ranged from basic tree identification for sixth-graders from Wendover Middle School, to discussions on ecology with seniors from

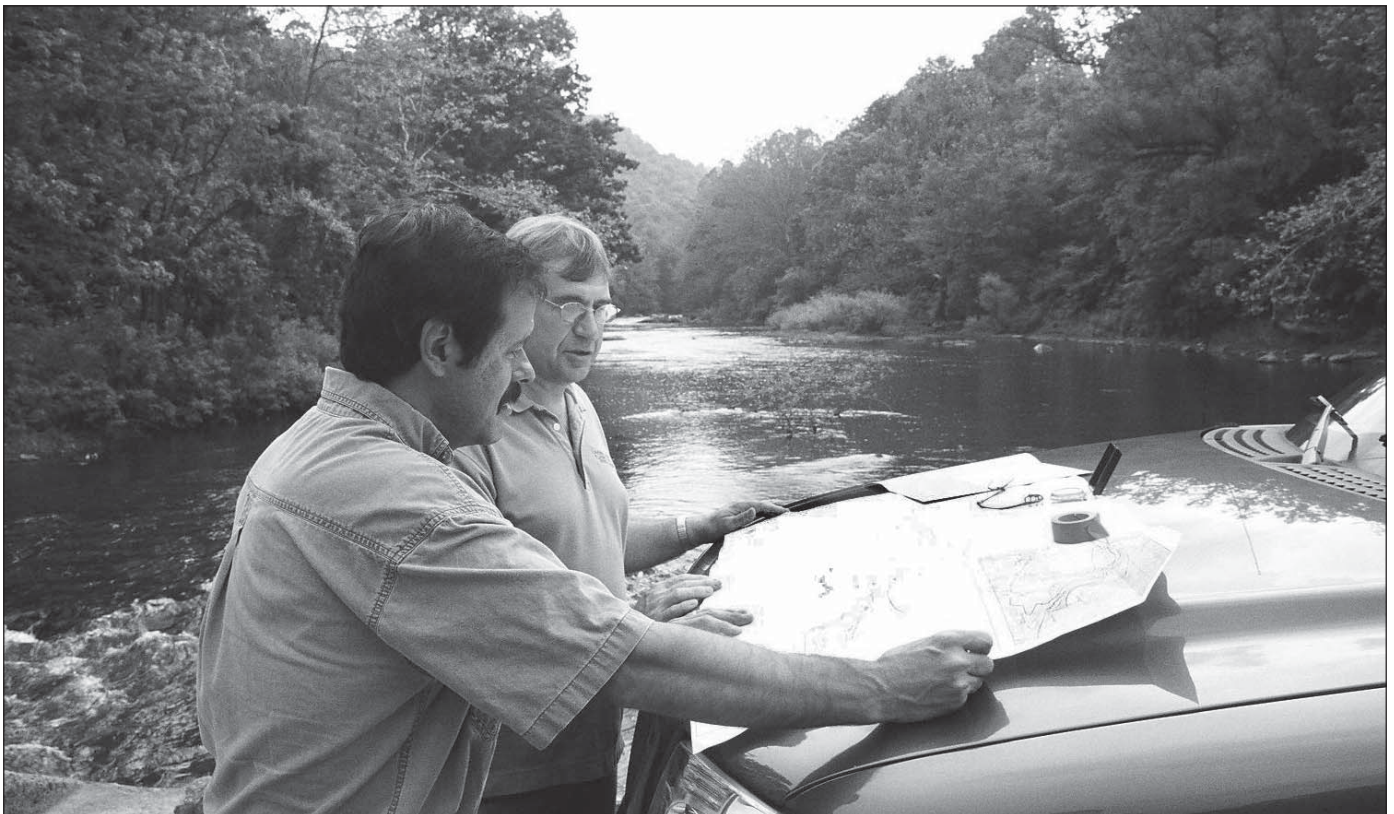
Greensburg-Salem High School. He also explained the concepts of forestry and conservation to students from Southmoreland High School, Greater Latrobe Middle School, and a group of home school students.

- The District participated in a **Forestry and Wildlife Conference** for woodlot owners in early March. One hundred forty people attended the event, which presented different forest management

practices, including streamside buffers, deer-management, and managing for wildlife.

- We distributed some 500 Tubex<sup>™</sup> **tree shelters** to landowners throughout the county last year. These five-foot plastic tubes provide a protected environment for young trees and seedlings, keeping them out of reach of hungry deer, rabbits, and other animals until they've had a chance to establish themselves.

### 4 Loyalhanna Gorge



*Westmoreland Conservation District Forester Tony Quadro (l) and Board of Directors Member Ron Rohall stop at the causeway (see side trip on page 7) to review a forest management plan for the Loyalhanna Gorge.*

### HEALTHY FORESTS

The Loyalhanna Gorge contains nearly 1,300 acres of mostly mature hardwood **forest**, and runs for about three very scenic miles between Kingston Dam and Longbridge.

As of spring 2005, management for this beautiful natural area was assumed by the Westmoreland County Bureau of Parks and Recreation, which will open it to the public for hunting, fishing, hiking, bird-watching, and other "passive" recreation activities.

About 50% of the land in Westmoreland County is forested. These forests act as filters and buffers to pollution, and so have

a direct and positive impact on the quality of the water in our county. Protecting, maintaining, and even creating new forested corridors along streams is essential to protecting the vitality of our water resources.

*For more information: Westmoreland Conservation District (724) 837-5271, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com); or Westmoreland Woodlands Improvement Association (724) 668-7650, [www.swpawoods.org](http://www.swpawoods.org); or Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, Bureau of Forestry (724) 238-1200, [www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry).*

# WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT



## CLEAN STREAMS AND WATER RESOURCES

- We very actively promoted a new perspective on stormwater management last year, introducing both municipalities and developers to concepts that actually can **improve the quality of**

**this water** when it enters our streams and groundwater supply, in addition to managing its volume and velocity.

Forty municipal workers from 12 county municipalities came to a workshop we co-hosted in June to learn how to test their municipal storm sewer system water, and practical ways to improve this water quality — from using oil separators to keeping road salt under roof.

- Some 300 engineers and developers throughout the county each received a copy of a **new poster we developed to promote the use of bioretention cells** — stormwater controls made to look like landscaped islands. This poster gives very specific design information for this best management practice, which employs amended soil and plants to filter impurities from stormwater and works especially well in large expanses of

## THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

### From Loyalhanna Gorge to Powdermill Nature Reserve

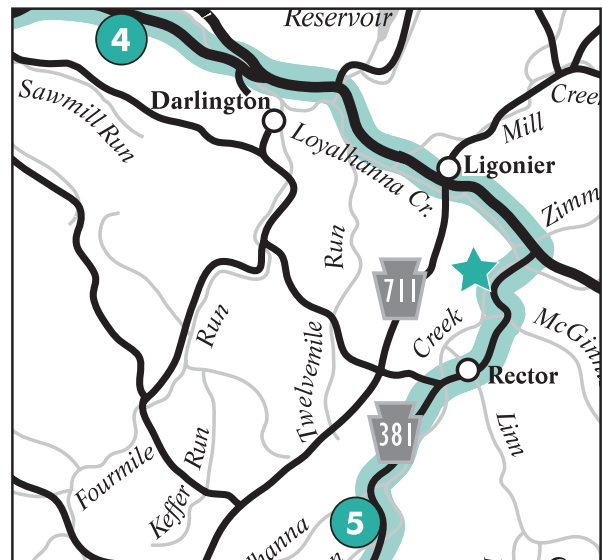
where an infiltration parking lot helps to keep oil and automobile fluids out of some of our county's cleanest streams

Continue on US Route 30 E

About 9-1/4 miles from causeway (or 12 miles from turn onto US Route 30 E), R onto SR 381 S

Continue on SR 381 S for about 6-1/4 miles

Powdermill Nature Reserve is on R



*ALONG THE WAY to Powdermill Nature Reserve...*

### ★ CLEAN STREAMS & WATER RESOURCES: Water Quality

Rolling Rock Creek, which you will cross about 1-1/2 miles after turning onto SR 381 S, has some of the best water quality in the county (notice all the forests nearby). Although it won't tell you anything about the water's chemistry, take a good look at the water in this stream. Then visually compare it and the other streams you'll see here in the eastern, forested part of the county with the streams you'll see later in the tour, such as Stauffer Run near Scottdale and Sewickley Creek near West Newton (these streams are impacted with pollution from abandoned coal mines (see page 6 for an example of this pollution) and from a variety of "non-point sources" (see top of page 26 for a definition of non-point source pollution).

**Please note:** Be aware that this is private property. You can stop only briefly here.

For more information: Loyalhanna Watershed Association (724) 238-7560, [www.loyalhannawatershed.org](http://www.loyalhannawatershed.org); or Jacobs Creek Watershed Association (724) 837-5271, [jacobscreekwatershed.org](http://jacobscreekwatershed.org).



paved surfaces, such as parking lots.

- Our hydraulic engineer continued his service on the committee to create **Pennsylvania’s manual on stormwater management**, and his efforts helped to ensure that innovative practices, such as green roofs and infiltration pavement, are included.

The manual will be used by municipal officials and engineers throughout the state as a guide for meeting Pennsylvania’s stormwater standards.

- Our hydraulic engineer also continued to serve on the **Villanova Urban Stormwater Partnership**, a collaborative effort to promote new and innovative stormwater management practices in urban areas.

- Sediment basin skimmers and green roofs were showcased at our annual **Stormwater and Erosion Control Workshop** in February, which drew more than 185 interested engineers,

surveyors, and landscape architects. Featured speaker was Dr. Albert Jarrett from Penn State University.

- Because stormwater isn’t contained within a single city or township boundary, there are **good reasons for adjoining municipalities to work together** to address its management.

Last March, District staff spoke at a workshop hosted by the Inter-Municipal Environmental Forum to

## 5 Infiltration Parking Lot at Powdermill



*Jim Pillsbury, Westmoreland Conservation District hydraulic engineer, holds a sample of the plastic grid that is installed under the grass to help stabilize this infiltration parking lot.*

### CLEAN STREAMS & WATER RESOURCES: Stormwater Management

This lawn area is really a parking lot in disguise. It is designed this way – with layers of tough plastic grid and modified topsoil under the grass – to **protect the quality of nearby Powdermill Run**.

Rain and melting snow from this parking area can slowly sink into the ground instead of just running off into roadside ditches (and then into streams and waterways) as it does on parking lots made of asphalt or concrete. That also means that this parking lot minimizes the pollution (things like leaking antifreeze or oil) that finds its way into our streams and rivers.

Grass, gravel, stone chips or other surfaces that allow water to sink into the ground can work well for small parking lots, residential driveways, sidewalks, garden paths, and backyard terraces.

For more information: Westmoreland Conservation District (724) 837-5271, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com); or Powdermill Nature Reserve (724) 593-6105, [www.powdermill.org](http://www.powdermill.org).



*While you’re here, why not take a walk along Black Birch Trail or check the bulletin board for upcoming nature programs?*

# WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT

encourage municipalities in the Turtle Creek Watershed to participate in such a joint effort. More than 120 municipal officials attended the workshop. Subsequent discussions and meetings with participants resulted in several municipalities — including Penn Township and Murrysville in Westmoreland County — beginning to work together on this issue by the conclusion of the year.

In July, Rostraver Township adopted a **stormwater ordinance** that the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection is using as a model for other municipalities.

As with erosion and sediment control, local ordinances can open doors to getting more and innovative conservation measures incorporated on development sites, and the District is working with local governments to adopt ordinances that will allow

innovative stormwater management practices.

After Hurricane Ivan roared through our county last September, **flooding hundreds of homes and businesses**, the District joined forces with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to assess the damage.

Residences and businesses along

## THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

### From Powdermill Nature Reserve to Firetower Road (TR 346)

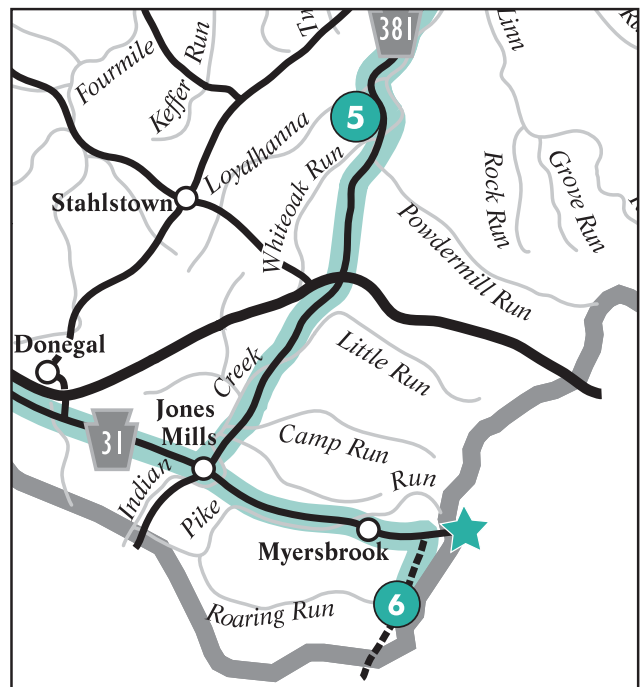
where repairs to a dirt and gravel road are keeping sediment out of the stream

Turn R out of Powdermill onto SR 381 S

After about 6-1/2 miles, L onto SR 31 E

After about 4 miles, R onto Firetower Road (the first 1-1/2 miles of this road were restored by Westmoreland Conservation District's Dirt and Gravel Road program)

After about 1/2 mile on Firetower Road, L into parking area/turn around to retrace steps



ALONG THE WAY to Firetower Road...

### ★ SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES



If you didn't turn onto Firetower Road, and continued instead just a little farther east on SR 31, you would see a sign marking the summit of Laurel Mountain. It is 2,728 feet above sea level. Think about this elevation when you are at the Youghiogheny River in West Newton later in the trip (see pages 19-20). Conditions such as outside temperature and amount of rainfall can vary noticeably as elevation changes. And both of those conditions influence things such as growing season.



Pucketa Creek in Washington and Upper Burrell townships and in the cities of Lower Burrell and New Kensington were hit especially hard, and federal money is now being directed to address streambank erosion problems in those areas as well as in the Jack's Run area of the City of Greensburg.

- Our hydraulic engineer provided **technical advice** on a variety of stormwater issues throughout the

county, including assisting individuals who needed to obtain permits from the Department of Environmental Protection for work in or near area streams. The District also directly issued four of these "Chapter 105 Stream Encroachment Permits" for agricultural operations in 2004.

- The District's **Stormwater Management Advisory Committee**, formed in 2003, continued to develop recom-

mendations to help our Board define this growing program area's focus, goals, and practical applications.

Some of the committee's suggestions include: prioritizing the District's efforts to those projects that provide the greatest community and environmental benefits, developing an in-house stormwater manual that identifies the best practices to use for the specific soil conditions found here in Westmoreland County, and managing the growing

## 6 Dirt & Gravel Road Improvements



Mike Barrick, watershed specialist for the Westmoreland Conservation District, inspects work done on Firetower Road. The straw in the right foreground helps to prevent erosion from water runoff.

### CLEAN STREAMS & WATER RESOURCES: Dirt & Gravel Roads

Unpaved roads can send significant quantities of sediment (also see page 16) into nearby streams, compromising water quality for thousands of people downstream and harming aquatic life and the chance to use these waters for recreation.

In an area such as this one (Roaring Run Watershed), where the streams are high-quality, the problem is especially troubling.

That is why local municipalities and the Westmoreland Conservation District are working together to correct grade and drainage problems on dirt and gravel roads in the county.

Here on Firetower Road, they have built up the road and contoured its surface in ways that direct the rain and water either

into newly built, protected roadside ditches or carefully into the adjacent woods. (Improvements to the road are easiest to see on your way back to SR 31.) Both options have reduced the amount of sediment that finds its way into nearby streams.

For more information: Westmoreland Conservation District (724) 837-5271, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com); or the Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads (866) 668-6683, [www.dirtandgravelroads.org](http://www.dirtandgravelroads.org).



While you're here, why not take a walk along the scenic Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail?

# WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT

demand for stormwater services by adding a part-time staff person and exploring the possibility of charging fees for these services.



## PRODUCTIVE FARMS

- The District concluded its four-year effort to **improve water quality**

**in the Whitethorn Creek Watershed**, which previously was the most severely agriculturally impacted watershed in the entire county.

Nitrates, phosphorous, and sediment levels in Whitethorn Creek all decreased after this program established more than eight acres of riparian buffers along the stream, planted with 1,000 trees.

Also helping were the implementation of conservation improvements

on area farms. These included more than 1-1/2 miles of fencing to keep animals out of the creek, the creation of four designated areas where animals can cross the stream, and the construction of two storage structures for manure.\*

- The first phase of similar water-quality work in the **Kiski-Conemaugh Watershed** concluded in 2004. Sixteen farmers in this watershed

## THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

### From Firetower Road (TR346) to Bridgeport Dam

where a dam helps control flooding in the Jacobs Creek Watershed and gives people a place to fish and picnic

Retrace Firetower Road to SR 31

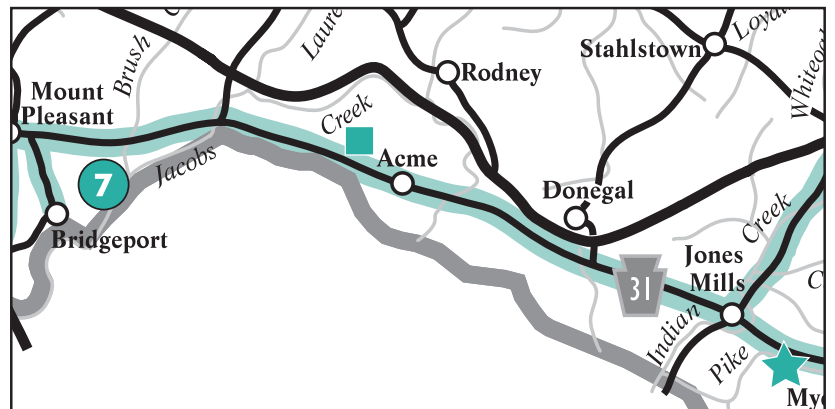
Turn L onto SR 31 W

After about 15-1/2 miles, L onto Bridgeport Street in Mount Pleasant (before RR tracks)

After about 1-1/2 miles, L at stop sign

After about 1/4 mile, R onto dam access road

Follow road to dam; parking area on left



### ALONG THE WAY to Bridgeport Dam...

## ★ HEALTHY FORESTS

Just after you turn left onto SR 31 W, this sign acknowledges Dr. Eleanor Morris for her many decades of outstanding conservation work on the forestland she owns in Donegal Township. She worked with a professional forester to improve this timber stand while minimizing erosion and sedimentation and providing for adequate tree-regeneration.

Private owners such as Dr. Morris control about 86% of all forested lands in Westmoreland County.



## ■ CLEAN STREAMS & WATER RESOURCES: Water Quality



From the top of 3-mile hill, on a clear day, you can see the skyscrapers of downtown Pittsburgh (the USX Tower and Oxford Centre are near the center of the vista).

Pittsburgh is where all of the water from the streams along this ridge (and from other areas of Westmoreland County) goes... so the quality of our local waterways directly affects the quality of the city's rivers.

The selection of Pittsburgh to host the world-class Bassmaster Classic fishing tournament in 2005 is one indication of the positive impact those efforts are having.

For more information: Westmoreland Conservation District (724) 837-5271, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com).

installed nearly \$600,000 worth of best management practices on their properties — including stabilized walkways for their animals, spring developments with water troughs, barnyard curbing, and rotational grazing fencing. The result has been an improvement in local water quality in both the Kiskiminetas and Conemaugh River watersheds.\*

- Two other, multiple-year agricultural

efforts to improve water quality in the county continued last year: the **second phase of the Kiski-Conemaugh Watershed program**, which will conclude in 2005; and the **Mid-Yough Watershed program**, which will continue through 2006. Both of these programs employ many of the same best management practices detailed in the previous bulleted items.\*

- We used our annual District awards banquet in November to **showcase the products of Westmoreland County farms and agricultural producers**.

Some 150 friends of conservation joined us for this evening, which featured a meal with breads from Friendship Farms and Saint Vincent Gristmill, Unity Township; berry pies from Sand Hill Berries, Mount Pleasant; ice cream from Kerber's Dairy, North Huntingdon;

## 7 Watershed-wide Flood Control: Bridgeport Dam



*Westmoreland Conservation District Chairman J. Roy Houston stops near the boat launch of the Bridgeport Dam, a flood-control project that maintains a permanent 70-acre water pool for recreation.*

### SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Flood Control

Bridgeport Dam is a gravity dam built to **control flooding** from Jacobs Creek, a stream that starts high on Chestnut Ridge and flows into the valleys below, winding through fields and towns such as Scottdale, which historically has been a center for many industries and people.

In the past, flooding from Jacobs Creek happened so often and created such a troublesome economic impact that four flood-control measures were built: this dam at Bridgeport, another dam at Acme, another dam at Greenlick, and a channel at Scottdale (which you'll see next on the tour).

This is one of only a few areas in the United States to have a completed flood-control program that addresses an entire watershed.

It was built under the United States Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act, and the four measures took some 30 years to complete.

When Bridgeport Dam was being built, the Westmoreland Conservation District lobbied to ensure that provisions were made to make it useable for recreation also. Today, the dam is a popular destination for boating, fishing, and picnicking.

*For more information: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (724) 853-5555, [www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov/](http://www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov/); or Westmoreland County Bureau of Parks and Recreation (724) 830-3950, [www.co.westmoreland.pa.us](http://www.co.westmoreland.pa.us) (keyword: parks).*

# WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT

white and chocolate milk from Hutter's Dairy, Kecksburg; and chocolates from Wilson's Candy, Jeannette. Door prize baskets also contained locally produced foods from Schramm Farms & Orchards, Harrison City, and Bellview Foods, Penn. (Also see the "Sustainable Communities" section for information on the 2004 award recipients.)

- Our agricultural technician **personally visited some 80 farms** at the

invitation of the farmers to provide site-specific technical assistance for their operations. He suggested appropriate best management practices, and provided information on the cost-share programs available for implementing those practices.

- We helped two South Huntingdon area farmers **develop nutrient management plans** for their operations, which represent 362 acres, combined. These

plans identify actions the farmers will take to keep nutrients (fertilizers and animal wastes) out of nearby streams.

At the end of 2004, 29 farms in Westmoreland County had voluntarily developed such plans.

- The District was part of the **Southwest Regional Tillage Conference**, held in January. The event drew 88 people who wanted to learn about alternative tillage methods, such as no-till,

## THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

### From Bridgeport Dam to Scottdale Channel

where a channel also helps control flooding in the Jacobs Creek Watershed and folks can walk and bike along a trail

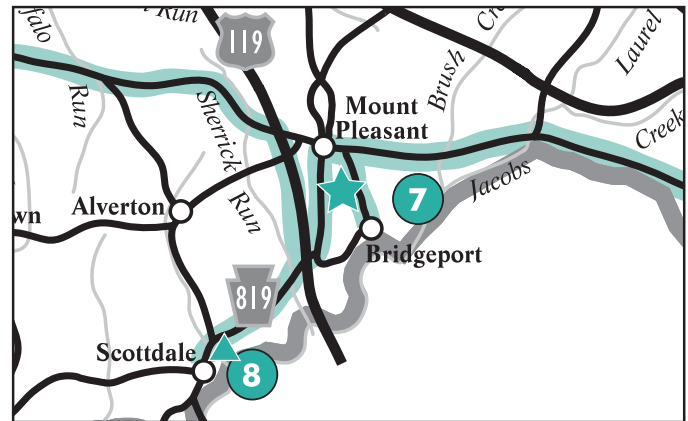
Retrace route to Bridgeport Street and then to SR 31

Turn L onto SR 31 W

Circle around Doughboy statue to make L onto SR 819 S (Diamond Street)

After about 4 miles, L onto Mount Pleasant Road in Scottdale

R just after crossing Stauffer Run to Jacobs Creek Trail entrance



- ▲ Just before the right turn into the Jacobs Creek Trail, you will cross Stauffer Run. Compare this stream to Rolling Rock Creek in the eastern part of the county (see page 9). Stauffer Run is polluted with abandoned mine drainage and sediment build-up.

### ALONG THE WAY to Scottdale Channel...

### ★ SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Recreation

As you return along Bridgeport Street, note that a hiking/biking trail will soon be built along the Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corporation's former railroad line that parallels the street on the left.

This Coal and Coke Trail will run through this greenway for roughly five miles and connect Willows Park in Mount Pleasant to Kendi Park in Scottdale (where the trail also will link with the Jacobs Creek Watershed Trail).

Pennsylvania has more rail-trails than any state in the nation.

For more information: Regional Trail Corporation (724) 872-5586, [www.youghrivertrail.com](http://www.youghrivertrail.com); or Westmoreland County Bureau of Parks and Recreation (724) 830-3950, [www.co.westmoreland.pa.us](http://www.co.westmoreland.pa.us) (keyword: parks).



in which seed is planted directly in the stubble of the previous crop. Because the fields are not turned over or disked before planting, no-till creates less erosion and compaction.

- With Project Grass and Penn State Cooperative Extension Service, the District hosted a "Farm Field Day" in May to demonstrate the **benefits of rotational grazing**. Fifty attendees heard veterinarians speak on the

animal-health benefits of grazing, learned about fencing systems, and visited two farms in Fairfield Township that practice rotational grazing as well as employ other conservation measures, such as stream crossings and spring developments.

- We collaborated with Penn State Cooperative Extension Service and Stanwood Elementary School teacher Tammy Gray to create a new educational

offering called "**Ag Basics.**" The course is based on the "Ag in the Classroom" curriculum, but customized to include Westmoreland County specifics.

Thirteen teachers participated in the first two-day offering of the course in August and enjoyed field trips to a local apple orchard, a homemade ice cream operation, an apiary, and the county fair, in addition to classroom instruction. Each teacher received

## 8 Watershed-wide Flood Control: Scottdale Channel



*Scottdale Channel. Notice the bank of sediment on the inside bend of the stream (far left), the rock riprap stabilizing the bank on the right, and the hiking/biking trail on the far right.*

### SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Flood Control

This channel on Jacobs Creek was built as another step in the watershed-wide effort to help protect the railroad and the many homes and industries that were built in this floodplain (the other flood-control measures are the Bridgeport, Acme, and Greenlick dams).

The dams are designed to lower the elevation of flood waters; the channel is designed to then move those waters safely through town.

*For more information: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (724) 853-5555, [www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov/](http://www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov/).*

Along Jacobs Creek here, you'll notice that there are banks of **sediment** near the sides of the stream. As streams flow, they pick up this soil (often because construction sites and farming operations nearby have loosened it). The stream carries the soil along for a while, and then drops it along its banks.

**Sediment is Westmoreland County's greatest water pollutant by volume.** It smothers aquatic life, reduces the size of the stream channel (and so contributes to flooding), and makes the water less able to support recreation such as boating or fishing.

While we never will totally eliminate sediment, we can minimize it. In fact, the largest part of the work the Westmoreland Conservation District does is to minimize erosion and the amount of sediment that gets into our waterways. Some of the ways we do this are to encourage construction workers to use silt fence (that ribbon of black plastic cloth you often see staked at the edge of work areas)...farmers to limit the places where their animals can cross streams...and landowners to let grass and bushes grow along the edges of their streams.

*For more information: Westmoreland Conservation District (724) 837-5271, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com).*

# WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT

curriculum and resources to use in teaching students about agriculture.

- The District once again worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Penn State Cooperative Extension Service to develop an **annual work plan** that coordinates the countywide agricultural efforts of each agency.

\* Funding for these programs came from a variety of sources, including the Pennsylvania Growing Greener program, the Pennsylvania Act 6 program, the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), the Environmental Quality Improvement Program (EQIP), the individual landowner/farmer, and the Westmoreland Conservation District.



## SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

- Our District Manager/CEO served on the **advisory board for Westmoreland County's Comprehensive Plan**. The plan assessed current conditions in our 1,040-square-mile county and, with input from local citizens,

## THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

### From Scottdale Channel to Windy Heights Farm

where preservation and good conservation practices keep the land healthy and productive

Retrace route to Mount Pleasant Street and then to SR 819

Turn R onto SR 819 N

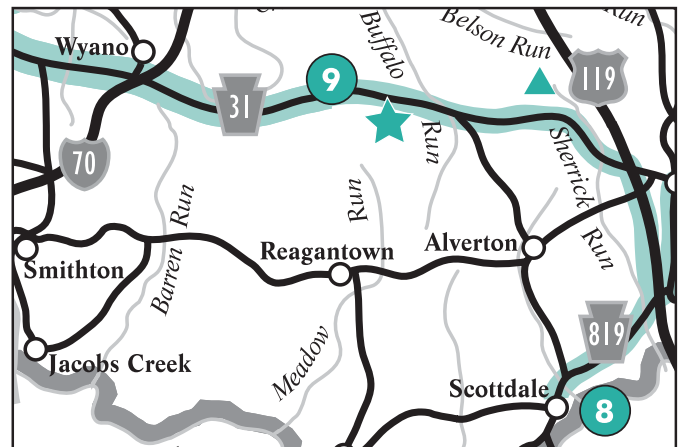
After about 2-1/4 miles, L onto US 119 N

After about 2 miles, exit to SR 31 W

Turn L at end of ramp

After about 4-3/4 miles, arrive at Windy Heights Farm

Please note: This is private property. The landowner has given permission to pull off here, but please don't walk on the site.



- ▲ About 2-1/4 miles after turning onto SR 31 W, in the town of Tarrs, you cross railroad tracks that some day will have a recreation trail beside them. This trail will be part of the Five Star Trail, which now ends in Youngwood. Some day that trail will continue on through Tarrs and into Scottdale, where it will connect with the planned Coal and Coke Trail (see page 15).

### ALONG THE WAY to Windy Heights Farm...

## ★ SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Backyard Conservation

Each of us can make difference for conservation.

In our daily lives, the choices we make and the things we do – from how much fertilizer we put on our lawns to whether we keep our vehicles well-maintained (and not leaking fluids) – have a tremendous cumulative effect on the health of our natural resources.

This backyard gardener has designed her flower, fruit, and vegetable beds as a series of sloped terraces, separated by grassy strips, to reduce erosion and prevent compaction of the soil.

She is the fourth steward of this piece of land, which has been farmed continuously for nearly 130 years.

Please note: This is private property. Please don't walk on this site.



created a vision for the future. The County Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Westmoreland County Commissioners in late December.

The primary outcome of this landmark process — which looked at housing, transportation, economic development, recreation, and all aspects of life in the county — was a conservation-related vision: “To maintain the county’s predominant rural character, conserve key natural

resources, and preserve agricultural uses.”

- Representatives from our Board of Directors, Associate Board, and staff have been involved in a community effort to assess and secure **“The Future of Agriculture in Our Community.”** Farmers throughout the county were interviewed to identify the specific challenges they face, and from this, an action plan for sustaining farms

and strengthening the industry will be developed. This effort is being spearheaded by Penn State Cooperative Extension Service.

- Our hydraulic engineer continued to serve as his borough’s (Southwest Greensburg’s) representative on a steering committee to **create a multi-municipal comprehensive plan** for the City of Greensburg, Hempfield Township, South Greensburg, and Southwest Greensburg.

## 9 Outstanding Land Stewardship at Windy Heights Farm



Westmoreland Conservation District Board of Directors Members P. Roy Kemerer and Dorothy Stoner survey the fields of fellow farmer Greg Forejt Sr., owner of Windy Heights Farm.

### PRODUCTIVE FARMS

The beautiful farm rolling out on both sides of the road and to the horizon is **one of the best examples of conservation in the county.** The farmer has developed a plan two-inches thick that lays out exactly the things he does to expertly manage the various soils and resources here, including using a conservation approach called “no-till,” which plants crops directly into existing vegetation without tilling the soil. Leaving the residue in the field helps to prevent soil erosion.

This farmer’s good stewardship recently earned him the honor of being named a Master Farmer by one of America’s oldest and

longest-running agricultural honors programs. Fewer than one percent of farmers in this region of the United States receive the Master Farmer designation.

This farm also has the distinction of being the first preserved farm in Westmoreland County (1993). It also is the first farm in the county to be sold after an agricultural easement was in place, a fact that made it affordable to the current owner.

For more information: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (724) 853-5555, [www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov/](http://www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov/).

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- Our watershed specialist worked with many of the **grassroots watershed associations** in the county last year, providing a variety of assistance that included: a technical review of the Loyalhanna Watershed Association's watershed assessment study...development of a membership plan for Jacobs Creek Watershed Association...advice and guidance on the Brinkerton abandoned mine drainage remediation site for the Sewickley

Creek Watershed Association...technical guidance to the Kiski Watershed Association as it prepared a request for grant money to clean up an old abandoned mine drainage site...and a field assessment of the watershed for the Pucketa and Chartiers Creek Watershed Association.

- District staff participated in **watershed assessments** in the Jacobs Creek,

Pucketa and Chartiers Creek, and Loyalhanna watersheds. In the Jacobs Creek watershed, they looked at the physical and biological aspects of the stream and conducted field testing. In the Pucketa and Chartiers Creek Watershed, they walked a stream and conducted an assessment of its physical properties, identifying areas such as severely eroded banks where improvement work is needed. In the Loyalhanna Watershed, they floated

## THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

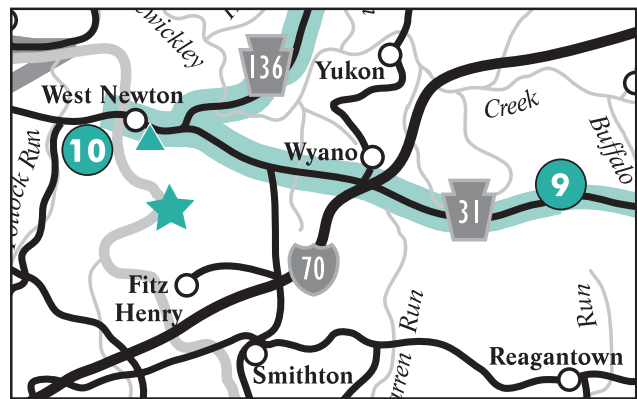
### From Windy Heights Farm to West Newton

where an old town is getting new life from a river and a bike trail

Continue on SR 31 W

After about 7-1/2 miles, SR 31 W becomes SR 136 W

1 mile more and you're in downtown West Newton (continue across the bridge to cross the Youghiogheny River and arrive at the bike trail)



▲ After Route 31 becomes Route 136, a dramatic drop in elevation begins. By the time you reach the Youghiogheny River in West Newton, you will be at about 750 feet above sea level. Compare this to the elevation at the summit of Laurel Mountain (2,728 feet).

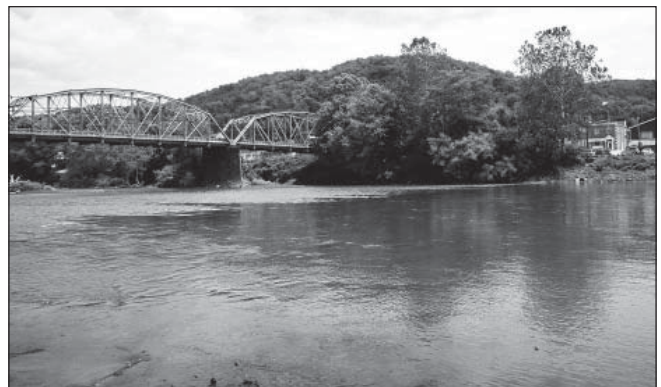
ALONG THE WAY to West Newton...

## ★ CLEAN STREAMS & WATER RESOURCES

The Youghiogheny is one of five major rivers in Westmoreland County. The others are the Allegheny, the Monongahela, the Kiskiminetas, and the Conemaugh.

None of these rivers actually flows through very much of the land in our county; they each skirt along a border with a neighboring county. The Allegheny is on the western border with Allegheny and Butler county...the Mon is on the border with Washington County...and the Kiski and Conemaugh rivers run east to west along the whole length of our county's northern border with Indiana and Armstrong counties.

But even though rivers are not geographically a big part of our county, what we do has a big impact on the quality of these rivers for those counties around us — because our many streams feed into them.





the stream in canoes, tested the water's pH, and looked for macroinvertebrates as evidence of water quality.

- More than 80 **name signs** were installed along state highways in the county to identify streams and waterways. The signs are meant to raise public awareness of these natural resources and the larger watershed.
- We continued to **assist local trail groups**, including those developing

the Five Star Trail (which currently runs from Youngwood to the City of Greensburg), the Coal and Coke Trail, (which will link Mount Pleasant and Scottdale), the Westmoreland Heritage Trail (which begins in Saltsburg and eventually will extend to Export), and the Regional Trail Corporation (an umbrella organization that promotes the conversion of railroad right of ways to recreational trails).

- Our annual awards banquet in November recognized individuals and organizations for their **outstanding contributions and decades of service to conservation and our communities**. Award recipients included: Farmer of the Year — Hopeway Dairy Farm (Wayne and Hope Frye and their grown children Kelley, Patrick, and Craig)... Conservation Service Award — Wesley Gordon, retired district conservationist,

## 10 West Newton & The Great Allegheny Passage



*Bill Doney, Westmoreland Conservation District Board of Directors member from nearby Smithton, offers restaurant recommendations to a bicyclist making a rest stop in West Newton during her journey along the Great Allegheny Passage.*

### **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Urban Revitalization**

Local people are actively working to **revitalize West Newton**, a once-booming river town that is about halfway between Ohiopyle and Pittsburgh along the Great Allegheny Passage recreation trail.

The trail brings thousands of people to the west river bank of West Newton, and plans are in the works to refurbish the bridge across the Yough in a way that will encourage these folks to ride into town to visit the restaurants, shops, and services there.

Urban revitalization is important to local quality of life. It makes good use of existing resources and infrastructure, fosters a sense of community, and reduces the amount of farmland and open space consumed by sprawl.

*For more information: Downtown West Newton (724) 872-0100, [www.dwni.org](http://www.dwni.org); or Great Allegheny Passage (724) 853-2453, [www.atatrail.org](http://www.atatrail.org).*

# WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Natural Resources Conservation Service; and Nevin Ulery, retired coordinator of Penn's Corner Resource Conservation and Development...Eagle Scout Project (improvements in Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park) — Glenn Ruff, a junior at Penn Trafford High School... and Hall of Honor — Paul Heyworth, retired newspaper writer and long-time conservation advocate (posthumously). (Also see the "Productive Farms" section for information on the local agricultural

products featured at the banquet.)

- This was the 19th year we sponsored the **Envirothon**, a hands-on competition for local high schools to test their knowledge of conservation and the environment. This year's event was held in early May at Twin Lakes Park and, in addition to the traditional topics of aquatics, forestry, and soils, it challenged students on the special topic of "Managing

Resources in the Urban Environment." The team from Franklin Regional High School placed first; and the teams from Kiski Area and Burrell, second and third respectively.

- High school students from Southmoreland participated in a **watershed day at the Jacobs Creek Park** in Greenlick in April. Eighty-five ninth-grade students learned about forestry, geology, biology, soils, and water

## THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

### From West Newton to the Amos K. Hutchinson Bypass

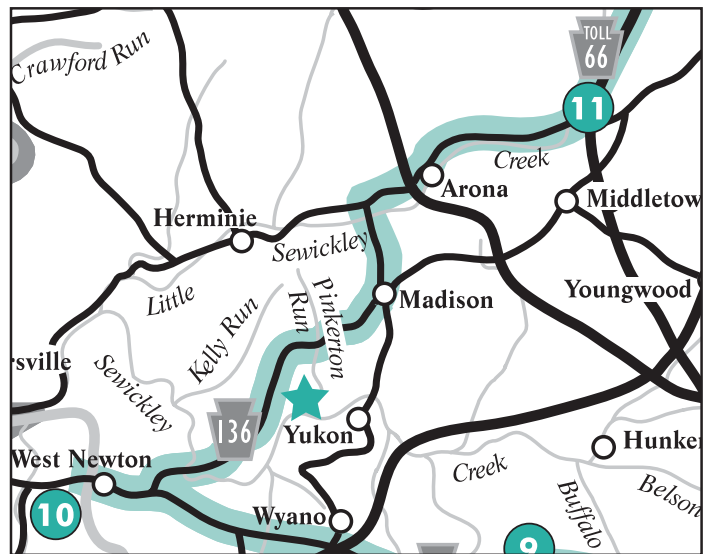
where more earth was moved than for any project in Westmoreland County history

Return to SR 136, heading East\*

After about 13-1/2 miles, L onto PA Turnpike Route 66 N toward Delmont (you'll need \$1 to use this road, also known as the Amos K. Hutchinson Bypass)

Continue on the bypass for about 2-1/2 miles

\* (See possible side trip below)



ALONG THE WAY to the Amos K. Hutchinson Bypass...

### ★ CLEAN STREAMS & WATER RESOURCES: Abandoned Mine Drainage

About 3-1/2 miles from downtown West Newton, turn R from SR 136 E onto Bells Mills Road. After about 1/2 mile, you'll come to Westmoreland County's only covered bridge.

Flowing beneath it is Sewickley Creek. Visually compare this stream to Rolling Rock Creek and others that you saw in the eastern part of the county (see page 9).

You'll notice here the telltale signs (orange color) of pollution from abandoned coal mines. The water is orange because of the iron it has picked up from the exposed rock surfaces inside the abandoned, deep coal mine.

Sewickley Creek Watershed Association is working hard to clean up this pollution, which impairs about 1 out of every 10 streams in Westmoreland County.

For more information: Sewickley Creek Watershed Association (724) 925-3621, [www.sewickleycreek.com](http://www.sewickleycreek.com).



## 2004 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

chemistry from District staff and other agency partners.

- A two-day workshop to introduce teachers to the concepts of **watersheds and sustainable communities** was held in October. Eleven area teachers attended. Each received lesson plans and a water-monitoring kit to use with their own students.
- We held a **Drinking Water Clinic** for well and spring owners in late July. Thirty-three participants tested water samples from their homes for a variety of factors, including pH, nitrates, hardness, and total dissolved solids. They learned what their individual results meant, how water can be treated to minimize certain contaminants, and the importance of protecting the land around a water source.
- **Two septic system workshops** were held in the first half of the year for homeowners in Ligonier and Allegheny Township. Some 100 people attended these two events to learn how to maintain their septic systems, how to identify signs of malfunction, what to do if problems arise, and how their responsibility compares with the responsibilities of state and township officials. The pros, cons, and costs of

### 11 Amos K. Hutchinson Bypass



Opened to traffic in December 1993, the Amos K. Hutchinson Bypass runs from New Stanton (PA Turnpike exit 75, US Route 119, and I-70) to US Route 22.

#### STABLE SOILS

The Amos K. Hutchinson Bypass (PA Turnpike Route 66), built in the early 1990s, is the **largest earthmoving project ever undertaken in Westmoreland County**. Because so much soil was moved, the Westmoreland Conservation District made hundreds of inspections along this 13-mile highway to be sure erosion was kept to a minimum.

The District also was involved in creating a new wetland (near the Arona Road exit) to replace one impacted by construction, and

in reviewing the road's 12 stormwater detention ponds. You can see some of these ponds on the right as you travel the highway. You'll also see some when you get off at Exit 8, including one on the right at the intersection of the ramp and SR 130; and another on SR 130, on your right just after you go under the highway.

For more information: *The Pennsylvania Turnpike*, [www.paturnpike.com](http://www.paturnpike.com).

# WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT

new, alternative septic systems also were discussed.

- Thirty-eight folks joined us for two workshops to **make their own rain barrels** for capturing rain water from their roofs and gutters, and to learn about the variety of ways stormwater can be beneficially used — from watering lawns, gardens, and flower beds, to creating a pond for wildlife.

- A program on **controlling aquatic weeds** was held in late March for 24 people, including farmers and golf-course groundskeepers, who regularly apply pesticides. These individuals are periodically required to obtain training credits in order to retain their license.

- **Earth Day** celebrations throughout the county kept District staff busy in early spring. The biggest event was held

at Saint Vincent College in Latrobe, where some 3,000 people came to learn more about conservation and the environment.

Likewise, the District used a “Know Your Watershed Day” in the Kiskiminetas Watershed in May as an opportunity to use the Enviroscape model to introduce middle-school students to the concept of a watershed.

## THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

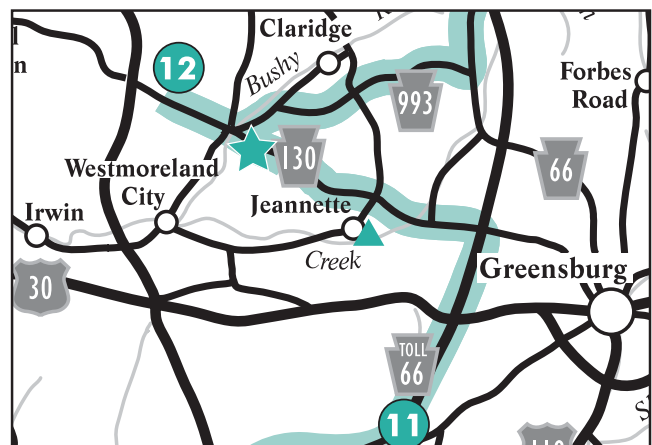
### **From Amos K. Hutchinson Bypass to Penn Glade Residential Development**

where innovative ways of managing stormwater are reducing the load on storm sewers and creating a more natural environment

After about 2-1/2 miles on the Amos K. Hutchinson Bypass, take Exit 8

Turn L onto SR 130 W

After about 5-1/2 miles, R into Penn Glade Detention pond is on R; swale is on L



▲ Jeannette is called “The Glass City.” The glass industry once flourished here because of the availability of natural gas, which is important for glassmaking because it burns so cleanly.

*ALONG THE WAY to Penn Glade Residential Development...*

### ★ **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Land Use**

About 3-3/4 miles after you turn left onto SR 130 W, just past Kistler’s Par 3 Golf Course, at a rise in road, you can see a vista that dramatically shows the boom in residential housing. Penn Township is an area of the county that has grown dramatically in recent years, creating some infrastructure problems such as the inability of the road you’re on to effectively handle the volume of traffic at certain times of day.

In late 2004, Westmoreland County completed a comprehensive plan that assessed all aspects of life — housing, transportation, economic development, recreation, open space, and so on (see the top of page 17). The results are a blueprint that can be used by municipal officials and organizations to create sustainable, livable communities.

For more information: Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County (724) 836-7048, [www.smartgrowthpa.org](http://www.smartgrowthpa.org); or Westmoreland County Department of Planning and Development (724) 830-3600.



- Partners, visitors, clients, and individuals from the community visited our campus last year for meetings, workshops, special events, or personalized assistance.

In all, we recorded 13,769 of these individual interactions in 2004 — just about exactly the same number as the previous year...and a solid continuation of the more than 35% increase registered from 2002, the last year our offices were in the original Donohoe Center building.



**EDUCATION**

- Our education program moved into high gear with a **\$100,000 grant** from the U.S. Department of Education’s Fund for the Improvement of Education. The grant funded our conservation education staff — a full time

coordinator and a part-time assistant — through 2005.

The new staff set a goal of reaching upward of 3,500 opinion leaders and adults in the county during the next two years with specific information on non-point source pollution,\* which is a major problem for water quality in area streams, but also something that each and every one of us can help minimize by making small changes in our everyday routines.

**12 Innovative Conservation Subdivision at Penn Glade**



*Chris Droste, erosion control specialist with the Westmoreland Conservation District, inspects a natural stormwater swale.*

**STABLE SOILS**

Penn Glade is an example of some **new ways of thinking about managing stormwater**. Instead of capturing stormwater in the traditional way — in a fairly deep excavation surrounded by a chain link fence — this development uses a pond (behind the model home). The pond’s gentle slopes don’t require a fence, so it blends naturally with the environment and, instead of an eyesore, becomes both an attractive visual element and habitat for wildlife.

This development also manages stormwater with a swale (instead of pipes). The swale also blends naturally with the green corridor near the center of the development. It begins at the

bottom of the steep slope and uses gravity to carry the rain and melting snow from the paved surfaces into a long, gentle depression carved out of the ground in this grassy area. The bottom of this depression is lined with grass, so the water it collects will very slowly and harmlessly sink into the ground.

By using a swale, the developer has eliminated the need to build and pay for a network of underground pipes, and reduced the load on the local storm sewer system.

*For more information: Westmoreland Conservation District (724) 837-5271, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com).*

# WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT

- We **directly reached some 4,000 people last year** by hosting education programs on forestry, erosion control, water quality, agriculture, and other conservation topics. Many of these education programs are detailed in other sections of this report.
- We formed a **Conservation Education Advisory Board**, consisting of environmental educators, former teachers, and involved individuals,

to provide input into the mission, vision, and goals of the education program.

- With the fall 2004 issue, our newsletter **Landmarks** took on a more comprehensive educational focus. Sidebars were added to many articles to explain conservation terms and offer additional information. The number of photos, charts, and illustrations was expanded, and a new tear-out section for upcoming Education Events was created.

We also formed a Communications Advisory Committee to help guide our work on **Landmarks** as well as our other information and outreach efforts.

- As a public service, we updated and published the **Conservation Directory**. This reference guide provides names, telephone numbers, and addresses of many organizations and agencies dedicated to conservation here in Westmoreland County, the

## THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

### From Penn Glade Residential Development to Single Point Urban Interchange

where special measures are taken to treat stormwater runoff because it flows into the drinking water supply (Beaver Run) for some 50,000 Westmoreland County homes and businesses

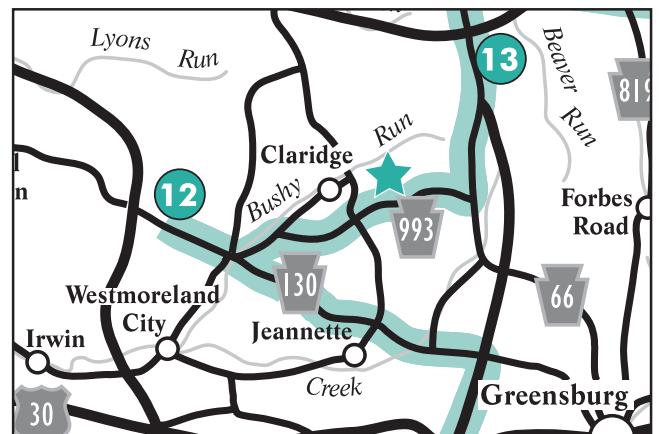
Turn L onto SR 130 E

After about 3/4 miles, L onto SR 993 E (Bushy Run Road)

After about 4-1/2 miles, L onto SR 66 N Business (you'll need to make a left after a highway bridge to continue on this road; watch for signs)

After about 2-1/2 miles on SR 66 N Business, arrive at SPU Interchange (intersection of Routes 22 and 66)

Please note: It is very difficult to pull off here. It's best to look carefully while your traveling companion continues to drive. The stormwater pond pictured is on the right, before you pass under the elevated highway.



*ALONG THE WAY to the SPU Interchange...*

### ★ SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Managing Cultural Landscapes



About 1 mile after turning onto SR 993 E, you will see Bushy Run Battlefield on your left. Preserved for its place in American history (the Indians were defeated here in 1763, which led to the opening of the West for settlement), such expanses of open space are increasingly being recognized also for their conservation value.

Wise stewardship of the natural resources of such places — including the land, vegetation, water, and wildlife — protects habitat, and provides scenic, ecological, and educational opportunities that positively impact our community quality of life.

region, and state. More than 2,000 of these handy booklets have been distributed free-of-charge to our partner agencies and the general public.

\* "Non-point source" refers to the fact that this pollution does not originate from a single, easy-to-see place (such as a pipe from a factory). Instead, it usually originates over a broad area — like a mile-long stretch of streambank where the soil is eroding into the stream...or a 100-car asphalt parking lot where rain washes motor oil and debris into the storm sewers and then

into a nearby creek...or a residential neighborhood where excess fertilizer from a group of backyards washes off during a heavy downpour and goes into the stream.

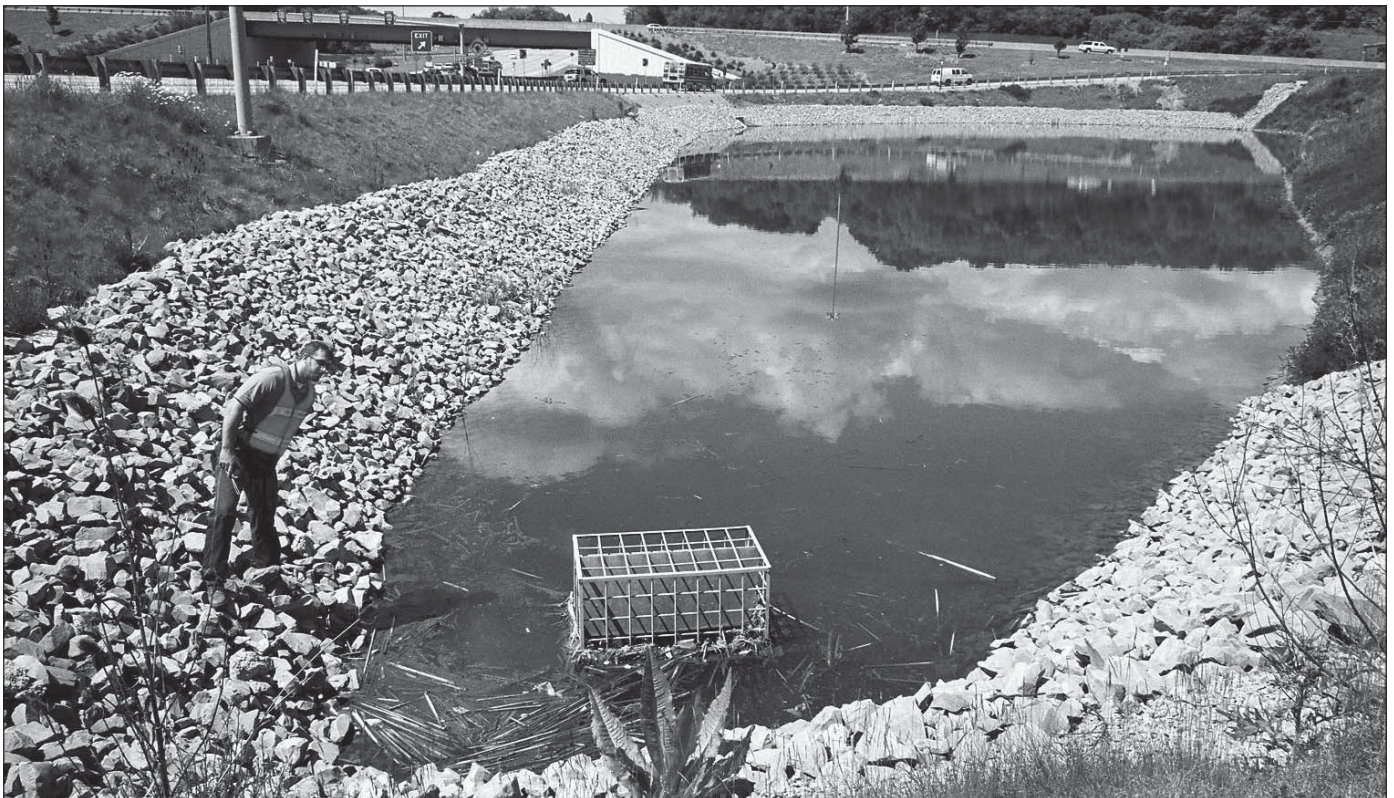
Keeping your car tuned up, using less lawn fertilizer, and letting the grass grow along the edges of a stream all will help reduce non-point source pollution.



**ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- Our conservation work continued to receive **strong support from the Westmoreland County commissioners and state legislators.** The

**13** Special Ponds Protect Drinking Water at SPU Interchange



Rob Cronauer, erosion control specialist with the Westmoreland Conservation District, checks the wet pond at the SPU Interchange.

**CLEAN STREAMS & WATER RESOURCES: Water Quality**

This interchange is called a SPUI— a Single Point Urban Interchange. It is the first of its kind to be built east of the Mississippi River, and it is important from a conservation standpoint because it **uses less land** than a traditional cloverleaf.

This interchange also is worth noting because of the work done here to **capture and clean the rain and melting snow and ice** that runs off all of this pavement.

You'll notice that there are wetlands in three of the four grassy "corners" of the SPU Interchange (the areas along the ramps). These act as natural treatment areas for this water runoff.

The wetland next to the Route 22 eastbound ramp is special because it is designed to stay wet most of the time (unlike the other wetland areas that slowly release their water). A wet pond like this one contains a large number of biological elements, which are important for enhancing water quality.

The quality of the water here is especially critical because it will flow into Beaver Run, which is the source of drinking water for some 50,000 Westmoreland County homes and businesses.

For more information: Westmoreland Conservation District (724) 837-5271, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com).

# WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT

appropriations they granted and the willingness they demonstrated to actively partner with us have made Westmoreland County a leader in conservation, and benefited all county residents.

- Our **Board of Directors and Associate Directors** played a greater role in District operations in 2004, serving on a variety of advisory committees for everything from forestry to planning for our annual banquet.

**P. Roy Kemerer** was reappointed to a new four-year term as a District Director by the Westmoreland County Commissioners at their meeting in late December. Roy has been a vital part of the District's leadership since 1982.

We also added four new associate directors: Ted Kopas, chief of staff for Westmoreland County Commissioner Tom Balya; John Turack, Washington Township supervisor; Joe Kalinowski, secretary of the Westmoreland

Woodlands Improvement Association; and Anita Foriska, owner of a local public relations company.

- District Director **Kim Edward Miller** received the **Ann Rudd Saxman Volunteer of the Year Award** from the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts and the State Conservation Commission. The award was a recognition of his many contributions to conservation,

## THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

### **From Single Point Urban Interchange to Beaver Run**

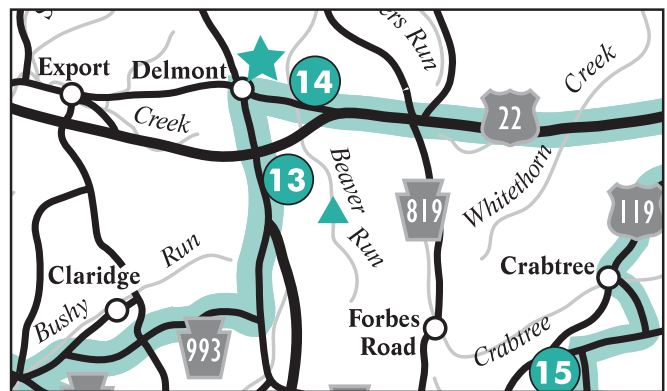
where some 50,000 Westmoreland County homes and businesses get their drinking water

Continue on SR 66 N

At first traffic light after SPUI, bear R onto Greensburg Street

At first stop sign, R onto Pittsburgh Street (Old US 22) E

After about 1 mile, you will cross over Beaver Run



▲ The Beaver Run Watershed was the very first one the Westmoreland Conservation District worked in after the organization was founded.

### *ALONG THE WAY to Beaver Run...*

### ★ **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Historic Preservation**

The town of Delmont was formally laid out and incorporated in 1833, but there had been settlements here much earlier. A local history notes that, in 1784, it was part of a 300-acre tract surveyed to William Wilson.

Many of the early homes, hotels, and stores can still be seen, especially along Greensburg and Pittsburgh streets.

A book entitled "History of the County of Westmoreland Pennsylvania 1882," tells a little about how this town developed: "Before the Pennsylvania Railroad was built, Delmont (or New Salem as it once was called) was a very busy inland town, and being one of the main stopping-places on the Pittsburgh pike, was the center of much trade and bustle.

"At one time, as high as five lines of stages passed through here, and the old-time taverns, with their bustling landlords and hard-worked hostlers, could hardly wait upon the travelers thronging the numerous old taverns that then flourished here."

Highways seem to be logical places for commercial development. Compare what is occurring today along our major

roadways, such as US Route 30 between North Huntingdon and Unity townships.





## 2004 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

including the donation of the barn that is now the Westmoreland Conservation District headquarters.

- We **increased our staff capacity** in late 2004 when an employee departure opened the door for a realignment of resources. Anthony Quadro was named assistant district manager/technical programs director; Sandra Dzdzdz, administrative assistant; and Karen Barnhart, assistant fiscal

administrator. Mark Jackson came on board as visual communication specialist, and Karen Jurkovic provided increased marketing, grant-writing, and communications support.

- Our **physical workspace increased** in 2004 with the transformation of the large 500-square-foot former hayloft into a library and office area. An adjacent 280-square-foot area was partitioned off for storage.

- The work we did to transform a 120-year-old barn into our headquarters and education center was selected to be included in a new, coffee-table book called **"Old Barns – New Houses: A Showcase of Architectural Conversions"** and published by Schiffer books. It is distributed nationally.

### 14 Beaver Run



*Al Barnett, Westmoreland Conservation District Board of Directors member, surveys Beaver Run and the streamside vegetation he and a consortium of other volunteers helped to plant several years ago.*

### CLEAN STREAMS & WATER RESOURCES: Water Quality

In the past, the landowners here used to cut the grass right up to the edge of the stream. A few years ago, they adopted a new, conservation way of thinking – and while you may think that the look is a little “un-manicured,” **the benefits of allowing Mother Nature to take over the edges of a stream are great.**

Grass, wildflowers, shrubs, and trees all help to help keep the water clean – and that is especially critical along this stream because it supplies the drinking water for some 50,000 Westmoreland County homes and businesses.

The streamside plants help hold the soil in place, reducing erosion and the amount of sediment that gets into the stream.

That in turn keeps the stream channel clear so there is less chance of flooding. (You saw at the Scottdale Channel how sediment can take up space in a stream.)

A consortium of organizations including Dominion Resources helped to plant some of the vegetation you see along this stream in the spring of 2002.

*For more information: Westmoreland Conservation District (724) 837-5271, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com).*



**COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

Hundreds of individuals, organizations, businesses, and foundations helped us over the past few years to create our first-ever comprehensive conservation

education outreach program.

It was their financial support, their donated time and talent, and, most of all, their belief in the value of promoting the conservation ethic that put all the pieces in place.

Today, thanks to these partners, we have a new education center, two new education staff members, a new conservation curriculum to share with area educators, and new teaching resources for educating the public about the District's programs in healthy forests, stable soils,

productive farms, clean streams and water resources, and sustainable communities.

Many thanks to the major contributors listed here, and to everyone who joined with us in some way to make this dream possible.

**Benefactors**

(\$10,000 and above)

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**THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP**

**From Beaver Run to Farm Practicing Rotational Grazing**

where agricultural conservation measures are helping keep streams clean

Continue E on Pittsburgh Street (Old US 22) until it intersects with US 22 (Wm Penn Hwy)

Turn L onto US 22 E

After about 5 miles, R onto US 119 S

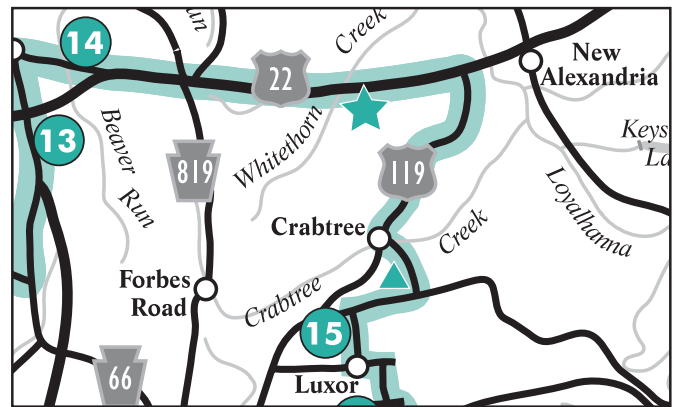
After about 3.2 miles, L at Cemetery Road

After about 1 mile, R at stop sign onto Calvary Hill Road

Continue for about 1/2 mile; pastures are on your left (and also below)

After about 1/2 mile more, make L onto Matt Shields Road; additional pastures are on your left

Please note: This is private property. The landowner has given permission to pull off here, but please don't walk on the site.



▲ You'll notice that there are a good number of farms in this area. They form an area of open space around the expanding urbanization in this northeast part of the county. One of these farms, the one on your right when you turn onto Calvary Hill Road, is one of the largest preserved farms in Westmoreland County.

*ALONG THE WAY to the farm practicing rotational grazing...*

★ **STABLE SOILS**

As you travel US 22, you'll notice some areas along the roadside where the ground is filled with rocks instead of vegetation. Many of these places are continuously wet from underground seeps, and that makes it difficult for grass or other vegetation to grow here. Without some kind of 'cover,' the soil would erode. So the rocks are here to give the seep a place where it can drain and to hold the soil in place.



# T I O N     D I S T R I C T     P A R T N E R S

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U.S. Department of Education, Fund for  
the Improvement of Education  
Westmoreland Conservation District  
Westmoreland County Commissioners  
Tom Balya, Thomas Ceraso,  
P. Scott Conner

## 15 Innovative Agricultural Practices



*Dan Griffith, agricultural conservation planner (l), and Kim Miller, member of the Westmoreland Conservation District Board of Directors, view this rotational grazing operation.*

### **PRODUCTIVE FARMS: Rotational Grazing**

Notice that this farm field is divided up into separate, large fenced areas. That's because this farmer employs a **conservation practice called rotational grazing for his livestock.**

Rotational grazing allows animals to graze in only one area of the pasture at a time. The other areas of the pasture are allowed to rest.

This practice benefits the farmer by improving the animals' health, saving on feed costs, and producing more product. It also benefits the community by reducing soil erosion, improving the use of animal manure, and improving water quality.

*For more information: Westmoreland Conservation District (724) 837-5271, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com).*

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(\$5,000 to \$9,999)

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**THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP**

**From Farm Practicing Rotational Grazing to Alternative Sewage Treatment System**

where an innovative septic system is protecting water quality

Continue on Matt Shields Road

Bear L onto Tipple Row Road

After about 1/2 mile, L at stop sign onto Bovard-Luxor Road

After about 2/10 mile, R onto SR 1051

After about 1/2 mile, L at stop sign

After about 1/2 mile, R at stop sign onto SR 1049

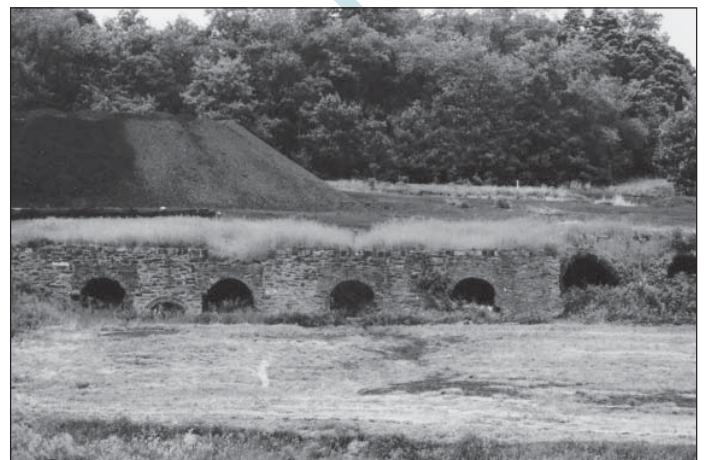
After only about 1/10 mile, R into park; treatment area is immediately on your left



ALONG THE WAY to Twin Lakes Park...

★ **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Natural Resource Extraction**

The Pittsburgh coal seam, which runs right through our county, is the single most valuable mineral resource ever found in the United States. Which explains why there was so much coal mining in our county, and why today there are so many remnants of coal mining, such as the coke ovens and bony pile you'll pass along Tipple Row Road.



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## 16 Alternative Sewage Treatment at Twin Lakes Park



Westmoreland County Commissioner and Westmoreland Conservation District Board of Directors Member, Tom Balya (r) and Westmoreland Conservation District Water Quality Educator Nicki Foremsky discuss the alternative sewage treatment system at the county's Twin Lakes Park.

### CLEAN STREAMS & WATER RESOURCES: Wastewater Treatment

Twin Lakes is Westmoreland County's most-used park. Several years ago, some of the restrooms at the park were changed from old-style privy toilets to flush type, **and a new, alternative technology was installed for treating the wastewater.**

The old treatment system had been undesirable for many reasons – it was uncomfortable for park users, it was costly to operate, and it was having a negative impact on the water quality of the lakes.

The new system uses a sphagnum peat moss filter bed to pre-treat the wastewater before it enters its final cleansing in an at-grade absorption field.

It not only does the job, but it also demonstrates a technology that can be used in the many other places throughout Westmoreland County where the soils are not suitable for conventional on-lot sewage disposal systems.

For more information: Penn's Corner Resource Conservation and Development Area, (724) 853-5555.



While you're here, why not rent a boat or take a walk around these pleasant, man-made lakes?

# WESTMORELAND CONSERVA

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## THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

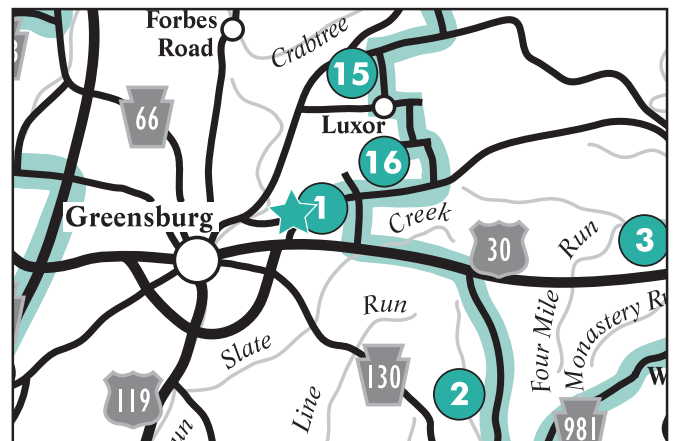
### From Alternative Sewage Treatment System to the Westmoreland Conservation District

where you can get answers to all your conservation needs

Turn R onto SR 1049

After about 3/4 mile, R at stop sign onto Donohoe Road (SR 1026)

After about 1-1/2 mile, L into Donohoe Center parking lot



NEAR the Westmoreland Conservation District...

### ★ A SHARED VISION

We are working to create a “conservation and agricultural campus” in this area of Donohoe Road. In four adjacent buildings, you’ll find a variety of agencies and organizations that work to protect and enhance our county’s natural and man-made resources. They include the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, Penn State Cooperative Extension Service, the Westmoreland

Conservation District, the Westmoreland County Bureau of Parks and Recreation, and the Westmoreland County Agricultural Land Preservation Program. Other organizations – including The Progress Fund and Westmoreland Cleanways – are scheduled to join the campus soon. The physical proximity of all of these individuals and efforts creates a tremendous synergy that results in even more benefits to Westmoreland County.



Mark Jackson became the latest addition to the Westmoreland Conservation District family in the fall of 2004 when he became the organization’s visual communication specialist.

# T I O N   D I S T R I C T   P A R T N E R S

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Kiwanis Club of Greensburg

Dr. Daniel J. Muccio

Nature's Way Market

Ed Nicholson & Sons Lumber Co. Inc.

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Penn's Corner Resource  
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Westmoreland County Department  
of Public Works

former  
Westmoreland County Commissioners  
Richard Vidmer and Terry Marolt

## 1 Westmoreland Conservation District



*Posing at the rain garden are Westmoreland Conservation District staff members (l-r, back) Sandy Dzendzel, administrative assistant; Karen Barnhart, assistant fiscal administrator; Joanne Kitsko, receptionist; (l-r, front) Christie Rhoades, secretary; Kathy Fritz, program secretary.*

Around the grounds of the Conservation District are a number of **demonstrations that show how to incorporate conservation in your home or business.** One of these is a self-guided stormwater trail that features more than a dozen ways you can capture free rain water and put it to good use — such as watering your garden or creating a pond for wildlife.

This picture features the rain garden we made from stormwater. Instead of sending the water from the barn roof into the storm sewer system, we directed it through an underground pipe to the top of this natural slope. Then we built a series of three ponds.

As the rainwater fills the first pond, gravity causes it to overflow as a gentle waterfall into next lower pond. As the second pond fills up, it cascades into the bottom pond. A hidden pump in the third pond circulates the water back up to the first pond, where it repeats its journey.

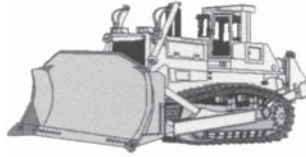
Our rain garden adds a new dimension — gentle, relaxing sound — to our landscape. It also adds diversity. With free water from the roof, three man-made ponds, and some native plants that like to get their feet wet, we've created an entirely new habitat here. And our new habitat attracts even more types of birds, beneficial insects, and animals to our property.



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## Stable Soils



## Clean Streams



## Productive Farms



## Healthy Forests



## Sustainable Communities



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Ted Kopas  
William Kotsenas  
Theresa Gay Rohall  
Elmer G. Slezak  
John Turack  
Keith Walters  
Robert Zelmere

### STAFF

Gregory M. Phillips  
*District Manager/CEO*  
Anthony P. Quadro, Jr.  
*Assistant District Manager/Technical Programs Director*  
Sandra Dzendzel  
*Administrative Assistant*  
Karen Barnhart  
*Assistant Fiscal Administrator*  
Mark Jackson  
*Visual Communications Specialist*  
Joanne Kitsko  
*Receptionist*

### TECHNICAL STAFF

James W. Pillsbury, PE  
*Hydraulic Engineer*  
Michael J. Barrick  
*Watershed Specialist*  
Robert D. Cronauer  
*Erosion Control Specialist*  
Christopher Droste  
*Erosion Control Specialist*  
Carolyn Graham  
*Growing Greener Program Assistant*  
Daniel Griffith  
*Nutrient Management Specialist/Agricultural Conservation Planner*  
Kathleen Fritz  
*Program Secretary*  
Kathryn Hamilton, RLA  
*PT Technical Assistant*

### EDUCATIONAL STAFF

Leanne Griffith  
*Conservation Education Coordinator*  
Nicole Foremsky  
*District/Extension Water Quality Educator*  
Christie Rhoades  
*Secretary*

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Interchange 67 (Irwin)  
Phone: 724-861-6662

email:  
kerber@kerberdairy.com

[www.kerberdairy.com](http://www.kerberdairy.com)

## WILLIAM A. ROTH, P.E.

*Civil Engineer*

**Roth, Moore & Associates**  
*Land Surveyors and Civil Engineers*

14900 Route 30 • North Huntingdon, PA 15642  
Phone: 412-829-4676 FAX: 412-829-6515

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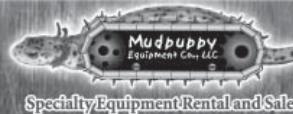
- Wetland Construction
- Wildlife Habitat Construction
- Passive Wastewater Treatment
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- Reforestation
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# Financial Statement

### CONCISE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION – COMBINED FUNDS

DECEMBER 31, 2004

#### ASSETS

CASH.....	\$ 214,786
GENERAL FIXED ASSETS.....	\$ 35,445
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 250,231</b>

#### LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE

CURRENT LIABILITIES.....	\$ 36,643
NET ASSETS.....	\$ 213,588
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 250,231</b>

### CONCISE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES – COMBINED FUNDS

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2004

#### UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

#### SUPPORT

WESTMORELAND COUNTY.....	\$ 783,104
STATE GRANTS.....	\$ 187,010
OTHER REVENUE.....	\$ 43,470
FEES.....	\$ 64,150
FARMLAND PRESERVATION.....	\$ 3,275
WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COALITION FOR ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION.....	\$ 100,310
INTEREST INCOME.....	\$ 756
SPECIAL PROJECTS.....	\$ 357,632
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,539,707</b>

#### EXPENDITURES

PROGRAM SERVICES.....	\$1,080,009
MANAGEMENT & GENERAL.....	\$ 376,451
FUNDRAISING.....	\$ 8,670
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,465,130</b>

EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)-CURRENT.....	\$ 74,577
NET ASSETS - BEGINNING BALANCE.....	\$ 139,011
NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR.....	<b>\$ 213,588</b>



## ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

These men and women volunteer their time and expertise by serving on various advisory committees related to the work of the District. These committees have been extremely valuable to the District's programs because they give us the benefit of a variety of professional viewpoints and advice.

### Nutrient Management Advisory Committee

Carolyn Graham  
Daniel Griffith  
Leanne Griffith  
John Lohr  
Jill Mariani  
Greg Phillips  
Gary Sheppard  
Tom Sierzega  
Larry Stokum

### Communications Advisory Committee

Anita Foriska  
Mark Jackson  
Karen Jurkovic  
Ted Kopas  
Greg Phillips  
John Turack

### Conservation Education Advisory Committee

Angela Belli  
Devin DeMario  
William Doney  
Nicole Foremsky  
Lindsay Forsys  
Karen Jurkovic  
Anita Nichols  
Greg Phillips  
Anthony Quadro  
Christie Rhoades  
Theresa Gay Rohall  
Tom Sierzega  
Elmer Slezak  
Joseph Stefko  
Dorothy Stoner  
John Turack

### Dirt and Gravel Roads Advisory Committee

Michael Barrick  
Ron Rohall  
Tom Sierzega  
James Vatter

### Forestry Advisory Committee

Robert Ackerman  
Edward Callahan  
Thomas Fitzgerald  
Anthony Quadro  
Ron Rohall

### Stormwater Advisory Committee

Linda Alworth  
Lucien Bove  
John Campfield  
Joseph Dietrick  
Christopher Droste  
Kim Gales  
Kathryn Hamilton  
Donald Hixson  
Charles Kubasik  
Dallas Leonard  
Suzy Meyer  
Kim Edward Miller  
Les Mlakar  
Kenneth Murin  
James Pillsbury  
Senator Bob Regola  
Edward Ritzer  
Darl Rosenquest  
Tamira Spedalieri  
John Surmacz  
Robert Whiting

### Water Quality Advisory Committee

Marianne Bolling  
Nicole Foremsky  
M. Curtis Fontaine  
Leanne Griffith  
Tom Grote  
Ali Hebshi  
Dallas Leonard  
Dean Matanin  
Deb Simko



On any given day, you might see some of the Westmoreland Conservation District's technical staff on the road, traveling to building sites, woodlots, and farms in all regions of Westmoreland County to help earthmovers, loggers, farmers, and others responsibly use our natural resources.

Our people also are involved in efforts to restore the health of natural resources that have been damaged in the past – such as land and streams degraded by pollution from long-abandoned deep coal mines.

And our education and outreach efforts give all Westmoreland County citizens a chance to become partners in conservation with us by giving them the information and tools they need to use resources wisely.

We are especially grateful for the support that our work has received from the citizens who live and work in this county with us, and from the Westmoreland County Commissioners Tom Balya, Tom Ceraso, and Phil Light and the late Commissioner Terry Marolt, who passed away in the fall of 2004.

Their collective willingness to care for our natural resources in a variety of ways – from financial support to implementing sustainable practices – has been a driving force behind many of the achievements in this report, and the reason so many people from surrounding areas travel to our county to work, play, shop, and enjoy our enviable quality of life.

### ***Sign the tour book!***

After you take any or all of the tour, be sure to sign the virtual tour book on our website, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com) (and be registered to win a conservation prize).