

Westmoreland Conservation District



2005 ANNUAL REPORT

Hidden In Plain View II



An Insider's Guide to Conservation Sites in Northwestern Westmoreland County

Dear Friend –

This year's "Hidden in Plain View" tour loops north and west through our Rhode-Island-sized county – past expansive corn fields planted with "low impact" methods... through well-stewarded, mature forests...and down the charming main streets of century-old cities.

Along this northwestern route, you'll get a somewhat different look and feel about our county than what you experienced in last year's 'heartland' tour. In this part of Westmoreland, for instance, you'll have a chance to see some of the county's major water features – a dam, a drinking water reservoir, and three of our five rivers (the Conemaugh, the Kiskiminetas, and the Allegheny) – as well as two of our most historic towns – Vandergrift, once called "America's most important industrial town," and New Kensington, where the aluminum industry was born.

As always, at each stop, we hope you enjoy discovering how these sites contribute to conservation – the work they do to clean the water...protect the soil and habitat... prevent flooding...and enhance the quality of life for all of us.

Many of the things you'll see on the tour are the result of partnership efforts between the Westmoreland Conservation District and other organizations, agencies, and businesses. Most are the result of individuals who care about our county and made it their mission to get involved.

Throughout this report, you'll see how individuals are making a positive difference for all of us by making thoughtful decisions about the way they tend the forests and the fields...create new communities and revitalize old ones...transform neglected infrastructure into quality recreation...and care for our water resources. If you like what you see, we encourage you to get involved, too. (The District's current projects are listed in the blue highlighted areas throughout this report.)

Happy Motoring!

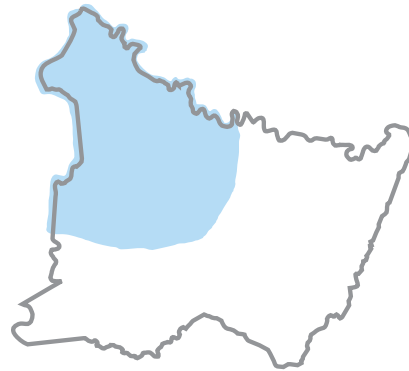


J. Roy Houston
Chairman



From the 1930s to the 1970s, New Kensington was the shopping district of the entire Alle-Kiski Valley. Citizens today are working to attract a new generation of business owners and shoppers to this enduringly beautiful downtown.

Let's Go Northwest



Westmoreland County



Pack up the picnic basket, put fresh batteries in the camera, lace up your tennis shoes, and get ready to explore the northern-most parts of Westmoreland County.

The entire tour circuit covers about 100 miles – all within the borders of Westmoreland County – and will take about a full day to complete.

If you prefer, you can break the tour 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, scenic stops, and other delightful places you'll encounter along the way.



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

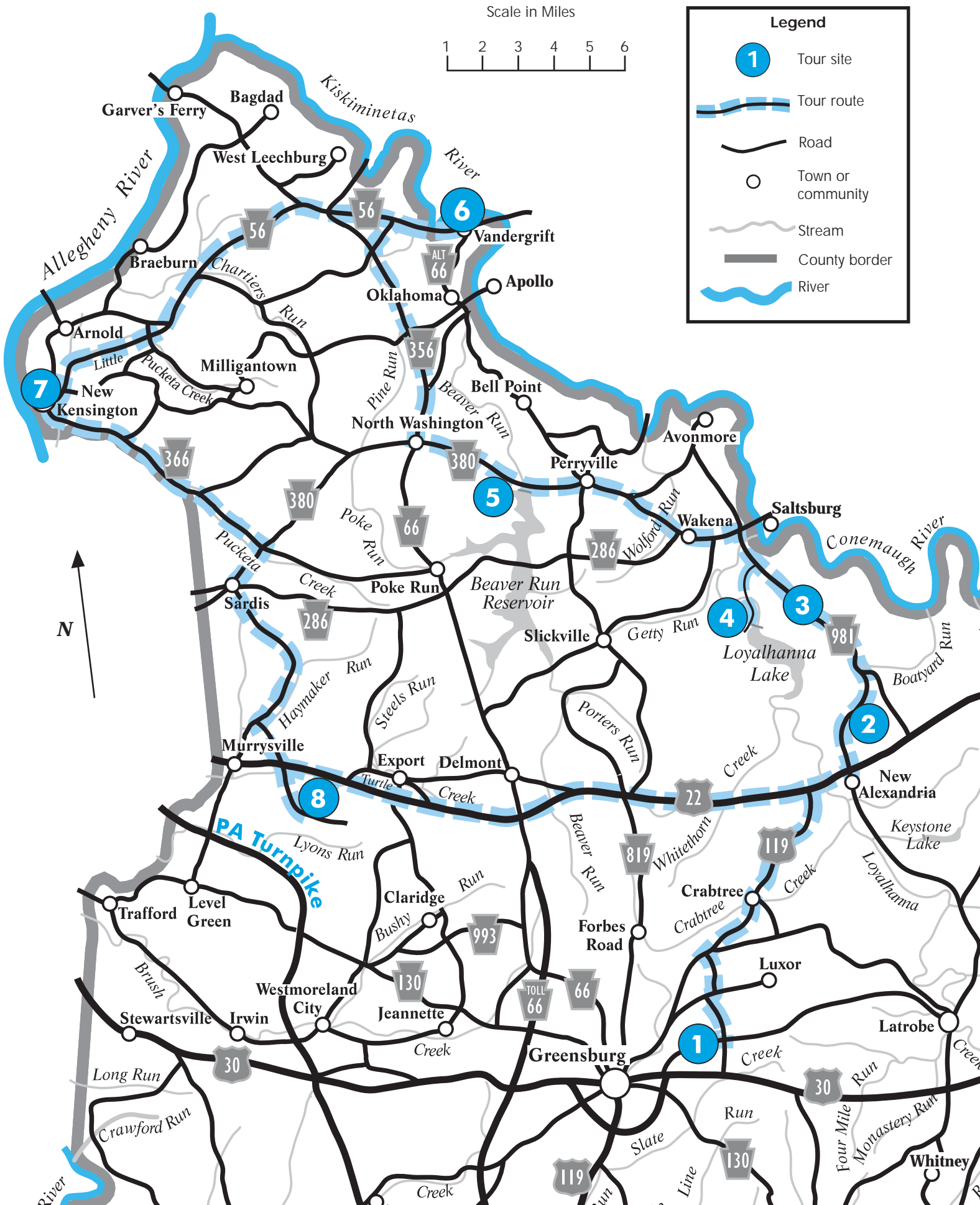
Some other things you can do to conserve fuel:

- 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.

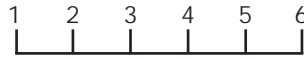
Drive safely! And remember to avoid distractions. Take a friend along to help navigate the route.

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.

THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP



Scale in Miles



Legend

1 Tour site

— Tour route

— Road

○ Town or community

~ Stream

— County border

— River



STABLE SOILS

- The **major earth-moving project** at Arnold Palmer Regional Airport (88 acres disturbed in the Loyalhanna Watershed) continued during the year and District staff visited this site numerous times to ensure that the large amount of disturbed

soil was not eroding into nearby streams. Protecting area streams from excess sediment benefits thousands of Westmoreland County residents with better-quality water and a reduced likelihood of flooding.

- Like earthmoving activities, unpaved roads also can send significant quantities of sediment into nearby streams, compromising water quality for thousands of people downstream and harming aquatic life and the opportunity to use these waters for recreation.

During 2005, the District continued to work with local municipalities to **repair eroding unpaved roads** throughout the county, particularly in areas with the highest water quality.

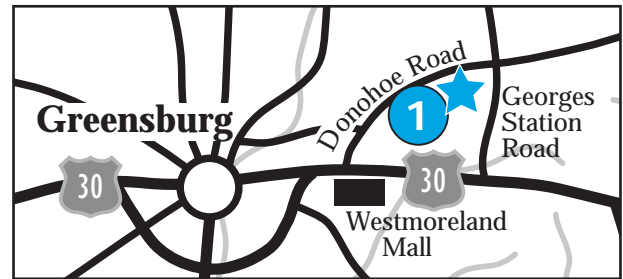
Along Firetower Road in Donegal Township, improvements were completed to build up the road and contour its surface so that rain and water will flow either into newly built, protected roadside ditches or carefully into the adjacent woods. This work helps to reduce the

THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

Begin at the headquarters of the Westmoreland Conservation District

where you can get help with 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).



NEXT TO the Westmoreland Conservation District...

★ **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Green Rehabilitation**



GreenForge (foreground) is the latest addition to a conservation campus that, over the past 12 years, has grown to include Donohoe Center and the Westmoreland Conservation District headquarters (see next page), and a revitalized Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park.

In 2005, the commercial building next door to the Westmoreland Conservation District headquarters and Donohoe Center was added to the conservation campus. Known as “GreenForge,” this building may well be the **first green rehabilitation of a commercial building** in Westmoreland County.

The District and its partners are rehabilitating this vacant, 1980s-era structure with green materials, energy-conserving technologies, and best management practices, including the county’s first-ever green roof – a flat roof covered with growing plants to moderate building temperature, reduce stormwater runoff, enhance air quality, insulate sound, and improve aesthetics.

When the building renovation is complete, GreenForge will provide office space for grassroots conservation and rural development organizations

and serve as a demonstration site for promoting conservation building practices throughout Westmoreland County.

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

amount of sediment in nearby Roaring Run.

Grants also were awarded for new projects in Donegal Township (along Oak Road, which will help improve the Loyalhanna Creek), St. Clair Township (Sugar Run Road, Sugar Run Creek), and Manor borough (Rowe Road, an unnamed tributary of Bushy Run). In all, these new projects will protect an additional three miles of stream.

• **Stabilizing the banks of streams**

throughout the county also helps to reduce sediment pollution. One of the more visible and significant efforts in this regard in 2005 was conducted at Donegal Highlands Golf Course in Mt. Pleasant Township.

With the cooperation of a landowner who was willing to think in new ways about how a golf course could look, and the assistance of the Jacobs Creek Watershed Association, the District helped to stabilize some 1,800 feet of the stream (Jacobs

Creek) that runs through that golf course.

The partners used coconut-fiber logs and rock armor on the streambanks to slow down the erosion; planted a 30-foot buffer of native shrubs and grasses on either side of the stream (creating a look that is more natural than highly manicured); and suggested a management plan for maintaining the conservation improvement.

- New ways of thinking also were evident in Penn Township during the year, when officials there expressed willingness to

1 Westmoreland Conservation District



District Manager/CEO Greg Phillips (left) goes over some final project details with technical staff members Rob Cronauer (center) and Jim Pillsbury before they go on the road to provide technical assistance to county residents.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Adaptive Reuse

The Westmoreland Conservation District building is a prime example of **reusing resources**. Originally this barn, built in the 1880s, was 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 about to be razed to make way for a housing development.

Instead, the Conservation District employed 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.

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

recommend that developers of large projects have a pre-planning site meeting.

These meetings occur very early in the development process – before any plans are drawn up – and can help reduce the amount of soil that will be disturbed for the development, which also lessens the impact of the development on any nearby streams.

In a pre-planning site meeting, District staff walk the proposed development

site with others involved, including the developer, the design engineer, and various municipal officials. During the walk, they identify opportunities where the site’s positive natural features could be preserved, such as where the developer could build with the existing terrain, and leave buffer areas along streams.

- Our good working relationship with officials in Hempfield Township helped to encourage a **new conservation addition to the township’s stormwater ordinance.**

Under the new addition, any project in the township that disturbs more than 5,000 square feet of land requires the earthmover to employ best management practices to minimize the amount of erosion.

- We worked with Rostraver Township officials to develop a **new ordinance regarding steep slopes.** This ordinance sets a maximum slope ratio that developments are permitted to create, and helps ensure the stability of these highly erodible areas.

THE CONSERVATION INSIDER’S ROAD TRIP

From Westmoreland Conservation District to the Forest Stewardship site

where one individual is making a positive impact on the health of our native woodlands

R onto Donohoe Road

At first stop sign, L onto Georges Station Road

At “Y,” bear R; at stop sign, continue R onto Luxor Road (SR 1028)

After about 1/10 mile, L onto Cameo Lane

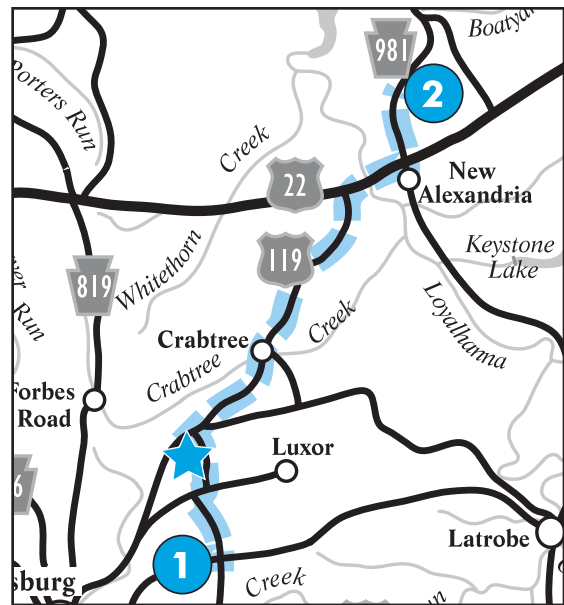
At first stop sign, R onto US Route 119 N

After about 6 miles, R onto US Route 22 E (William Penn Highway)

After about 1 mile, L onto SR 981 N (Latrobe - New Alex. Road)

After about 1 mile, note two stone pillars on right. This is the individual’s property.

Please note: This is private property. Please don’t drive down the lane. The owner has offered to host tours of the property. If you are interested, please contact the Westmoreland Conservation District.



ALONG THE WAY to the Forest Stewardship site...

★ **PRODUCTIVE FARMS: Land Preservation**



Not long after you turn onto Cameo Lane, you’ll see sweeping farm fields on both your right and left. This 600-acre beef-cattle and cropping farm, owned by the Heinnickel family, is in one of Westmoreland County’s fastest-developing townships, Hempfield. It also is **preserved – in perpetuity – under an agricultural conservation easement** that permanently protects it from development and limits its use to agriculture only.

Although agriculture is Westmoreland County’s number one industry in terms of gross dollar product, farmland is rapidly being lost to housing plans, strip malls, highways, and other impacts of urbanization.

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

Pennsylvania has one of the most aggressive farmland protection programs in the country. In Westmoreland County, 56 farms (more than 8,000 acres) have been preserved since a Farmland Preservation Program was established here in 1990. There currently are some 143,000 additional acres of farmland in the county that are not preserved.

You will notice a number of working farms on the tour, especially as you travel US Route 119 N between Cameo Lane and US Route 22.

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

The ordinance also has the added benefit of ensuring that any slopes created in the process of development will blend more naturally with the surrounding land.

- The District and the North Huntingdon Township planning department continued to enjoy a strong cooperative relationship last year, with **regular communication regarding stormwater and land disturbance activities** in that rapidly growing area of the county.

- We met with a number of developers – including those proposing new and next-phase residential projects in Manor, and Donegal and Unity townships – to **illustrate the advantages of incorporating various conservation practices.**

Some suggestions now being considered on various sites include: limiting the amount of disturbed areas on new developments, enhancing stormwater ponds, and channeling stormwater into a grassed boulevard in the center of

the street, where it can infiltrate into the soil instead of being held in a pond and conveyed through the storm sewer system.

- In 2005, we **reviewed a total of 426 development plans**, an increase of 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 (previously, permits were required only for work that disturbed five acres or more).

2 Forest Stewardship Site



Bob Ackerman, a self-taught forest steward, stands near a mature red oak more than 50 inches in diameter on the preserved portion of his property.

HEALTHY FORESTS: Individual Stewardship

Individuals own almost all of Westmoreland County's forests.* Down this private lane are some outstanding examples of how one of those individuals has cared for 130 of those forested acres – with a combination of **preservation, careful cutting, and replanting.**

On his property, he has preserved a unique area of mature, second-growth Allegheny hardwoods – black cherry; green ash; hickories; sugar maple; yellow poplar; and red, white, and black oak – that has not been cut since the undisciplined logging known as “The Great Clear Cutting” that took place throughout our area some 100-160 years ago. He also is working to regenerate some of the native shrubs and wildflowers that once grew in these

mature, even-aged woods as a way to further enhance the natural ecosystem.

On another part of his property, the landowner had some logging done under the watchful guidance of a professional forester. The forester made sure that trees were evaluated not solely for their value today in terms of “price per board foot,” but also for their value in perpetuating the long-term health of the forest. During the logging, measures were taken to control erosion and

continued on page 5

* About 86% of the total woodlands in Westmoreland County are privately owned. That means that the health of some 285,300 acres of forest is in the direct control of the men and women who own it.

We also **conducted 502 on-site inspections** of development sites throughout the county during the year, a 10% increase from 2004.

The District's costs of conducting these plan review and inspection services are partially funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, which has delegated the responsibility for erosion-control regulations to the District. Fees paid by developers, which totaled some \$54,000 in 2005, also helped pay

District expenses related to these activities. Combined, these two sources funded approximately 1-1/2 full-time positions in the District's erosion and sediment control program. The District assumed the remaining costs of providing these plan-review and inspection services.

- The District completed and officially dedicated a **new soil-education exhibit**, making it one of **only a few places in the state** where the public can see an interpretive display of our

most basic natural resource.

The new soil display features five vertical slices of earth taken from different locations in Westmoreland County. Each is displayed at eye-level so visitors can easily examine the world that's usually hidden under their feet. By pointing out key features such as color and texture, depth to bedrock, and the ability to hold water, the display makes it clear that all "dirt" is not the same. As people come to understand the differences in soils, they

Forest Stewardship Site continued from page 4

to prevent loose earth from building up in Tubmill Run, a warm-water fishery that meanders through the property before joining up with the Loyalhanna Creek.

And on yet another parcel of his property, this landowner took land that was strip mined in the 1970s, and replanted it with some 15,000 oak and other tree seedlings in an effort to recreate forest. Unfortunately, only about 300 trees survived, the others victims of poor soil conditions and an overabundant deer population.

Equally amazing as the stewardship work he has done in these woods is the fact that this landowner didn't study the principles of sustainable forestry until his retirement in 1984. Since then, he

has attended numerous workshops...partnered on projects with organizations including the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry, the Westmoreland Conservation District, and Penn State Cooperative Extension (Ebensburg)...helped to found the Westmoreland Woodlands Improvement Association...and become one of the leading advocates for forest stewardship in the county.

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

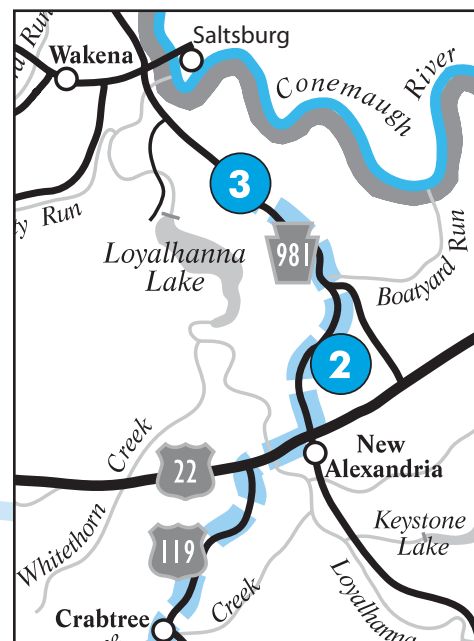
THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

From the Forest Stewardship site to the Innovative Farming Practices site where one individual is making a positive impact on the health of soils and waterways

Continue on SR 981 N, bearing R at "Y" in the road to do so
 After about 2 miles, L at stop sign to continue on SR 981 N
 After about 1-1/4 miles, note large agricultural field on right; and, shortly, on the left as well (in the vicinity of Marshall's Market and gas station)

This is the individual's property.

Please note: This is private property. Please don't walk on the fields.



can use them most wisely.

The new soil display is named in honor of one of Westmoreland County's conservation pioneers, John Millen, a self-taught conservation farmer who served as chairman of the District Board of Directors in 1954.

- **A workshop for earthmoving contractors** in November presented some of the latest information, tips, and techniques to help these professionals make construction and earthmoving jobs go

more smoothly. Twenty people attended.

- Some 30 people attended a workshop at Powdermill Nature Reserve in May to learn more about **stabilizing dirt and gravel driveways**.

Attendees got a firsthand look at the various techniques that have been recently employed at the nature reserve to stabilize a 1,000-foot unpaved driveway and to discover how effectively each has been doing the job.



HEALTHY FORESTS

- Our forester ensured that good erosion control practices were in place on numerous **active logging sites** throughout the county during the year, helping to protect both the soil and the quality of nearby waterways.

3 Innovative Farming Practices Site



District agricultural specialist Dan Griffith (l) talks with Stanley Auen, who has been farming for more than 30 years. About eight years ago, Stan changed from traditional methods such as chisel plowing to a conservation farming method called no-till. The results have been dramatic and positive for our natural resources and his farming operation.

STABLE SOILS: No-till Farming

The farmer whose fields you pass (near Marshall's Market and gas station) is the largest crop farmer in Westmoreland County. He also is the **biggest practitioner of an agricultural method called "no-till,"** which has been growing in popularity because it benefits both the community and the farmer.

In no-till, the fields are not plowed before planting. Instead, the seed is planted directly in the stubble of the previous season's crop.

Since the land is not turned over or disked, there is less loose soil and nutrients to find their way into nearby waterways – and that means a healthier environment for aquatic life, and overall better water quality. It also means that prime agricultural soils tend to stay in place better – remaining on the farmer's field, where they can contribute to raising healthy crops.

By using no-till on the nearly 5,000 acres of land he farms in Westmoreland and nearby Indiana counties, this farmer is making

a significant contribution to protecting water quality. Much of the land he works is near major waterways – the Conemaugh and Kiskiminetas rivers, and the Loyalhanna Lake, which is a very popular spot for fishing and boating.

Using no-till benefits the farmer, too. It improves the tilth and productivity of the soil, which means bigger crop yields. And, because it reduces the number of trips he has to make over a field to prepare the soil for planting, it reduces fuel costs and saves time during one of the busiest seasons of the year.

This farmer also does a number of other things on his land to conserve soil and protect area waterways, including: having a plan to manage nutrients, including the manure from his 500-cow herd; and creating diversion ditches, grassed waterways, and dry ponds to manage water flow over his fields.

For more information: U S Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (724) 853-5555, www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov/.

Major sites inspected (and the nearby waterways) were: a 700-acre site in Ligonier Township (Loyalhanna Creek), a 200-acre harvest in Donegal Township (Four Mile Run), a 400-acre site in Bell Township (Kiskiminetas River), and a 150-acre project in Fairfield Township (Tubmill Creek).

- When Hempfield Township officials decided to create a logging ordinance, they asked our forester for **advice and guidance regarding best management practices and erosion-control methods.**

Hempfield now joins a number of other areas in the county – including Ligonier, Lower Burrell, Murrysville, and the townships of Unity, Rostraver, Penn, and North Huntingdon – that have ordinances specifying how timber harvests should be conducted.

- Our forester completed **personalized woodlot management plans for eight private landowners** in five different watersheds in the county: Sewickley, Loyalhanna, Jacobs, Indian,

and Brush creeks.

After assessing each site, our forester prepared written recommendations for each landowner on the best ways to manage the particular features of his or her forested land.

- Representatives of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureau of Forestry, Forbes District and the Conservation District **signed the Memorandum of Understanding** they had updated in 2004.

THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

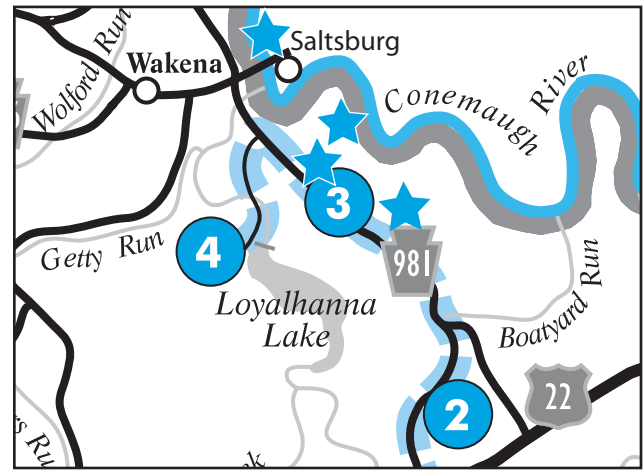
From the Innovative Farming Practices site to the Loyalhanna Dam

where a concrete dam and earthen embankment help control flooding in areas downstream, including the city of Pittsburgh

Continue on SR 981 N

About 2-1/2 miles after Marshall's Market and gas station, L onto Loyalhanna Dam Road (T910)

After about 1-1/4 miles, L at Loyalhanna Lake sign. Follow arrows to parking lot.



ALONG THE WAY to the Loyalhanna Dam...

★ **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Natural Resource Extraction**

About a mile from Marshall's Market and gas station, you'll notice a big blue tank in a field to the right (there also were similar tanks in the no-till farmer's fields). These tanks are usually found near a natural gas well. They store the salty, oily fluid (brine) that comes up out of the ground when natural gas is extracted.

About 1/2-mile farther down the road, you'll see a sign for a stone quarry on the right.

And if you ventured off the tour route and took a side trip along the Kiski River between Truxall and Salina, you would see a 400-acre hillside where timber is being harvested.

Each of these is an example of natural resource extraction in our county. Other types are the mining of coal (you'll see an old tippel later in the tour as you travel SR 366 E from New Kensington), the drilling of wells to extract methane gas from underground coal beds or to tap the natural warmth from the ground for geothermal heat, and the dredging of rivers to collect sand and gravel (you'll see this along Industrial Boulevard in New Kensington).

At this point in the tour, you are near towns named for their natural deposits of salt – Salina and Saltsburg. Salt was mined in

early America as a very valuable commodity. In times of scarcity, salt could be used to buy meat when money could not, and so salt wells were drilled all along the Kiski and Allegheny rivers in the early 1800s.

As you can see, natural resources are very important to our daily lives. They provide us with a variety of necessities – fuel for heat, wood for furniture, stone to build homes with, salt to season our food. **The challenge with natural resources is to balance how quickly we use them with how long it takes them to renew.**

Conservation is the wise use of our natural and man-made resources. Conservation also comes into play during the physical extraction of the resources. It means mining or drilling or cutting the resources in a way that minimizes the impact of that process on the surrounding environment.

Creating waterbars (raised mounds of dirt) at intervals along a haul road at a timber harvest site minimizes the amount of soil that is loosened (erosion), and is an example of putting conservation practices in place during resource extraction.

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

The signatures make this new document the official blueprint for how the two organizations will work together to meet the needs of today's forest landowners.

- Our forester was appointed to the **Forestry Committee** of Penn's Corner Resource Conservation and Development Area.

A major goal of this committee is to develop a plan to educate woodland owners, students, and others in the nine-county region served by Penn's Corner about good forest management practices

and the importance of wooded areas.

- An **article on tree shelters** in the May issue of the National Association of Conservation District's "Forestry News and Notes" featured comments by our forester on his decade-long experience with Tubex® shelters.

The District sells an average of 1,500 of these shelters a year to folks who use them to protect young tree seedlings from animal predation. Any profit from these sales is used to support the District's

conservation education program.

- The District's **forestry workshops** continue to be among our most popular education offerings. A total of 66 landowners and interested members of the public joined us for the Forestry II class in April, and for Forestry I in October.

Participants explored topics that ranged from basic tree identification to common problems faced by woodlot managers. They observed the variety of local woods used in the construction of

4 Loyalhanna Dam



Loyalhanna Dam cost about \$5.5 million to build in the 1950s; since then, the Army Corps of Engineers estimates it has prevented flood damages in excess of \$160 million.

CLEAN STREAMS & WATER RESOURCES: Flood Control

The Loyalhanna Dam was built to **protect people and property from the devastating effects of flooding.**

This concrete structure and the adjoining earth embankment – completed in 1951 – provide flood-protection for the lower portions of the Loyalhanna Creek, and the Kiskiminetas and Allegheny rivers; and the upper portion of the Ohio River.

The Loyalhanna Dam can store the equivalent of 6.16 inches of precipitation runoff from the 290-square-mile area it drains. It creates a 400-acre lake on the Loyalhanna Creek, which is the main waterway in the Loyalhanna Watershed (the largest watershed in Westmoreland County).

Efforts such as the good forestry and agricultural practices you see on this tour have helped to make the water quality on Loyalhanna Lake better for boating and fishing.

For more information: U S Army Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh District (724) 639-9013, www.lrp.usace.army.mil/rec/lakes/loyalhan.htm.



While you're here, be sure to spend some time on the observation deck of the park office.

Also at this site, there are pavilions, picnic tables, a boat launch, and even a basketball hoop for you to enjoy.

Just be sure to observe the signs; some areas are restricted.

the District's Center for Conservation Education, and spent part of the class outdoors in the adjacent, natural wooded area of Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park.



- We **personally reached more than 560 elementary and high school students** during the year with the forestry message.

Presentations were given to students in various school districts, including Greensburg-Salem, Southmoreland, and Greater Latrobe.

CLEAN STREAMS AND WATER RESOURCES

- Our hydraulic engineer continued to help local residents and businesses **recover from flood damage** caused by Hurricane Ivan (September 2004) and a major rain event five months later, in January 2005.

Combined, these two events brought a 50% increase in average annual rainfall to parts of our county. Among the hardest hit were areas of Ligonier, Derry, Greensburg, and New Kensington.

Our hydraulic engineer met with officials and residents in these areas, and helped to plan restoration actions that were implemented with federal funds.

- Residences and businesses along Pucketa Creek in Washington and Upper Burrell townships and in the city of Lower Burrell

THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

From the Loyalhanna Dam to Beaver Run Reservoir

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

Retrace route to Loyalhanna Dam Road (T910)

At stop sign, L onto SR 981 N

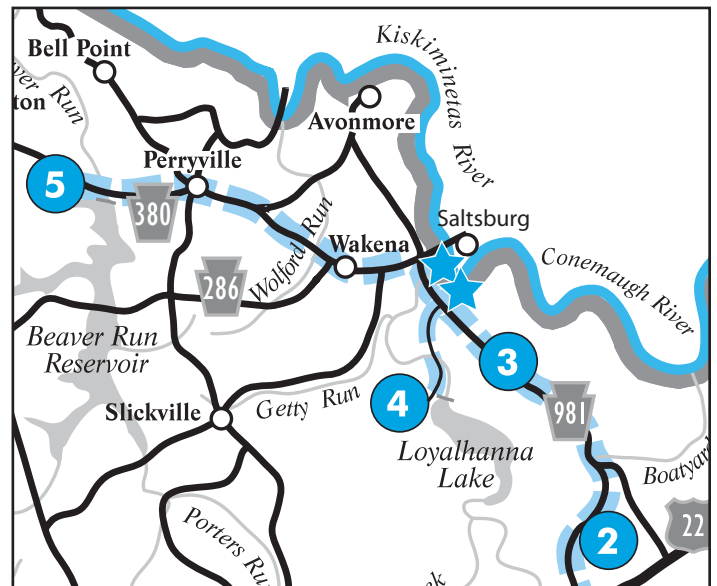
Continue for about 1 mile to stop sign. **BE CAREFUL AT THIS INTERSECTION.** Approaching vehicles do not have to stop. At this point, we suggest crossing the bridge to see the Westmoreland Heritage Trail and the water confluence at Saltsburg (see "Along the Way" below for directions).

If you prefer to continue on to Beaver Run Reservoir –

After about 1/4-mile, L onto SR 286 W

After about 1-1/2 miles, continue straight to get on to PA 380 W

After about 4 miles, L into Beaver Run Reservoir parking area



ALONG THE WAY to Beaver Run Reservoir...

Take an easy side trip to Saltsburg to see a new trail and a water confluence.

Cross the Kiski River into Indiana County

At the end of the bridge, R onto Water Street

After 1/10 mile, there is an observation/access area on R called "Rivers Edge." From here you can see where the Loyalhanna and the Conemaugh join to form the Kiski.

From "Rivers Edge" turn onto Point Street

At first stop sign, R onto Salt Street (note: traffic on your left at this intersection does NOT have to stop)

After about 1/4 mile, bear R into recreation area. Westmoreland Heritage Trail is on your right; West Penn Trail is on your left. Parking area is straight ahead.

After your visit, retrace the route back through Saltsburg, across the river, and onto SR 981 N. Pick up directions under "If you prefer to continue to Beaver Run Reservoir" above.

★ **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Recreation**

One of the region's newest trail projects is the **Westmoreland Heritage Trail**. This trail is being built in sections as land is acquired (8 miles are owned to-date) and funds are available, with the goal of ultimately extending for some 22 miles across northern Westmoreland County between Saltsburg and Trafford.

Right now, cyclists, hikers, joggers, and walkers can enjoy about three miles of completed Westmoreland Heritage Trail (and have access to an additional, equal length of unimproved trail), beginning in Saltsburg and continuing toward Delmont.

The trail goes through Slickville; over the Beaver Run Reservoir; through lush, thick forest; and across two beautifully renovated bridges, one over the Conemaugh River and one over the Loyalhanna Creek. Both bridges were restored by the Conemaugh Valley Conservancy.

were hit especially hard in the 2004 and 2005 flooding.

The District is advocating for conservation measures that will more comprehensively **address the flooding, erosion, sedimentation, and loss of habitat problems in this area**

– particularly along Little Pucketa Creek in Lower Burrell and New Kensington.

As part of this effort, the District successfully petitioned the Westmoreland County commissioners to include funding

for a demonstration project on the county's Growing Greener Initiative list. State approval of the project also is necessary before design can begin.

- At the District's suggestion, the Westmoreland County commissioners also included on the county's Growing Greener Initiative list an allocation for **conservation improvements at the Westmoreland Fairgrounds property in Mt. Pleasant Township.**

If the project is approved on the state

level, measures to control erosion, sediment, surface-water runoff, and pollution will be installed, and should improve conditions in the nearby streams, which are part of the Sewickley Creek Watershed.

- Our hydraulic engineer provided **technical advice** on a variety of projects in the county in 2005, including the innovative installation of a 'green lawn' parking lot at Powdermill Nature Reserve that allows stormwater to infiltrate, and the ongoing effort to clean up the largest abandoned



(l-r) Westmoreland Heritage Trail President Noel Grimm and Board Member Chris Droste (who also is the District's erosion control specialist) on one of the newly refurbished trail bridges.

The Westmoreland Heritage Trail gets its name from the many local heritage sites it will pass by – including the site of George Westinghouse's second Westinghouse Electric plant (Trafford), and the site of the first commercial gas well in Westmoreland County (drilled in 1878 in Murrysville) (also see "Sustainable Communities: Resource Extraction" on page 7).

The Westmoreland Heritage Trail also connects to the West Penn Trail in Saltsburg.

For more information: Westmoreland Heritage Trail (412) 372-5429, c/o 194 Donohoe Road, Greensburg, PA 15601.

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

In Saltsburg, you can see where the Loyalhanna Creek and the Conemaugh River join to form the Kiskiminetas River.

In the past, the scenic Kiski river basin had the sad distinction of being **one of the most polluted in the United States** – primarily because of discharges from abandoned coal mines, but also because of erosion and inadequate or nonexistent sanitary sewage systems.

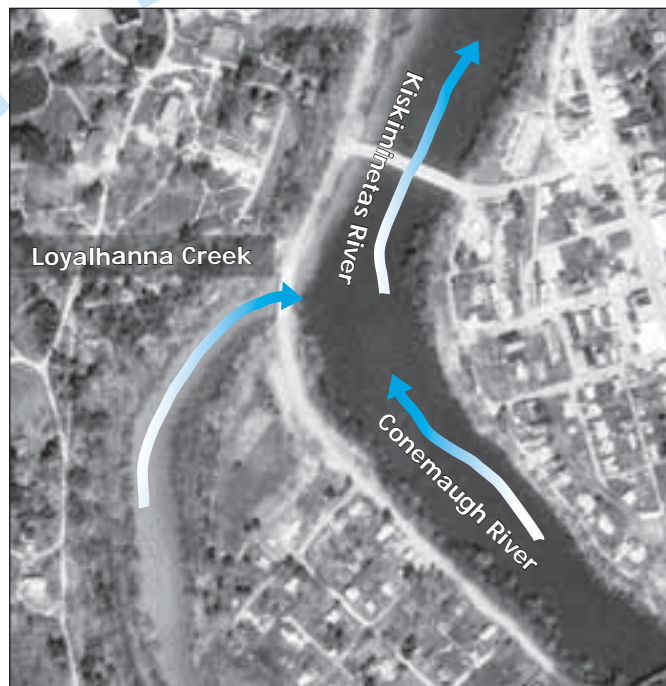
In 1980, a river survey by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources showed the Kiski River virtually devoid of aquatic life. DEP found only one frog and no fish.

Since then, many agencies, citizens, and watershed groups have been working hard to heal this damaged waterway. And their efforts are paying off. When the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission surveyed the river in 1990, it found it was supporting a limited fishery – people were actually catching fish in this river, an event unheard of for more than 100 years.

By 2000, the Fish Commission's tests found that water quality in the Kiski was continuing to gradually improve, although there is a long way to go before it can be considered a healthy river. Mine drainage and sewage still remain serious pollution problems.

In 2000, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources designated the Kiskiminetas and Conemaugh rivers as Feature Rivers of the Year.

For more information: Kiskiminetas Watershed Association (724) 568-3655.



Water confluence at Saltsburg. Here, the Loyalhanna Creek joins the Conemaugh River to form the Kiskiminetas River. Farther north, the Kiski empties into the Allegheny River.

mine discharge in the lower Sewickley Creek Watershed (near Lowber).

- 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.

As part of the Inter-Municipal Environmental Forum, District staff members are working to encourage municipalities to engage in long-term, broad-based stormwater issues. One such project

under way is the development of a Geographic Information System for the Turtle Creek Watershed.

- Representing the southwestern Pennsylvania region, our hydraulic engineer continued his service on a committee that is **writing the state's stormwater management manual**.

During 2005, this committee produced a second draft of the 2-1/2-inch thick manual, which is a guide for municipal officials and engineers on how to meet

Pennsylvania's stormwater standards.

The committee hopes to have a final draft manual by late 2006.

- Our hydraulic engineer continued his service as a member of the board of directors of the **Villanova Urban Stormwater Partnership**, a work group of industry, academia, and government representatives that encourages urban areas to implement best management stormwater management practices.

He also participated in a symposium

5 Beaver Run Reservoir



Beaver Run Reservoir has 34 miles of shoreline, and is surrounded by some 5,000 acres of undeveloped land, mostly forest. Forests play a major role in promoting high-quality water.

CLEAN STREAMS & WATER RESOURCES: Water Quality

Here, water is impounded not for flood control, but for an equally important reason – human consumption and use.

Beaver Run Reservoir is one of two major water supply sources managed by the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County. **Some 50,000 homes and businesses in Westmoreland County get the water they use for drinking, washing, and the many tasks of daily life from this reservoir.**

Beaver Run Reservoir was constructed in 1952, and then enlarged in 1962. It has a current capacity of 11 billion gallons.

Water from Beaver Run Reservoir is treated at the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County's George R. Sweeney

Treatment Plant. This plant can treat a maximum of 24 million gallons of water each day. The average daily production in 2005 was 17.9 million gallons.

Because the water in this reservoir is used primarily for human consumption, no type of recreation is permitted here. Lack of human activity in and near the water also makes this area attractive to wildlife. In 2003, the first known bald eagle nest in recent years in Westmoreland County was seen here. Two eaglets were hatched.

For more information: Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County (724) 834-6500, www.mawc.org.

with conducting an in-depth study of the current program and the needs in our county. The project has resulted in much good discussion and some solid, initial recommendations.

The committee's recommendation to add a part-time staff person was adopted by the Board, and **Kathryn Hamilton joined the District as technical assistant** in mid-year. Likewise, an advisory committee recommendation to create a **manual of standard operating**

procedures for the program resulted in a draft document for review.

- With the addition of Kathryn Hamilton, we **added a new layer of technical skills to our staff**. As a registered landscape architect, Kathy not only is able to assist with the stormwater program, but also to provide site-design services.

In 2005, she designed an infiltration parking lot for the Regional Trail Corporation's West Newton site, and a parking lot and buffer for the Coal and Coke Trail at

Kendi Park in Mt. Pleasant.

She also did a rendering showing how much of the original landscape design could be restored in the Casino Theater area of Vandergrift, while still addressing the need for parking in that area (see page 15).

- With Westmoreland County getting more than its usual share of rain in late 2004/early 2005, we **focused our annual engineers' workshop on stormwater and drew the largest audience ever**.

ALONG THE WAY to downtown Vandergrift...

Take an easy side trip to see two interesting places, Northmoreland Park and Pounds Turkey Farm.

To Northmoreland Park –

After bearing L at "Y," continue on SR 356 N for about 2 miles

Make sharp L onto SR 4034/Pine Run Road

At first stop sign, bear R onto Markle Road

After about 1 mile, lake is on left; other attractions (ball fields, horse ring, tennis, airfield, pavilions, and more) are on right.

After visiting Northmoreland Park –

Retrace route to end of SR 4034/Pine Run Road

At stop sign, L onto SR 356 N

Proceed to Pounds Turkey Farm (see next page)



★ **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Recreation**

Northmoreland is physically the largest park (548 acres) in the Westmoreland County Park system.

It features the **only recreational lake in northern Westmoreland County** – a 17-acre man-made lake, fed by Pine Run (a stream you will cross on your way to Vandergrift).

The lake was a joint effort among Westmoreland County, which sponsored it; the Natural Resources Conservation Service, which designed and funded it; and the Westmoreland Conservation District, which did the survey and provided technical advice.

The lake was completed in the fall of 1989, and is open for boating and fishing (it is stocked with both warm water fish and trout by the PA Fish Commission). Walkers and joggers now can travel the circumference of the lake on a new paved walkway.



Rowboat and pedal boat rentals, fishing bait, ice, supplies, and snacks are available to visitors at the boathouse on Northmoreland Lake.

More than 260 individuals joined us to hear a panel discussion of local engineers and architects who are employing some innovative stormwater management approaches in Westmoreland County, see the latest in stormwater management products and services, and get updates on Pennsylvania's new stormwater manual.

- The District joined with Rostraver Township to host a free, regional workshop on the new **Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4)** requirements.

More than 25 officials from various areas throughout the county attended this workshop to learn how to test their stormwater discharges for pollutants in accordance with new MS4 regulations.

- Some 40 engineers and watershed association representatives attended the **"Stormwater Management within Watersheds"** satellite downlink workshop we hosted in October.

And 53 individuals joined us during the year for two workshops where they

had the opportunity to **make their own rain barrels**.

Attendees at these latter workshops took home a total of 85 50-gallon rain barrels for catching rainwater that they can use to water their gardens and lawns. Not only does a rain barrel benefit the user by capturing rain (a free resource), it also benefits the community by reducing the demand on the local storm sewer system.

To Pounds Turkey Farm (from Northmoreland Park) –

After turning L onto SR 356 N from Pine Run Road, continue for about 1-3/4 mile, then L at stop sign to remain on SR 356 N

After about 1/10 mile, L at traffic light onto Melwood Road
Continue for 1 mile. Pounds Turkey Farm sign is on left; farm store is on right.

★ **PRODUCTIVE FARMS:** *Value-added Agriculture*

Pounds Turkey Farm is a successful, 70-year-old agricultural family business that specializes in raising turkeys that are free of hormones and antibiotics.

At the market located on the farm you also can buy beef, all-natural chicken, and a variety of **"value-added" products** that range from homemade turkey potpie and turkey-and-cheese snack sticks, to cranberry sauce and vinaigrettes.

This concept of "adding value" to a basic agricultural product – such as taking apples and making apple juice, or using milk to make cheese – increases the value of a farmers' products, and is one way to derive additional income to keep the farm operation profitable.

For more information: Pounds Turkey Farm (724) 845-7661, www.poundsturkeyfarm.com; or "The Future of Agriculture in Our Community," Penn State Cooperative Extension Service (724) 837-1402, westmorelandextension@psu.edu.

After visiting Pounds, continue to Vandergrift –

Retrace route to traffic light; L onto SR 356 N

After about 1/2-mile, R onto Towne Center Drive (note the juxtaposition of agriculture on the left side of this road and the commercial development on the right side)

At first traffic light, R onto SR 56 E

Follow SR 56 E about 2-3/4 miles into downtown Vandergrift. Historic Casino theatre will be on your left.

Parking area is in front of theater.



Pounds Turkey Farm store hours: Tues.-Thurs. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.;
Fri. 10 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.; Sat. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.



Three generations are involved in this successful, prize-winning business: (l-r) Bethany, Beverly, Tim, Thelma, Rick, and Jody Pounds.

- Our staff **spoke about stormwater at a variety of events** throughout the year, reaching professional, local-citizen, and student audiences that ranged from PennDOT employees and members of the International Erosion Control Association, to county residents interested in learning more about coal-bed methane.



PRODUCTIVE FARMS

- The District concluded the second phase of its four-year effort to **improve water quality in the Kiski-Conemaugh Watershed** in 2005 – bringing the total conservation investment in this watershed to almost \$1 million.

During this second phase, eight farmers in the watershed installed some \$68,000 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.

In all, 24 farms installed nearly \$700,000-worth of conservation improvements under this program, which began in 2001.

(A separate program, specifically

6 Downtown Vandergrift



This old picture postcard shows how the landscaped island once looked, as viewed from the steps of the Casino theater, looking toward the train station.



Discussing the possibility of turning this gateway area of Vandergrift into a permeable green parking lot are Cindi Contie, Vandergrift Improvement Program board member, and Westmoreland Conservation District staff members Jim Pillsbury and Kathryn Hamilton.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Managing Cultural Landscapes

Hailed by historian Ida Tarbell as America’s “most important industrial town,” Vandergrift is a unique, planned community, built in the late 1890s by an iron and steel company that was the first to allow workers to own their homes.

George McMurtry started the community by building a steel mill on a 650-acre farm along the Kiski River, and then hiring the firm of Frederick Law Olmstead to design a town with gently curved streets, paved sidewalks, and plenty of open space.

One of those open spaces – an expanse of lawn between the town’s train station and its revitalized Casino Theater – has strayed from its original landscape design over the years, changing to virtually all pavement to accommodate automobile parking.

Civic leaders and local citizens have joined together to study what can be done to enhance this town-gateway area. One proposal they are considering would create a space that blends both Olmsted’s original lawn design with the needs of the automobile

targeting an area of the Kiski-Conemaugh Watershed that contained the most severely agriculturally impacted watershed in Westmoreland County (Whitethorn Creek) concluded in 2004, after investing \$200,000 in best management practices in that sub-watershed.)

The result of all of these efforts has been an improvement in local water quality in both the Kiskiminetas and Conemaugh river watersheds.*

- A similar agricultural-conservation effort

to improve water quality in the **Mid-Yough Watershed** continued during the year, investing some \$30,000 in comparable best management practices on seven farms in that region.

The Mid-Yough Watershed program will continue through 2006.*

- We assisted the Loyalhanna and Sewickley Creek watershed associations in their **efforts to get best management practices in place on agricultural operations in their regions.**

The two watersheds received a total of approximately \$150,000 from the Growing Greener grant program, which was used to add conservation on 17 farms. Improvements included 17 miles of streambank fencing, 33 stabilized crossings, 20 alternative watering facilities, and 130 acres of wildlife plantings.

- Our agricultural technician **personally conducted some 93 farm visits** to provide site-specific technical assistance for local agricultural operations. He often

age by installing a **permeable parking lot**. These lots can be created in various ways, such as using stone pavers with short grass growing in between. The overall result looks much like a lawn, but acts like a parking lot because it can bear the weight of vehicles.

Another benefit of this kind of “infiltration” parking lot is that it protects the quality of nearby waterways (in this case, the Kiski River) by allowing rain and melting snow to slowly sink into the ground instead of just running off and carrying any leaked antifreeze or oil into the water.

For more information: Vandergrift Improvement Program Inc. (724) 567-5286, www.officialvandergrift.com; or Westmoreland Conservation District (724) 837-5271, www.wcdpa.com.



Curved streets and rounded buildings make Vandergrift a uniquely graceful and beautiful city.

THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

From downtown Vandergrift to downtown New Kensington

where a multifaceted community effort is under way to revitalize this once-thriving city

From the Casino theatre, take SR 56 W

After about 3-1/2 miles, L at traffic light to stay on SR 56 W

After about 3/4-mile, bear L at “Y” to stay on SR 56 W

After about 7-1/4 miles, bear L to stay on SR 56 W; then get in right lane

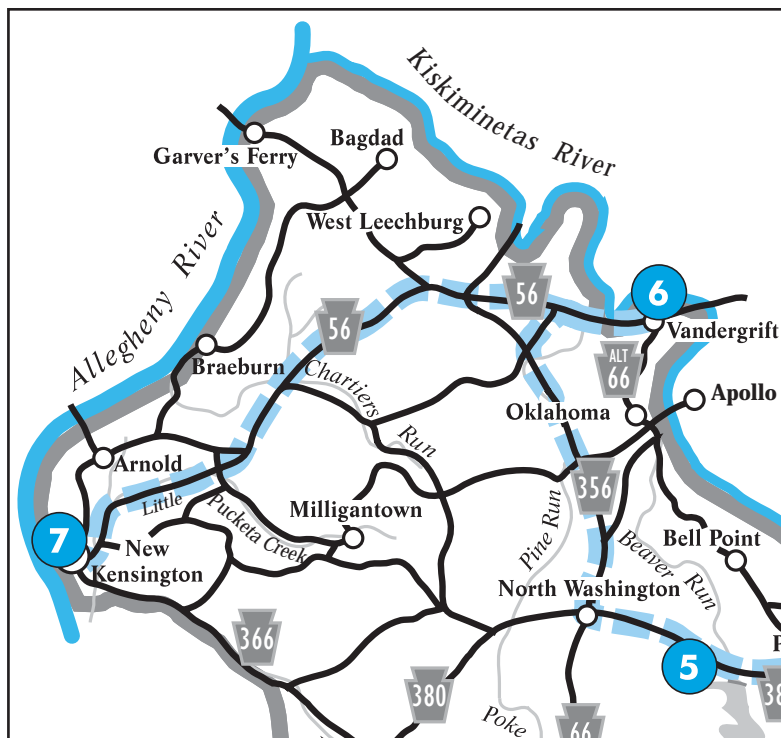
After about 1 mile, bear R to stay on SR 56 W

After about 1/2-mile, R onto Fourth Avenue (notice the “KOZ” signs on the right and left as you travel this street)

After about 1/2-mile, R onto Hileman Drive (Geo-Solutions, Inc. will be directly in front of you)

At first stop sign on Hileman Drive, R onto Fifth Avenue (this is the tree-lined downtown street featured in this report)

After about 1/2-mile, R onto 7th Street. At the intersection of 7th Street and Truck SR 56/Industrial Boulevard, the Allegheny River is directly in front of you, and you are facing the general area under consideration for the river development discussed in this report.



suggested appropriate best management practices, and provided information on the cost-share programs available for implementing those practices.

- For the first time in District history – and perhaps for the first time anywhere in Westmoreland County – an **entire banquet meal was created using products that were raised, grown, or produced in Westmoreland County.**

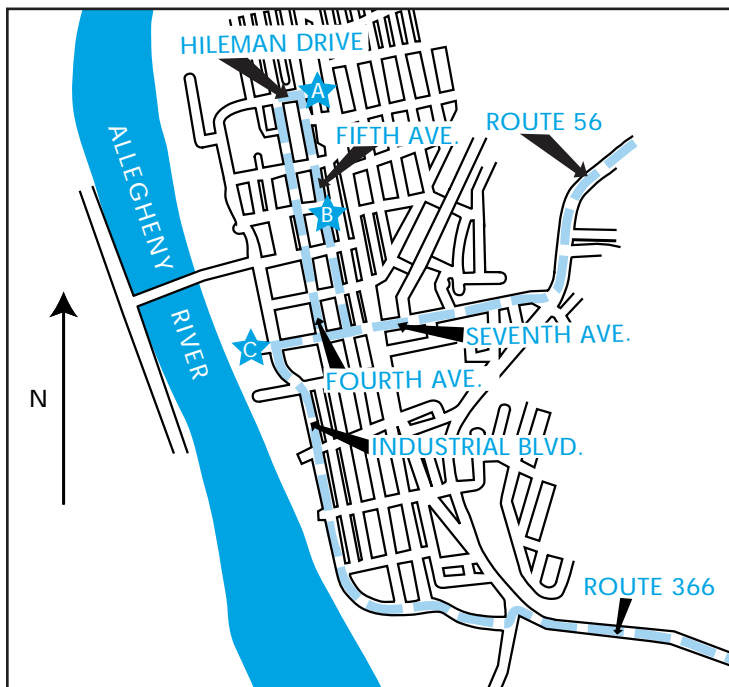
The event was the District’s annual awards banquet in November, and some

200 friends of conservation joined us that night to enjoy a meal featuring turkey from Pounds’ Turkey Farm in Leechburg; beef from Hoffer’s Ligonier Valley Packing in Ligonier; lamb from Jamison Farm in Latrobe; produce from Schramm Farms & Orchards in Harrison City; breads from Friendship Farms in Lycippus; butter, eggs, and cheese from Hillandale Farms in New Kensington; flour from Saint Vincent Gristmill in Unity Township; condiments from Bellview Foods in Penn

and DeLallo’s in Jeannette; berry and cherry pies from Sand Hill Berries in Mt. Pleasant; ice cream from Kerber’s Dairy in North Huntingdon; white and chocolate milk from Hutter’s Dairy in Kecksburg; candy from Wilson’s Candy in Jeannette and Brown’s Candy Kitchen in Mt. Pleasant; and organic cookies from Caren Weaver of Greensburg. (Also see the “Sustainable Communities” section for information on the 2005 award recipients.)

- Forty-one farmers and conservation

7 Downtown New Kensington



Newly established Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZ) help to attract business. Companies that locate here may be eligible for tax benefits.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Urban Revitalization

Not all that many years ago, New Kensington was probably the most affluent and fashionable city in Westmoreland County. Its downtown stretched for some 18 blocks, and prosperous citizens strolled sidewalks lined with specialty shops, restaurants, and as many as seven separate movie theatres.

Today, New Kensington is a city in recovery.

The major industries that fueled the town’s economy – aluminum production and products – have gone, and along with them, many of the businesses and personal livelihoods they supported.

But although down, this world-renowned “Aluminum City” is by no means out. A spirited core of local citizens is showing their own mettle, working to parlay the city’s other assets – a favorable business climate; charming, tree-lined streets; and a wide, graceful river – into a changed, but once again vital, community.

Attracting new business – Once a blighted area of sub-standard housing and nuisance structures, a four-acre site along Fifth Avenue was **transformed in the fall of 2004 into a location tailor-made for light industrial and commercial businesses.** And the Redevelopment Authority of the City of New Kensington is so pleased with the result that it has just begun doing the same thing with two-and-a-half more acres next door.

The first new company, Geo-Solutions, Inc., an environmental consulting company, recently built several buildings in this downtown “Keystone Opportunity Zone,” moved its equipment in, and created jobs for some 20 people.

The Redevelopment Authority also succeeded this spring in having about 460 acres of the city (plus several acres in the adjacent city of Arnold) designated as a state Enterprise Zone, which means that financial incentives such as low-interest loans and tax credits are available for companies that choose to locate or expand there.

professionals joined us in late October for a trip to Holterholm Farms in Maryland. Holterholm is notable because it is a sustainable, profitable, low-input dairy that built its success in a nontraditional way – by using rotational grazing, innovative manure management, and by milking cows for only 10 months each year.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service partnered with us in hosting this tour, and a portion of the funding was provided by a Pennsylvania Department

of Environmental Protection 2005 Environmental Education grant.

- The District was part of the **Southwest Regional Tillage Conference**, held in January. The event drew more than 100 people who wanted to learn about alternative tillage methods, such as no-till, 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. It also saves fuel, wear and

tear on tractors and other major equipment, and time.

At the conference, experts presented information on the use of nitrogen with no-till for small grains and corn, crop rotation, using no-till drills, and nitrogen and manure management.

- A day-long forum on the **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program** was held in February for landowners in a nine-county region who are interested in or who have signed up to participate in



Street trees along Fifth Avenue.



Jane Glenn (l) and Juanita Pallone care for one of a dozen Chanticleer pear trees planted along a downtown street.



Access to the Allegheny River, now limited and private, may open up dramatically as part of the city's revitalization efforts.

Livability and aesthetics – One of the loveliest aspects of this city is its trees. Fine-leafed locusts frame the major downtown avenues with a lacey canopy that invites visitors to stroll and shop. On the hill above town, maples cast a line of cool, dark shade along the edges of tidy residential streets like Manor Road.

About 10 years ago, local citizens who saw the value in these natural assets set about to make sure they would be preserved. The citizens worked to reinstate the city's three-person Shade Tree Commission, and have been raising funds to employ a certified arborist, conduct tree inventories, develop stewardship plans, and plant and maintain trees in the commercial, residential, and community park areas of town.

It is an effort that can pay more than just aesthetic benefits. Many urban planners recognize that **trees and landscaping can have a positive effect on economic development**, and be a help in revitalizing urban business districts.

Opening up to the river – For years, industry dominated the Allegheny River in this area. Companies used it to as a shipping lane to move natural resources such as lumber, oil, and coal down river to Pittsburgh, and as a dumping ground for factory wastes and runoff.

Here in New Kensington, the Alcoa factory buildings lined the riverbank for blocks, preventing even a glimpse of the water from the town's main thoroughfares.

Today, New Ken is about to follow other urban areas in the nation by **opening up access to the river** – so it can be enjoyed by all for recreation and its aesthetic contribution to the quality of life. The city's goal is to develop a public riverfront area, complete with trees, shrubs, lights, observation areas, public river access, and eventually even housing overlooking this liquid asset.

For more information: Redevelopment Authority of New Kensington (724) 337-3525, newkensington-redevelopmentauthority.org; Shade Tree Commission (724) 337-4525, www.NewKensingtonOnline.com.

the program. CREP currently is the largest-funded conservation program available to landowners who are interested in voluntarily employing best management practices to reduce erosion.

As of the end of 2005, **164 land-owners in Westmoreland County had signed up for the CREP program.**

Some 100 people attended the February forum.

In addition to the Westmoreland Conservation District, sponsors for the forum

were the Farm Service Agency, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

- **We offered our new “Ag Basics”** course again in 2005, and drew 11 teachers. The course introduces educators to the basics of agriculture – with emphasis on local agriculture – and encourages them to share this knowledge with their students.

In addition to classroom work, the course took teachers on field trips to a number of local agricultural operations,

including Friendship Farms, the Keenan farm, and the county fair. Teachers who successfully completed the two-day course received one Act 48 credit.

- Our nutrient management specialist was part of a committee to help the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection **determine goals for improving non-point source pollution on farms** (see page 26 for definition of non-point source pollution). One of the goals the committee identified was to significantly increase the

THE CONSERVATION INSIDER’S ROAD TRIP

From downtown New Kensington to an Innovative Conservation Development

where new ways of thinking about housing are creating an especially livable, green community

At the intersection of 7th Street and Truck SR 56/Industrial Boulevard, L (note the mounds of gravel and sand on your right (see page 7))

Follow signs to get onto SR 366 E (when this tour was written, there was a detour in place, and well-marked)

From the traffic light at the triangle in Parnassus, bear L at “Y” to continue on SR 366 E (note the old coal tippie on your right)

After nearly 6 miles, bear R to take off-ramp for SR 380 W toward Monroeville

After 1 mile, bear R to take exit toward Saltsburg and SR 286

After 1/4-mile, L onto SR 286 E

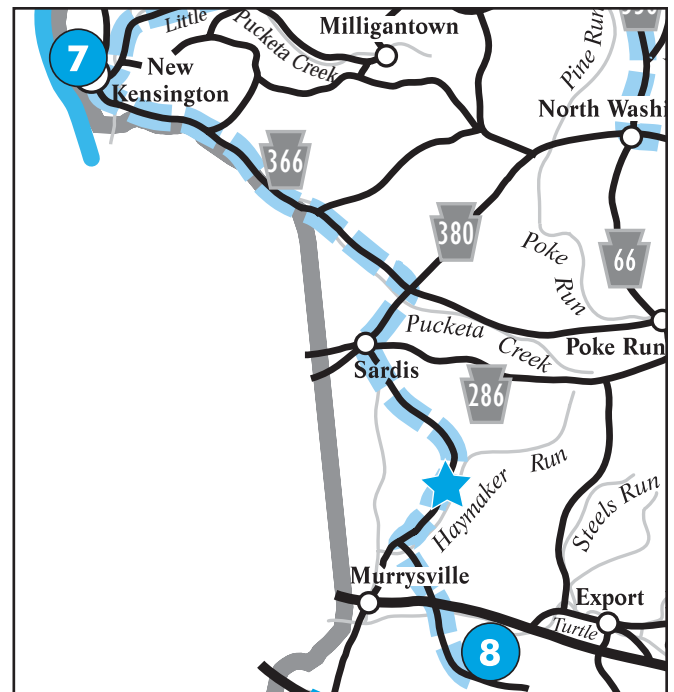
After 1/4-mile, R onto Sardis Road

After some 3-1/4 miles, L onto School Road

Continue for 2 miles to US Route 22 (William Penn Highway)

Stay straight to cross US Route 22

Continue for about 1/2 mile to Marquis Place on L



ALONG THE WAY to Marquis Place...

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



Some 2-3/4 miles after turning on to Sardis Road, notice the meandering stream that parallels the highway on your left. This is Haymaker Run.

The water quality in this stream is good, and it often is used as an outdoor classroom by area teachers, because microinvertebrates and other aquatic creatures

can be found living in healthy streams such as this one. You also often can see people fishing here as well.

Haymaker Run is part of the Turtle Creek Watershed, which

takes in western Westmoreland County and eastern Allegheny County.

Watersheds are natural communities. **The size and shape of a watershed is determined by how water flows through the land.** So even though one person may live in Delmont, Westmoreland County, and another in Wilmerding, Allegheny County, they both are part of the same, Turtle Creek, watershed. And what happens upstream – from the chemicals put on lawns to how much paved surface there is – directly affects those who live lower in the watershed.

Later in the tour, you will cross Turtle Creek as you travel from Marquis Place to the Westmoreland Conservation District on US Route 22.

For more information: Turtle Creek Watershed Association (412) 829-2817, www.turtlecreekwatershed.org.



SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

- In 2005, a creative partnership that included the Westmoreland Conservation District, the Westmoreland Industrial Development Corporation Inc., and the Katherine Mabis McKenna Foundation joined forces to **purchase the vacant commercial building next to our**

number of conservation plans in place on farms throughout the state.

- Our nutrient management specialist also once again worked with the US 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.

8 Marquis Place



Developer A. Richard Kacin (l) and Westmoreland Conservation District Chairman J. Roy Houston review the innovative conservation plans for Kacin Companies’ new Murrysville development, Marquis Place. R.F. Mitall Associates is the project engineer.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Low-Impact Development

This new residential development is a model for conservation, and for new ways of thinking about the communities we create.

Here, the developer is creating modern, upscale housing (two 44-unit condominiums) with a shared club house and pool in the center, woods on three sides, and a walking trail that will lead to nearby Duff Park and, longer-term, connect with the Westmoreland Heritage Trail (see pages 9-10).

The developer will use only 8 acres of this 22-acre site for the build-out part of the community by **working with the natural characteristics of the property and by using the land wisely.**

His design locates the buildings on the portions of the site that are naturally level and so totally eliminates the need for conventional grading and fill. And the living spaces will be built vertically (as three- and four-story residences), rather than spreading them out (as single-family, detached homes).

The result is far less disturbance to the land...and more natural areas for everyone to enjoy.

Another benefit of this model conservation community is the way it will greatly minimize the amount of stormwater runoff.

Fourteen acres of the site will be left natural – as grassy slopes and woods and green spaces where rain can infiltrate. The amount of paved surfaces will be limited; the development has only one circular road, and all residential parking is indoors, on the ground floor of the buildings.

The reduced amount of stormwater runoff from this community will be managed by an innovative pond designed to keep a permanent level of water at all times. In addition to being aesthetically pleasing, the pond will help local water quality by holding the stormwater in place to allow any sediment to drop out.

For more information: Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County (724) 836-7048, www.smartgrowthpa.org.

offices on Donohoe Road...
 rehabilitate it with green materials,
 energy-conserving technologies,
 and best management practices...
 and incorporate it as part of an
 expanding "conservation campus"
 that includes Donohoe Center, our barn
 headquarters, Ann Rudd Saxman Nature
 Park, and the Westmoreland County
 Public Works building.

This project most likely will be the **first
 green rehabilitation of a commercial**

building in Westmoreland County.
 Its various materials and technologies will
 include a green roof (another first in the
 county), a solar array to provide part of
 the electrical needs, and a geothermal
 system.

The rehabilitation goal is to create
 a building that is both efficient and
 sustainable, and to do so at a level high
 enough to **attain Silver-level certifica-
 tion from The LEED (Leadership in
 Energy and Environmental Design)**

Green Building Rating System®.

Total cost of the building purchase
 and rehabilitation is estimated to be in
 the range of \$2,049,000.

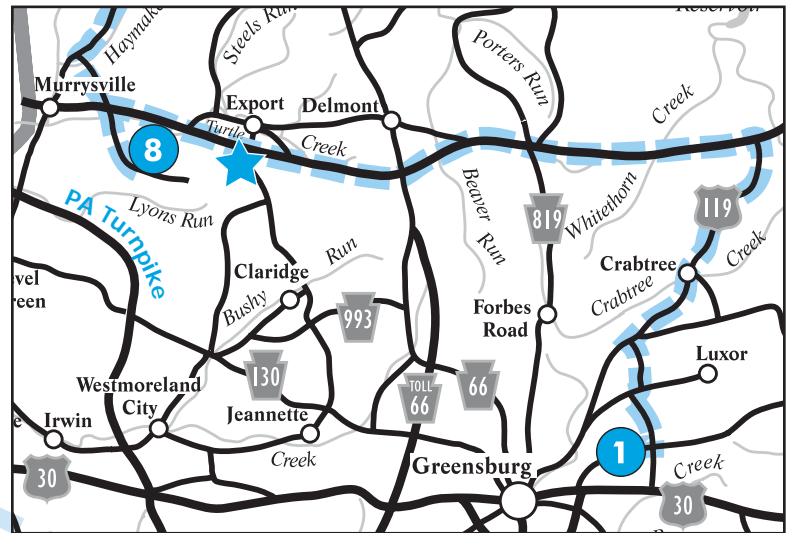
A **capital fundraising campaign**
 was launched late in 2005, and support
 was received from the Katherine Mabis
 McKenna Foundation; the Richard King
 Mellon Foundation; the Energy Harvest
 grant program of the Pennsylvania
 Department of Environmental Protection;
 the West Penn Power Sustainable Energy

THE CONSERVATION INSIDER'S ROAD TRIP

**From an Innovative Conservation
 Development to the headquarters of the
 Westmoreland Conservation District**

where you can get help with all your conservation needs

- Turn R out of Marquis Place onto School Road
- After about 1/2 mile, R onto US Route 22 (William Penn High-
 way) (after just about one mile of travel on Route 22, notice that you
 cross Turtle Creek)
- After about 12-1/2 miles, R onto US Route 119 S
- After about 6 miles, L onto Cameo Lane
- At first stop sign, R onto Luxor Road (SR 1028)
- After about 1/10 mile, L onto Georges Station Road
- At first stop sign, R onto Donohoe Road
- Donohoe Center parking lot/Westmoreland Conservation
 District on L



ALONG THE WAY to Westmoreland Conservation District...

★ **STABLE SOILS & SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

US Route 22 (William Penn Highway) is one of the two larg-
 est east-west highways in Westmoreland County, and one of the
 original United States highways of 1926.

Since 1994, an effort has been under way to widen and renew
 this highway in a series of sections. In 2006, the section that
 begins just east of the Cozy Inn cutoff in Murrysville and extends
 east to near the Route 22/66 Interchange in Salem Township is
 being redone. The remaining portions of Route 22 in Westmore-
 land County are scheduled to be complete in the next few years.

This work involves a significant amount of earthmoving,
 drilling and grouting of mine voids, drainage work (storm sewers,
 inlets, rock-lined ditches), and fill.

In a project of this magnitude, it is especially important that
 best management practices be followed to **control erosion and
 to infiltrate/slow down stormwater.** Overall, there are many
 examples of good conservation practices being employed on this
 project.

Widening and upgrading a major roadway such as this also
 has an impact on the land nearby. A bigger and better highway



will bring more traffic through here, and increase the likelihood
 that more land near the highway will be developed.

Local communities will need to make good long-term deci-
 sions about where, when, and how this development should take
 place, and consider both today's quality of life and tomorrow's
 legacy.

For more information: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
www.renew22.com or www.dot.state.pa.us; and Smart Growth Partnership
 of Westmoreland County (724) 836-7048, www.smartgrowthpa.org.

Fund; the Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corporation; Kim Edward Miller, president of Wolf Lake Incorporated; and Richard Glance, architect. Near the conclusion of the year, we also requested that the Westmoreland County commissioners include GreenForge on the county's Growing Greener Initiative project list.

The first GreenForge tenants committed to lease space during the year. They are Westmoreland Cleanways, a grassroots organization that fights litter

and illegal dumping and promotes recycling; the Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, a group that works to clean up land and water damaged by past coal-mining practices in 24 counties in western Pennsylvania; and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's local Rural Development office, which helps people in rural areas develop sustainable communities and improve their quality of life.

The GreenForge project is receiving

strong administrative support from District personnel, who have helped to set up the accounting and budgeting for the project, and to coordinate the financing, rehabilitation, fundraising, and leasing efforts.

- We focused attention on the need to **revitalize older, urban communities** in Westmoreland County by hosting one-day bus **tours in both Monessen and New Kensington**.

In the Monessen area, 40 participants saw a variety of examples of conservation

1 Westmoreland Conservation District



Leanne Griffith (l), District conservation education coordinator, encourages Greensburg-Salem junior Mary Jackson to feel different kinds of Westmoreland County soil to see if she can notice their differences. The interactive soil bin is part of a new education display at District headquarters on our most basic natural resource.



STABLE SOILS

Inside the Westmoreland Conservation District's barn headquarters is **one of only a few soil displays in the state of Pennsylvania**.

Five vertical slices of earth, taken from different locations in Westmoreland County, are displayed at eye-level so visitors can easily examine the world that's usually hidden as much as four feet under the soles of their shoes.

By pointing out key features such as color and texture, depth to bedrock, and the ability to hold water, the display makes it clear that all "dirt" is not the same. In fact, there are 47 different kinds of soils in Westmoreland County – including ones that are slick and slippery...super thin...and chock-full of air spaces.

A soil's characteristics help determine its best use. There are very good reasons why farmers don't grow soybeans in places where the Earth's bedrock is close to the surface of the ground (soybean roots can grow 6-7 feet long)...or why builders don't dig ponds in soil that has a lot of air spaces in it (water can run through it easily).

As people understand the differences in soils, they can use them most wisely.

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

in action, including how brownfields are being reused, access to the river is being reopened, and recreation trails are being built.

Likewise, on the New Kensington area tour, the 44 people who spent the day with us saw the revitalization of an historic theatre, the rebirth of blighted urban areas, residential streets beautified with trees, and how businesses are making a difference in water quality.

A number of partners helped with the planning and accompanied us on the tour, including Pennsylvania State Representatives John Pallone and Ted Harhai, and Pennsylvania Senator Jim Ferlo.

- We worked hard in the spring to encourage area voters to **support an environmental initiative called Growing Greener II**. And they did.

Pennsylvania citizens overwhelmingly voted to pass a \$625 million bond referendum that will be used to clean up rivers and streams, reclaim abandoned coal mines and brownfields, preserve natural areas and open space, improve state parks and local recreation facilities, preserve working farms, and improve habitat.

The first phase of this funding – Growing Greener I – invested more than \$4 million in improving Westmoreland County’s land and streams.

References to both Growing Greener programs and the projects they support in Westmoreland County are found throughout this report.

- Our hydraulic engineer continued to serve as his borough’s (Southwest Greensburg’s) representative on a **multi-municipal comprehensive planning committee** established two years ago by Hempfield Township, the City of Greensburg, and Southwest and South Greensburg boroughs.

In October, the committee unveiled a single, 223-page comprehensive plan that each community will use as a guide for future development within its borders. The plan was created with input from citizens in each of the four adjoining communities.

- Our Board was notified during the year that a local farmer’s will expressed her wish that her 90-acre Hempfield Township farm be used for **passive recreation and conservation education**.

The Roberta N. Schwarz property, north of Greensburg near Route 66, is primarily agricultural – laid out in contour

strips designed years ago by the District. It also includes some forested acres and steep slopes.

Our technical staff inventoried and evaluated the property, and our Board has agreed to investigate the potential of District partnership in this opportunity.

- Our watershed specialist headed up an effort to establish a **quarterly information-sharing meeting for various conservation and natural resource agencies** headquartered in the western part of the county.

The first meeting in January set an informal, conversational tone where representatives from organizations including the PA Department of Environmental Protection, the Westmoreland County Planning Department, the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County, the Smart Growth Partnership, Rural Development, Westmoreland Cleanways, North Huntingdon Township, and the Conservation District could share information about current and upcoming projects, and lend support to each other’s efforts.

- Sixty new **name signs** were installed along state highways to identify streams and waterways throughout the Sewickley Creek Watershed during the year.

The blue signs – showing the names of the creeks and runs that flow beneath or beside the highways – are meant to raise public awareness of these natural resources and area watersheds. It is estimated that the majority of these signs are passed by 500-1,000 vehicles each day.

- The District was one of several sponsors of a program designed to **help local watershed groups become more self-sustaining**.

Called “Passing Go,” the program presented two well-received workshops where members of local grassroots organizations could learn more about budgeting, financial liabilities, and insurance for Boards of Directors from regional experts in these fields.

- 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.”**

Some participated in interviewing farmers throughout the county to identify the specific challenges they face, and others spoke at many of the 10 workshops held during the year to address the needs identified in those interviews.

“The Future of Agriculture in Our Community” is being spearheaded by Penn State Cooperative Extension Service.

- **Numerous challenges to water quality in the rural town of Crabtree** have started local groups and experts talking about the feasibility of developing a unique, combination-approach solution that could resolve each of them.

Water quality in this area is affected by raw sewage discharges and malfunctioning on-lot systems, a 5,000-gallon-per-minute net alkaline abandoned mine drainage discharge, and agricultural waste from six major dairy and beef farms.

The District is a member of the “Crabtree Coalition,” which, among other things, is investigating the possibility of creating a plant to process the bio solids from a sewage plant (if one is built) and manure from surrounding farms into a compost-like material. In the process, the plant also could produce electricity and bottled methane.

- We continued to **assist local trail groups**, providing both technical assistance and service on their boards.

Involvement included work with the Five Star Trail (which currently runs from Youngwood to the City of Greensburg), the Coal and Coke Trail (which will link Mt. Pleasant and Scottdale), the Westmoreland Heritage Trail (which begins just over the Westmoreland County line in Saltsburg and eventually will extend to Trafford), and the Regional Trail Corporation (an umbrella organization that promotes the conversion of railroad rights-of-way to recreational trails).

Our erosion-control specialist also provided technical guidance to Irwin borough in its effort to create a hiking/biking recreation trail as part of a major community revitalization program.

- Many of our staff continued to **volunteer their time and expertise with various community groups**, including service on the boards of the Jacobs Creek, Turtle Creek, Pucketa and Chartiers Creek, and Sewickley Creek watershed associations; and Westmoreland Cleanways.
- 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: Conservation Farmer of the Year – William Selembo...Hall of Honor Inductees



Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen McGinty (second from right) presents a flag proclaiming the District as a winner of the Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence to District Board of Directors members (l-r) Bill Doney, Kim Miller, Dorothy Stoner, Ron Rohall, Chairman Roy Houston, and Roy Kemerer.

– Frank Skacel Sr. and Elwood Leslie (both posthumously)...Conservation Educator
 – Lindsay Forsys...Conservation Organization – The Westmoreland Woodlands Improvement Association...Conservation Partner – Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corporation...Special Recognition – Amanda McMillan, J. W. Wilkinsons' Nurseries Inc., Adam Eidemiller Inc., and Roth, Moore & Associates.
 (Also see the "Productive Farms" section for information on the local agricultural products featured at the banquet).

- For the fifth consecutive year, our assistant fiscal administrator administered a number of **strategic planning grants for conservation districts in other parts of Pennsylvania**. The grants are part of the State Conservation Commission's "Leadership Development Program," and provide funding to districts that want to develop a strategic plan for their operation.

Since 2001, she has assisted this important program by administering 30 such grants.

- 2005 marked the **20th anniversary of our sponsorship of the Westmoreland County Envirothon**, a hands-on

competition for local high schools that challenges them to think critically about the natural world and their role in it.

The 2005 event was held in early May at Mammoth Park and, in addition to the traditional topics of aquatics, forestry, and soils, included a special topic on how to incorporate conservation in the planning and restoration of cultural and historic sites in our country.

Students from the Westmoreland Enrichment Classes (a team of home school students based in Norwin) placed first; and the teams from Franklin Regional High School and Yough High School placed second and third respectively.

The Westmoreland Enrichment Classes team went on to the state competition, where they placed first in the oral component and 15th overall.

- High school students from Southmoreland participated in a **watershed day** in April at the Jacobs Creek Park in Scottsdale and at Greenlick Dam.

Ninety-nine ninth-grade students learned about forestry, geology, biology, soils, and water chemistry from District staff and other agency partners.

- **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 2,500 people came to learn more about conservation and the environment.

- We held clinics throughout the year on a number of **water-quality topics**.

Workshops on drinking water, septic system care and maintenance, and private wells drew a total of 52 adults. A pond-management workshop in the fall was attended by 22 individuals.

- Students, partners, clients, and like-minded individuals from the community came to our barn headquarters during the year for meetings, workshops, special events, or personalized assistance.

In all, we recorded some **12,138 of these individual interactions** in 2005. This reflects a 13% increase from 2004 (comparing both years without the Earth Day program) and is a solid verification that we are **steadily reaching more people with the conservation message**.



EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

- In 2005, we completed the first-ever, comprehensive outreach program in Westmoreland County to reach adults and young adults with information on non-point source pollution.*

This two-year effort used targeted workshops, information booths, and literature to reach those members of our local population that have the greatest potential to make a positive impact on this pollution problem, which harms water quality.

We estimate that a total of some 8,000 individuals were reached by this concerted two-year program, which was funded by a Growing Greener Environmental Education Grant.

Many of the specific education efforts are detailed in other sections of this report.

- We developed and obtained approval from both the Westmoreland Intermediate Unit and the Pennsylvania Department of Education for a new college-graduate-level class for teachers called “**Conservation 101.**”

The class featured 15 hours of classroom introduction to water quality, forestry, agriculture, stormwater management, and wildlife, taught by the District’s technical experts in each respective field.

Seven teachers attended the October inaugural offering of the course, and each obtained one Act 48 credit.

- Early in the year, our Conservation Education Advisory Board helped us **develop both a vision and mission statement for our education program.**

The mission they developed states, in part, that we “engage youth and adults in ongoing educational opportunities on conservation values and practices” and that we “encourage individuals to make informed decisions regarding natural resources stewardship by illustrating the benefits and consequences of their actions.”

Subsequently, our staff used this guidance to develop targeted goals for the program and specific education offerings for the year.

- During the summer of 2005, we **created a new Conservation Resource Library** in the barn’s large loft, and invited the public to browse and borrow from more than 500 book, magazine, and video resources available there. Many of these items were donated by friends of the District.

Major subject categories available include: energy...no-till farming...dirt and gravel roads...green building... and more than 15 other topics related to the more technical side of conservation and agriculture.

We also relocated our popular literature table to the library, a move that improved traffic flow in building’s main floor entryway and helped to draw people up the stairs to explore the new resource library.

- We significantly increased our outreach efforts by **increasing the number of news releases and media contacts**



Forestry is one of the District’s most popular education subjects. Here, District Forester Tony Quadro (center) takes participants into Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park to help them gain more firsthand knowledge about their own woodlots.

made during the year. In all, 16 news releases were written and each was distributed to an average of 20 local media outlets. In 2004, only two news releases were issued.

Use of this information was high, with most every release appearing in at least several local papers.

- With the approval of the Board, we contracted with a professional website-development firm to **begin the process of expanding and improving the District's website.**

- We **updated our District logo**, based on a recommendation from our Communications Advisory Committee. The new logo features a more contemporary type face and has additional space between words to make it read more quickly.

This is the first 'freshening' of the District logo since it was designed in 1984 by Emil Kuhar.

- We continued to **make improvements to our Landmarks newsletter**, which now covers a wider range of conservation topics in each issue, presents technical information in easier-to-understand language, and sports a design that enhances readability.

We also acquired additional advertisers to help us with the costs of producing this publication as well as our annual report.

- In 2005, the addition of our visual communications specialist and communications consultant allowed us to **develop District displays for various community and professional events that were customized and relevant to the audience.**

Among the targeted displays we developed were ones for the meeting of local township supervisors, and the engineers workshop.

- Our visual communications specialist was a **featured speaker at the National Association of Conservation Districts' national conference** in Atlanta. He gave tips for improving District communications and outreach.

* "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, such as a three-acre field disturbed by earthmoving...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 banks of a stream all will help reduce non-point source pollution.



ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- **The District's barn headquarters captured the prestigious Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence** in 2005. Only 11 projects from a field of 82 entries were selected to receive this top environmental award.

Selection criteria included an assessment of overall environmental benefit, public service, economic impact, use of innovative technology, teamwork, and environmental education and outreach. Among other 'green' materials and technologies, our barn headquarters features a geothermal system, low-E glass, and recycled tires used for deck flooring.

PA Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen McGinty came to Greensburg to make the presentation on-site on behalf of Governor Edward Rendell.

- **The District's barn headquarters also won recognition in the Pittsburgh region's first-ever "Cool Space" competition**, sponsored by PNC Bank and a nonprofit group called the Cool Space Locator to "celebrate and highlight the cool spaces in our midst and to create excitement about cool spaces that will encourage adaptive reuse of urban locations."

Forty-five sites were chosen as just these kind of "cool spaces" from a field of 107 entries.

- **District Associate Director John Turack was selected as a statewide award-winner by the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts** at its conference in late July. John received the Elected Official Recognition Award for the many conservation efforts he initiated in Washington Township, where he serves as one of three supervisors.

His efforts included convincing his fellow commissioners to install permeable

surface walkways and an infiltration trench around a new recreation building, and an extensive outreach effort to promote water-quality awareness among members of the public.

This latter work is particularly important as approximately one-third of Washington Township drains into Beaver Run Reservoir, a major drinking-water supply for some 50,000 Westmoreland County homes and businesses.

- **Overall support for the District's work increased in 2005, and came from a variety of partners** who likewise believe in the value of conservation.

The cornerstone of our funding continued to be the strong, consistent commitment of the Westmoreland County commissioners, whose allocation not only formed the core of our financial support but also helped us to attract additional sources of funding, including increased levels of support from the state's Departments of Environmental Protection and Agriculture.

During the year, we also realized an increase in corporate sponsorship of our publications and educational events... an increase in grant allocations from the state and federal government and from foundations and businesses...and an increase in contributions of both dollars and time by individuals. Fees received for services also increased.

- A number of our **staff enhanced their skills** during the year with professional training and academic courses.

Jim Pillsbury attended Villanova University's graduate-level classes on engineering and stormwater management.

New employee Kathy Hamilton attended continuing education sessions on channel calculation and sediment basin calculation reviews for technicians presented by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

Erosion control specialist Chris Droste received training credits for attending a regional conference on stormwater, soils, and low-impact development, hosted by The Pennsylvania Housing Research Center at Penn State.

And a number of our District personnel attended both the Stormwater Best Management Practices workshop sponsored by the International Erosion Control Association at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, and a special Presentation Skills workshop hosted by SCORE (the Service Corps of Retired Executives).

- In the fall, **one of the barn's two open-air decks was enclosed** to make a dual-purpose, all-season space that serves as a private meeting area for the District's Board of Directors, as well as the office of District Manager/CEO Greg Phillips.

The new space also includes much-needed storage for the room dividers, tables, and chairs from the main meeting room.

- We conducted **an extensive review of our employee handbook** during the year, the first since it was last revised in 2000.

Our administrative staff team worked with our legal council and a committee of our Board of Directors to update policies and procedures, and to simplify the language in this important document.

By year-end, a comprehensive revision was complete, and submitted to the entire Board for review.

- We **replaced our 14-year-old plotter** with a new one with expanded capabilities. In addition to spread sheets and support for our technical efforts, the new plotter has been a tool for our visual communications specialist, who has used it to produce banners and displays in-house, saving both time and money.

We also replaced our color copier, which has resulted in significant improvements in quality and speed, and expanded our in-house printing capabilities.

Financial Statement

CONCISE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION COMBINED FUNDS – DECEMBER 31, 2005

ASSETS

CASH.....	\$ 243,815
LOAN RECEIVABLE.....	\$ 150,045
GENERAL FIXED ASSETS.....	\$ 62,346
TOTAL	\$ 456,206

LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE

CURRENT LIABILITIES.....	\$ 63,620
LOAN PAYABLE.....	\$ 150,000
NET ASSETS.....	\$ 242,586
TOTAL	\$ 456,206

CONCISE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES COMBINED FUNDS – YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2005

UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

SUPPORT

WESTMORELAND COUNTY.....	\$ 783,104
STATE GRANTS.....	\$ 184,777
OTHER REVENUE.....	\$ 76,639
FEES.....	\$ 36,842
FARMLAND PRESERVATION.....	\$ 5,926
WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COALITION FOR ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION.....	\$ 685
INTEREST INCOME.....	\$ 1,343
SPECIAL PROJECTS.....	\$ 201,165
TOTAL	\$ 1,290,481

EXPENDITURES

PROGRAM SERVICES.....	\$ 892,511
MANAGEMENT & GENERAL.....	\$ 368,972
FUNDRAISING.....	\$ 0
TOTAL	\$ 1,261,483

EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)-CURRENT.....	\$ 28,998
NET ASSETS - BEGINNING BALANCE.....	\$ 213,588
NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR.....	\$ 242,586



Gathered in the new Conservation Resource Library are District staff members (l-r, seated): Joanne Kitsko, receptionist; Sandy Dzendzel, administrative assistant; and Kathy Fritz, E&S program administrative assistant; (l-r, standing) Mark Jackson, visual communication specialist; Christie Rhoades, secretary; Johanna Sheppard, agricultural program assistant; and Karen Barnhart, assistant fiscal administrator.

Publication Credits

Editorial direction and manuscript – Karen Jurkovic
Creative director – Mark Jackson

Graphic design assistant – Stephanie LaFrankie
Photography, cover - Loyalhanna Dam,
pages 8, 11, 13 and 14 – Karen Hohman

Photography, other cover shots and all other pages – Mark Jackson

Historic picture postcard of Vandergrift, PA page 15
courtesy of the Vandergrift Improvement Program
Architectural rendering of Marquis Place,
Murrysville, PA page 20 courtesy of Kacin Companies

Special thanks to George Sebek and Reeses for allowing us to photograph them as they took the tour with District Secretary Christie Rhodes

Westmoreland Conservation District

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J. Roy Houston



VICE CHAIRMAN
Ron Rohall



TREASURER
Conrad Donovan



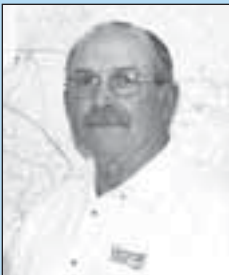
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P. Roy Kemerer



Tom Balya,
County Commissioner



Albert Barnett



William Doney



Kim Edward Miller



Dorothy Stoner

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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

Robert D. Cronauer
Watershed Specialist

Christopher Droste
Erosion Control Specialist

Kathryn Hamilton, RLA
Technical Assistant

Daniel Griffith
*Nutrient Management Specialist/Agricultural
Conservation Technician*

Johanna Sheppard
Agricultural Conservation Program Assistant

Kathleen Fritz
Program Administrative Assistant

EDUCATIONAL STAFF

Leanne Griffith
Conservation Education Coordinator

Christie Rhoades
Secretary

WILLIAM A. ROTH, P.E.

Civil Engineer

Roth, Moore & Associates
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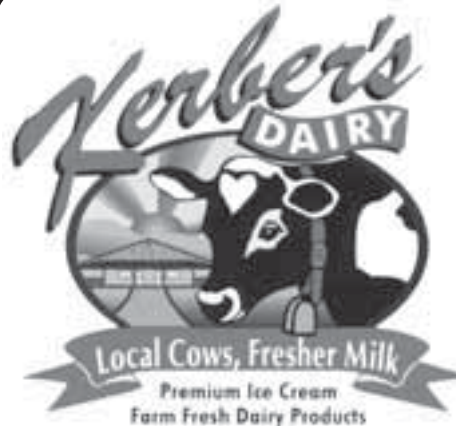
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Save The Date...

Westmoreland Conservation District

Annual Awards Banquet

Friday, November 17, 2006

6:00 PM



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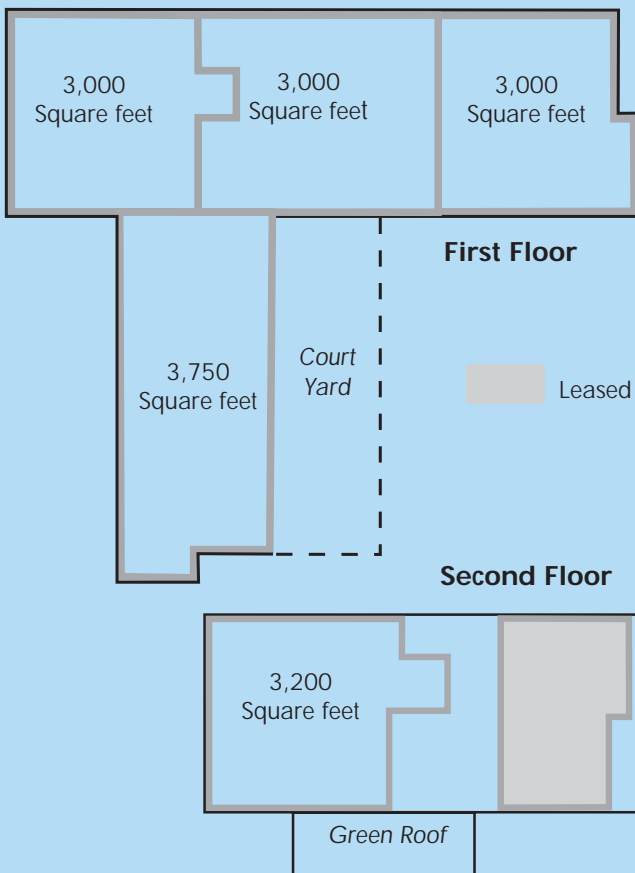
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For more information on GreenForge, contact **Greg Phillips**, Westmoreland Conservation District manager/CEO, at 724-837-5271 or greg@wcdpa.com.



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

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

Communications Advisory Committee

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

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William Doney
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Anthony Quadro
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Theresa Gay Rohall
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Elmer Slezak
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Water Quality Advisory Committee

Marianne Bolling
M. Curtis Fontaine
Leanne Griffith
Tom Grote
Dallas Leonard



A Special Thank You

We owe a deep debt of gratitude to our many partners, friends, volunteers, and financial supporters who have joined with us in the conservation of Westmoreland County's resources.

We especially acknowledge the support of the Westmoreland County Commissioners Tom Balya, Tom Ceraso, and Phil Light. Their understanding of the value of conservation, and their dedication to support its practice in so many ways throughout our county, has created an enviable quality of life for all who live and work here.

Sign the tour book!

After you take any or all of this year's tour, be sure to sign the virtual tour book on our website, www.wcdpa.com (and be registered to win a conservation prize).



Mission

The Westmoreland Conservation District promotes, educates, and implements conservation principles through examples and programs. We encourage best management practices and voluntary compliance of laws. Our Board of Directors, professionals, and volunteers are committed to the leadership and service required in pursuing a better environment. We use our skills and talents, and the cooperation of our partners to build a culture of responsible stewardship and sustainability.



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Greensburg, PA 15601

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